AUSTRA利亚'S STRATEGIC CULTURE
An investigation of the concept of strategic culture and its application to the Australian case

by

Alan Bloomfield

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Abstract

The notion that each state in the international system approaches matters of war and peace somewhat differently because they each possess a unique strategic culture is not a new or obscure one but it nevertheless remains controversial. While some scholars dismiss the utility or practicality of examining states' cultures when seeking to explain or predict those states' patterns of strategic decision-making, even amongst those who accept that we should pay attention to cultural differences between states when carrying out strategic analysis there remains a frustratingly eclectic range of offerings from scholars regarding how best to do so. In short, significant uncertainty remains regarding both whether strategic culture should be used as an analytical tool and, if it is so utilized, how one should go about doing so.

This thesis therefore explores the concept of strategic culture in great detail, both theoretical and empirical. The opening three chapters examine why the more traditional rationalist/materialistic theories should not exclusively dominate strategic analysis, then the various existing strategic cultural offerings are considered and critiqued and, finally, a new conceptual model for strategic cultural analysis is proposed which draws from the hitherto largely neglected psychological and sociological literature. Both of these fields, it is submitted in Chapter 3, have spent more time and effort developing ways of understanding and analyzing culture than the field of IR has to date, and therefore the models and methods debated and developed in these fields should, it is argued, be 'imported' into IR to drive further strategic cultural research. The thesis then moves in the following six chapters to consider Australia's strategic culture. The purpose of this part of the thesis is two-fold: first, it illustrates how the model offered in Chapter 3 works and, by implication, suggests how scholars may go about applying it to other cases. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the latter six chapters explore the twists and turns of Australia's substantive strategic decision-making over the course of the last century or more, thereby explaining how Australia's strategic history can be understood from a cultural perspective.
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Chapter 1

Introduction: Strategic Culture in Context

Scholars have asked 'what good is strategic culture?' for some time now, and the answer remains elusive.¹ This study seeks to provide one in two broad ways, namely, by first exploring and critiquing the concept of strategic culture itself before offering a new way of conceptualising it, after which I illustrate the new model by applying it to the Australian case. I show that a state's perceptions of cultural similarity or difference with other states profoundly affects whether those other states are identified as 'friends' or 'foes,' and that this determination in turn has important implications for how that first state perceives both the source and severity of the strategic threats it faces. I also argue that within each 'strategic culture' a number of 'strategic sub-cultures' exist; each has a different cultural orientation, and so a different idea of which other states are friends or enemies. In this way each sub-culture offers a unique interpretation of 'reality'; these strategic sub-cultural traditions—or cognitive 'schemas'—compete for influence over strategic decision-making. Finally, I suggest that their relative influence waxes and wanes over time, explaining both continuity and change in strategic culture and therefore also in strategic decision-making.

I am not claiming, however, that strategic decision-making 'broadly' put must be approached 'exclusively' culturally. My model is not intended to 'supplant' or replace wholesale the existing theories of strategic decision-making but nor does it relegate strategic culture to the status of a mere 'supplement' to them, to be ignored most of the time and then 'thrown in' ad hoc to save failing theses. The core of my argument is, instead, that attention to the cultural aspects of strategic decision-making promises to reveal quite a lot of useful detail about the nature (and variations between) states' agency, an issue often neglected by traditional IR theories, especially the realist variants of such. I expand on this critique later in this chapter to provide a general justification for the thesis. But I also argue later that traditional IR theories still tell us a great deal about strategic decision-making; about the effects of geography, the balance of power; the efficacy of various technologies and so on. The existing theories are not worthless; they merely neglect the cultural aspects of strategic decision-making. So, when strategic decision-makers

¹ See David Haglund's 'What Good is Strategic Culture?: A Modest Defence of an Immodest Concept,' International Journal 59:3 (Summer 2004), 479–502.
they populate international politics with actors who can be understood in an international social context so with friends and enemies (and plenty of other actors who are essentially irrelevant); or with states that can be trusted and provide a sense of reassurance, while others seem capricious or threatening. So at the core of my argument is the notion that culture gives meaning to material reality.

The purpose of this chapter is to first examine four assumptions that underlie the study before I move to a short critique of existing IR theories concerned with strategic decision-making to explain generally why we should theorise about culture in strategic contexts. I finish the chapter with a very brief exploration of constructivist theory to discuss a few key concepts which inform the study. In the next chapter I critique the existing strategic culture literature and find that it cannot in its present form be of great use in illuminating these under-theorised matters so in this second chapter I provide a more specific justification for the dissertation. In the chapter following that I explain my new strategic cultural approach which I claim on the one hand shines a sharp analytical focus on the more properly cultural aspects of strategic decision-making by explaining what culture does and how we can detect andanalyse these matters, and on the other hand I say it enables us to better appreciate the entire process (i.e. not just the cultural aspects) of strategic decision-making, at least from a cultural perspective I then illustrate my new model or approach by applying it to Australia’s strategic culture in Chapters 5 to 9 but I preview those later chapters in Chapter 5 so as not to confuse the reader.

Four General Assumptions

Each of these four assumptions is of only general importance, yet they all deserve specific discussion now. First, my primary units of analysis are states because these are the most common and important contemporary strategic actors. Because the approach I take is broadly constructivist my model could conceivably be applied to sub-state cultural units like ethnic groups or even entities like the Islamist jihadi movement. Nevertheless, states dominate the strategic field and I focus on them (and on one in particular, Australia). Also, my strategic cultural approach is most readily applicable to understanding democratic states, or at least states with a free and open strategic discourse that can be easily studied and in which strategic subcultures can compete openly for influence over decision-making.
The second assumption is that in this thesis, ‘strategic’ generally refers to grand strategy. This term describes the ‘most political’ aspects of organised violence, those well above the tactical and operational levels in which units and troops actually clash, and even above the level of ‘classic strategy’ which has more properly ‘theatre-of-operations planning’ rather than ‘total national strategy’ connotations. Having said this, while I obviously will discuss broader aspects of foreign policy at times, this study is deliberately focused on the strategic aspects of such; so, the preparations for the threat of or actual use of violence against other strategic entities (most of which are still states).

The third assumption is that this thesis should be constructed in a way that produces analytical theory. I argue in later chapters that strategic culture should be used analytically, to help us understand the outcomes of what are in part normative debates between the various contending strategic sub-cultures. In other words I argue that the strategic sub-cultures themselves contain normative arguments (typically discernable in both explicit and implicit modes) about which other states Australia should be like or which (and why) certain states should be trusted while others should be feared, and that perceptions of cultural difference and similarity play an important part in this process of threat and affinity perception. But my strategic cultural model is designed more to analyse the relative influence of the various sub-cultures over time rather than to identify whether one is best. Of course, many scholars argue that to analytically theorise is to implicitly accept the sovereign state system and thereby, however weakly, normatively commit to it instead of embracing openly emancipatory goals or purposes. Ultimately, however, I dismiss the substantive implication that these sorts of arguments all broadly rest upon, namely, that an international system built on the principle of sovereign statehood always or even mainly has normatively bad effects. I therefore undertake analysis of the international system with few qualms.

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2 Basil Liddel Hart says that grand strategy ‘coordinates and directs the resources of a nation, or a band of nations, towards the attainment of goals defined by fundamental policy.’ See Hart, Strategy (New York: Meridian, 1967), 322.
3 In the Pacific in World War II US strategy was to ‘island-hop’; they would take just a few islands by heavy assault, then build an airfield from which to dominate that part of the Pacific, by-passing and isolating the most fortified Japanese bases (i.e. Rabaul, Truk Atoll) to control the air and sea totally. US grand strategy involved two great thrusts, in concert with allies, converging on the Philippines and designed to cut Japan off from South East Asia and especially the petroleum resources found there.
5 This point is made repeatedly by Barry Buzan, from his early work like People States and Fear (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1983) to his most recent published work; Barry Buzan & Lene Hansen, The Evolution of International Security Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
This study is based on the third analytical-intent assumption and concerns the falsifiability of my new strategic cultural model. Karl Popper established that for a theory to be judged ‘Scientific’ and so broadly analytical it must be falsifiable. As Martin Hollis suggests, deliberately falsifiable theorising adapts to refutation by experience while dogmatic thinking rejects the counter-examples. Most mainstream, policy-oriented IR scholars would accept that to merit being called analytical a theory must be at least capable of falsification. It must be possible, then, to test (counterfactually, or in the future) my substantive claims by showing that there are, or could be, conditions in which an otherwise dominant sub-culture did (or will) not affect strategic decision-making. Later I present evidence from Australia’s strategic discourse to show that multiple sub-cultures have coexisted and competed for influence historically, and that several of these traditions are at least a century old. But I also show that while some of these sub-cultures exist in the discourse, and so could potentially influence strategic decision-making, there is little evidence that these latent sub-cultures exercised much or any influence on Australia’s strategic decision-making. This should raise reader’s confidence that the dominant strategic sub-cultures I identify at various times during the analysis of Australian strategic decision-making do (or actually did) affect strategic decision-making and are (or were) not mere epiphenomenal cultural manifestations of deeper material causes.

Ted Hopf makes falsifiability a crucial criterion of his otherwise interpretivist study of Russian foreign policy behaviour. For example, he explains that there were four different identities or discursive traditions competing in Russia in 1999. However, one, the ‘liberal relativist’ (i.e., akin to ‘critical/postmodern’) had no discernable effect on Russian foreign policy even though it unquestionably existed in the discourse. So, his claim that other identities or discourses affected foreign policy behaviour more was capable of falsification in certain conditions, namely, those in which the liberal-relativist position could become more influential. It is thus possible to

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8 Like strategic planning documents, parliamentary debates, academic scholarship, etc. They will be discussed in Chapter 5.
10 Ibid., 219.
11 The ‘New Western Russia’ preferred emulation of the West while the ‘Liberal Essentialist’ wanted Russia to chart a ‘Slavic’ path; the ‘New Soviet Russia’ identified positively with the Soviets but had only occasional influence. See ibid., chap. 4.
His substantive findings about which identity was dominant were then, in his words, a sort of relative, working truth, that is, claims to validity that I expect to be true only in relation to other interpretive claims, not to some objective reality. The claims to validity are ‘working’ because they operate only in comparison to other claims; they are not the truth, but merely the most plausible account yet offered.\(^\text{12}\)

I adopt a similar approach. Hopf justifies his ontological commitment to focus on discourses/identity more by reference to philosophy or political theory, citing scholars like Ludwig Wittgenstein and Charles Taylor,\(^\text{13}\) while I rely more on new understandings of and approaches to culture that have emerged recently from the fields of psychology and sociology (see Chapter 3). Nevertheless Hopf and I are essentially studying similar things in a non-traditional but still ‘generally’ falsifiable manner.\(^\text{14}\)

**Universalistic Assumptions about Social Theory: My Position**

The basic premise of strategic culture is that culturally different states will behave somewhat differently when facing similar strategic circumstances. This study is therefore predicated on producing *sui generis* and not universally applicable theory, making it more properly a variety of foreign policy analysis\(^\text{15}\) rather than ‘systemic IR theory.’ As I show below many traditional IR theories nevertheless explain, or purport to do so, the strategic behaviour of states as well as the dynamics of the international system. But such theories also typically make certain assumptions about how states make strategic decisions or, in other words, they begin to provide substantive content to the matter of states’ agency. I will also demonstrate below that the traditional IR theories also rest on problematic assumptions about the *universality* of their findings in the sense that they tend to assume just a single standard of rationality. As a result they tend to remain very ‘indeed I would say ‘whitewash’ or obscure cultural distinctiveness which I argue is important. But first I want to briefly explore the question of whether the

\(^{12}\) Ibid., 24.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 23–32.

\(^{14}\) The other main difference is that he studies ‘foreign policy’ writ large; I focus more narrowly on strategic aspects only.

OI will argue that it is not, which should surprise few, but it allows me to argue later that the key failing of many traditional IR theories is that they assume it is.

Hedley Bull argued that a true international system only came into being in the latter half of the nineteenth century\(^\text{16}\) and by the late 1970s he felt that the international system could more properly be called an international society with states bound by a common set of rules,\(^\text{17}\) namely, four basic principles that most contemporary states agreed upon most of the time.\(^\text{18}\) But he also felt that international society was thin and sometimes precarious compared to national societies comprised of individuals who shared similar cultures.\(^\text{19}\)

Much of the reason for this was that the basic rules of the international society were European\(^\text{20}\) and had been imposed upon the rest of the world.\(^\text{21}\) It is certainly arguable that today international society is a little less precarious than it was in Bull’s day, especially given the end of the Cold War. But others argue that storm clouds are gathering,\(^\text{22}\) with most such discussions focusing on the likely implications of the rise of the so-called BRICs–Brazil, Russia, India and China–states that are, in descending order, less and less culturally European or Western.\(^\text{23}\)

What does this say about traditional IR theories? I say again that they essentially theorise as if the world were culturally homogenous because they tend to argue from openly rationalist and materialistic philosophical premises which, I argue, can be problematic for pragmatic or analytical reasons (and for normative ones, although I am less concerned about such in this study). Perhaps when virtually all the important strategic decisions were being made by western statesmen, so for several centuries roughly speaking before the Second World War, this position was defensible. Perhaps it could even be argued that most/all important states’ elites were or are directing their otherwise culturally non-Western states largely in accordance with a Western standard of rationality. Yet both

\(^{16}\) In that by then most of the world and most of its people were ‘linked,’ for many purposes (especially strategic, but also increasingly economically) in a single political system where decisions made in one part (typically Europe) routinely affected most other parts. Bull, The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics (Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1977), 20.
\(^{17}\) Ibid., 13.
\(^{18}\) These were: the preservation of the system itself; the principle of non-interference/sovereignty; general peace, with force useable (legally) only in self-defence; and commitment to pacta sunt servanda (‘agreements must be kept’). See ibid., 16–19.
\(^{19}\) Martin Wight, Systems of States (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977), chap. 1.
\(^{20}\) Bull, Anarchical Society, 40.
tant strategic decisions are not all being made in Western capitals any more, and it is fair to assume that this general trend will continue. As to the latter, this thesis will demonstrate that elites too cannot easily escape their culture – indeed, they may be excellent examples of their culture and this may substantially explain their political success. At a minimum it is problematic to just assume that all strategic decision-makers operate according to Western standards of rationality. I concede that not all traditional IR theories are overtly or strictly materialistic, but they are nevertheless all basically universalist/rationalist. At the core of the relationship between rationalism and materialism is the epistemological assumption that all humans do (or should) many are implicitly prescriptive) interpret objective reality in a single way, namely, rationally. And because this single interpretation can/should be applied to understanding all of reality the primary, occasionally the only, relevant ontological units implicitly become material objects and their measurable properties. This is logical to the extent that non-sentient material objects cannot themselves be enculturated because their properties and functions remain essentially unaltered across time and space. Variations in interpretation of material objects must, it is typically assumed by the unreflective rationalist/materialist mind-set, be the product of enlightened thinking which can/should be corrected.

Many IR scholars working outside the realist/liberal mainstream, however, have noted that the prevalence of these sorts of attitudes in traditional IR approaches means the field has, despite its universalist pretensions, actually been very ethnocentric, being primarily interested in western problems and imbued with western assumptions. Nevertheless, the rationalist/materialist philosophy found its strictest expression in behaviouralism.

24 Classical realism’s ‘factors of power’ include national morale, the quality of diplomacy and even national character (a concept superficially similar to strategic culture). See Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth W. Thompson, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, 6th ed. (New Delhi: Kalyani, 1991), 146–69. George Kennan’s ‘X’ article also blends realpolitik and cultural arguments; ‘The Sources of Soviet Conduct,’ Foreign Affairs 25:4 (1947), 566–82. And liberals in the democratic peace and the neoliberal institutionalist traditions analyse the effect of democratic and other ideas.


argued along Humean lines that the commonsense idea that causal mechanisms exist in the world, producing the regularities we observe, was no more than metaphysical superstition. We see regularities that lead us to posit causal arguments, but we never actually observe causal mechanisms. In IR Morgenthau was soon under sustained attack, while Morton Kaplan and William Riker claimed that scholarly work not based in rigorous statistical analysis or game-theoretical logic (i.e. anything unlike their work) was little more than 'intuitive guesses' or 'wisdom literature'. Behaviouralists sought not just to introduce more rigorous scientific methods to the social sciences but to conclusively establish them as the only criteria for assessing scholarly output. They were especially influential in strategic studies, where system theories, game theory and quantification [were] in the vanguard, showing what could (and should) be done. Structural realism lent itself to quantitative studies of large data sets [while] the fact that no nuclear exchanges took place, and hence did not generate quantifiable data, made game theory seem particularly suited for the development of deterrence theory.

Not everyone agreed. In 1966 Hedley Bull bluntly accused the behaviouralists of arrogance 'conceiving themselves to be the inspired founders of a wholly new science. But behaviouralism largely triumphed during the period from 1950 to 1990; indeed, Chris Brown claims that the so-called second debate initiated by Bull was something of a non-event and more properly a minor skirmish in what was otherwise largely a rout. As we will see in Chapter 2 these debates were kept flickering by, among others, some of the early strategic culture scholars.

32 Buzan and Hansen, Evolution, 90.
33 He asked, for example, whether international politics is a ‘system’ implying mechanical cause/effect dynamics, or a ‘society’ exhibiting characteristics of a community? How can we prove either way if our analysis is strictly materialist? Subjective judgement is unavoidable when ‘coding’ raw data; thus behaviouralists ‘smuggle in’ their own values. See Bull, ‘International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach’, World Politics, 18:3 (1966), 367.
35 The strongest challenge emerged in International Political Economy circles, beginning in the 1970s with various types of neo-Marxist theories (i.e. dependency theory, World Systems Theory and Gramscian-inspired analysis); see Stephen Hobden and Richard Wynn Jones, ‘Marxist Theories of International Relations’, in Baylis, Smith and Owens, Globalization.
But they did not flare up again consistently until the 1990s in the course of attempts to explain how the Cold War ended.  

Human Decision-Making: Contending Philosophies

To continue this discussion of the problems associated with universalising or rationalist/materialist theorising we must consider the rational choice tradition. On the face of it, it seems logical to assume that humans act rationally in the bare sense that they typically follow predictable patterns of behaviour.  

The earliest such models typically assumed agents had at least three universal attributes; fully ordered preferences, complete information and an essentially perfect capacity to process information. Yet sustained critique showed such simple universalising assumptions were deeply flawed empirically and as early as 1956, despite its growing influence in political science, back in economics Herbert Simon was claiming that ‘the classic [rational choice] model of how alternatives are assessed in terms of their consequences is neither descriptive of behaviour nor a good guide in choice situations.’  

By the 1990s many political scientists agreed, with Bryan Jones claiming that ‘people making choices are intendedly rational, they want to be rational, but they cannot always be so.’ Modern rational choice models therefore typically modify the latter two assumptions to reflect the ‘bounded rationality’ of real agents, but nevertheless the simpler and better known ‘thick’ variants of rational choice theory still assign substantive, universal content to the first assumption about human preferences or goals: in other words they commonly assume all humans

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38 Hollis, Philosophy of Social Science, 116.

39 Preferences are quite often incompatible, inconsistent and frustratingly volatile; information is not necessarily readily available (or at least is virtually never ‘perfect’); and few minds work exactly like computers.


41 March, ‘Bounded Rationality,’ 298.

42 I.e. this implies that agents face real time/resource limits on gathering information, or do not have ‘computer-like’ reasoning.
utility functions and perceptions differ widely and people have very different combinations of altruistic and self-interested motives then the construction of explanatory models may be frustrated.⁴⁴ So collectivities, by analogy, are also said to also be self-interested rational utility maximisers seeking more profits (firms), power (states) or votes (parties).⁴⁵ These thick rational choice models, however, have come under increasingly caustic attack⁴⁶ and the strong-universalist varieties are increasingly falling out of scholarly favour.⁴⁷

Some scholars instead pursue segmented universalism⁴⁸ while others prefer only thin variants of rational choice theory (or partial universalism which assume only that agents efficiently employ the means available to pursue their ends, whatever they may be)⁴⁹ As John Ferejohn puts it, unless we substantially enrich the concept of rationality, or supplement it with extra assumptions about human nature, rationality by itself cannot account for the selection of one outcome rather than another.⁵⁰ I prefer these thin-varieties of rational choice theory because they imply that the study of culture is important, perhaps even necessary prior to the application of a rational choice model.⁵¹ Still, I do not want to obscure the fact that states try to act rationally, and succeed to various degrees, when making strategic decisions. I still treat states as agents and while I argue later that cultures offer limited menus of options, or cause certain of these to be preferred over others, decision-makers still make choices between them.

However, while this study is grounded in interpretavist philosophy I am not advocating a strong-interpretavist position. On the other side of the philosophical coin, so to speak, from the universalising rational choice position is the hermeneutic, postmodernist or discursive tradition which in its more strident articulations can approach a cultural relativist or at least a strongly anti-universalising position towards the production of social

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⁴⁵ For an early example see; F.Y. Edgeworth; Mathematical Physics (London: Kegan Paul, 1881), 16.
⁴⁶ Gabriel Almond’s critique is illustrative; on the rear cover of Green & Shapiro’s Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory he claims ‘half a century after its founding and despite its promise … the rational choice school has little to show by way of empirical confirmation of its grand hypotheses. Its proponents have engaged in a shell game of efforts to defend their claims of rigorous science, universal applicability, and superiority to all other explanatory theories.’
⁴⁷ Green and Shapiro discuss scholars like Bueno de Mesquita, Christopher Achen and Duncan Snidal: Pathologies, 24.
⁴⁸ I.e., such studies contain their explanation to limited social domains (i.e. voter turnout, but not actual voting); ibid., 27.
⁴⁹ John Ferejohn, quoted in Green and Shapiro, ‘Rational Choice Theorising,’ 13.
⁵¹ An excellent illustration is Ferejohn’s analysis of voting patterns in early-Stuart England’s parliamentary elections, ibid.
and endlessly varying cultural discourses profoundly affect individual and especially group behavioural patterns I think of actors in Max Weber’s third general form of action whose behaviour is the expression of settled custom simply a dull reaction to accustomed [social] stimuli.53 Likewise, consider Martin Hollis’s bureaucrat: there is, he says some suggestion that, whereas for homo economicus [i.e. cost/benefit-man] to be rational is to calculate, for homo sociologicus [i.e. rule-following man] to be rational is to follow a rule.54 Rational-behaviour-as-rule-following is central to Ludwig Wittgenstein’s philosophy social reality is not out there but instead is tied to our use of language and understanding of social contexts. Peter Winch argues further that all behaviour which is meaningful is eo ipso rule-governed.55 Nevertheless, as Hollis puts it, in summary of his discussion of Wittgenstein and Winch:

All this is very strong stuff. It seems to allow no appeal beyond forms of life, neither to an external reality nor to independent criteria of what is rational to believe or do. That makes it sternly idealistic and sharply relativistic, in that diverse forms of life are self-contained and closed to external criticism. Moreover, human beings appear to feature only as social actors, players of games who do all and only what they take the rules to require of them.56

So, when stated strongly the interpretivist tradition can suggest humans are entrapped by discourses, or usually just one monolithic, dominant discourse or interpretation of reality. Authors favouring this approach are typically critically-inclined and their very critique offers an alternative interpretation. But my point is they portray humans as often needing often quite radical enlightenment (provided by them of course) because most people are, at the moment, deeply but unwittingly affected by discourses which drive them to act violently towards or oppress certain other groups, or to just accept their own degradation. This may explain Michel Foucault’s otherwise intuitively implausible claim that discourses (i.e. non-sentient, abstract entities I public streams of thought) have agency.57 Other traditions accept that ideas can become autogenic (i.e. self replicating) and act like self-fulfilling

53 Quoted in Hollis, Philosophy of Social Science, 149.
54 Ibid., 151.
57 Hollis, Philosophy of Social Science, 157.
58 Hay, Political Analysis, chap. 7.
But for Foucault power is ubiquitous, power produces knowledge and knowledge directly imply one another meaning that history is an endlessly repeated play of domination. So elites largely cannot (as opposed to will not) consciously acknowledge their dominance: they accept it as natural they have no agency, and nor do the masses who also accept the discourse; agency thus resides in the discourse itself, which is everywhere and all pervasive and causes everything (social). But these monolithic approaches to culture and discourse are inherently problematic and unreliable, at least for my analytical purposes, because they are typically not stated falsifiably. So, again, while my study proceeds from a fundamentally interpretivist position it is not of the strong type explored just now but the less normative, more analytical type associated with Ted Hopf and other conventional constructivists work.

Traditional Strategic Theory: The Problem of Agency

Realism, while not as overwhelmingly dominant as in decades past, still looms large over the field of IR, which is why Tim Dunne and Brian Schmidt urge all IR scholars to engage with it. Realism is best understood with reference first to the structural variant associated with Kenneth Waltz (often still called neorealism). Its central claim is that relative power differentials between states determine the structure of international politics, which in turn explains international outcomes. It is deliberately parsimonious and represents a fairly strict behaviouralist approach to IR theorising because it is both overtly rational in the sense that states which fail to respect the laws of the balance of power will be eliminated and explicitly materialistic, assuming there is just one singular objective

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64 Jack Donnelly, Realism in International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 107.
international system, then, is said to be \( \text{conditioned by anarchy} \), and there is only a single interpretation or meaning of such.\(^6\) Of course, many contemporary scholars disagree on this last point. Alexander Wendt, the most well known \( \text{structural-constructivist} \),\(^7\) argues that there can be various interpretations of anarchy\(^8\) while in 1985 Jack Snyder talked of different \( \text{ideal types} \) of security dilemma.\(^9\) And David Rousseau has ambitiously offered a constructivist account tying together all three levels of analysis using computer modelling.\(^\) So, there are other more flexible, admittedly more complex but I think (ironically) more \( \text{realistic} \) models which take the social or cultural aspects of the international system seriously.

More pertinently, there are a profusion of \( \text{realisms} \) seeking to explain the behaviour of states \textit{per se} and not just international systemic dynamics,\(^\) which makes them direct competitors with any strategic cultural model. They flow out of attempts to deal with the explanatory gap\(^\) or indeterminancy\(^\) in Waltz theory arising from the dissonance between his claims that, on the one hand, states are likely to engage in balancing behaviour because they are \( \text{units} \) wishing to survive and on the other his refusal to include variables from the \textit{unit}-level of analysis like \( \text{decision-maker} \) beliefs or other matters of state-agency which are for him more properly the province of \( \text{theory} \) about foreign policy which should be kept conceptually separated from systemic (or structural in his case) IR theory.\(^\) Structural realism adopts this narrow focus to avoid becoming \textit{reductionist},\(^\) making it like \( \text{externalist} \) varieties of rational choice theory\(^\) in which material, structural forces \( \text{push} \) actors in certain directions and those actors are rational only to the extent that it would be irrational for them to resist. Many other realists, however, have

\(^6\) As David Rousseau has put it, ‘Waltz felt that ranking states according to their power or capacity should be rather straightforward.’ See Identifying Threats and Threatening Identities (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 23.
\(^8\) In the sense that he privileges structure over agency in his models; Houghton, ‘Reinvigorating,’ 26.
\(^\) Identifying Threats, chap. 4.
\(^\) See the discussion in Glenn and Howlett, ‘Neorealism,’ 36–9.
\(^\) Waltz, Theory, 72.
\(^\) Ibid., 65.
Understand in greater detail what states do strategically other than merely survive, and in so doing have produced various and competing accounts.

To illustrate, consider how the offensive realists say states are inveterate power-maximisers constantly looking to one-up their opponents\(^80\) while the defensive realists counter that most states, most of the time, are mere security seekers,\(^81\) happy to get by with the minimum power necessary and not particularly aggressive.\(^81\) Another prominent cleavage exists between balancers\(^82\) and bandwagoners,\(^82\) while others note that some states do neither instead they hide\(^83\) from or transcend\(^83\) conflict.\(^83\) But these quite different accounts of states’ agency flow from the same basic premise, that states seek security in a singular, objective, anarchical reality. Unfortunately, Waltz is quite inconsistent on this point; sometimes he sounds like a balancer, sometimes like a bandwagoner\(^84\) although he probably favours the former.\(^85\) In any event he has conceded more recently that the structure of the international system only constrains and does not strictly determine states’ behaviour, which seems to open space for accounts of state agency.\(^86\) Yet, as we saw above, he also specifically ruled out theoretical attention to these matters, or at least attempts to tie the two levels of analysis together coherently.

Stephen Walt, despite clearly remaining a realist,\(^87\) has provided an influential account of alliance dynamics between Middle Eastern states that recognises that strategic decision-making is at least in part affected by cultural perceptions of similarity and difference. Crucially, he contends that states balance against threats, not against power per se. So, the material manifestations of power are not the only variables taken into account\(^88\): ideologies matter too, meaning that states sharing political, cultural and other traits are more likely to become and remain allies.

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\(^84\) See Waltz, *Theory*: on p. 126 he sounds ‘defensive,’ on p. 92 he sounds ‘offensive,’ and on p. 118 he sounds like both (‘states, at a minimum, seek their own preservation and, at a maximum, drive for universal domination’).


\(^87\) On this point, see Rousseau, *Identifying Threats*, 21.

threatening or untrustworthy. The neo-classical realists argue in a similar vein that states do not actually decide to act strategically on the basis of a ‘perfectly objective’ picture of the world. Instead, intervening variables filter data about the relative distribution of power, so that assessments of such informing actual strategic decisions are related to but not directly determined by reality.

Yet while I concede that cultural difference could seem akin to an intervening variable, serious problems of indeterminacy still remain with all the realist assignations of agency, providing a general justification for exploring strategic cultural approaches to strategic decision-making. Jeffrey Legro and Andrew Moravcsik argue that when neoclassical realists resort to institutional analysis they adopt a liberal perspective while attention to ideological distinctiveness implies constructivism. So, while I concede it is wrong to think of different theories as having exclusive rights to the building blocks of international relations, their central claim that realists have addressed anomalies by recasting realism in forms that are theoretically less determinate, less coherent, and less distinctive which easily degenerates into post hoc theorising is a powerful one. Walt, for example, does not really theorise about his ideologies where they came from, how enduring they are, how they affect each other etc. In short, these realist theories smuggle in under-theorised assumptions about states identities in a confused and often arbitrary manner. A further problem is posed by the mere presence of these different versions of realism coexisting and undermining each others’ fundamental philosophical pretensions to universalism; it is always a little unclear how the claims of the rival realisms could be, or what their relationships are to one another.

89 Ibid., 33–40.
92 Friedburg, Weary Titan, 8.
93 Literature that explicitly theorises about culture broadly put is usually ‘tagged’ as constructivist.
94 Brian Rathburn, ‘A Rose by any Other Name: Neoclassical Realism as the Logical and Necessary Extension of Structural Realism,’ Security Studies, 17:2 (2008), 299.
96 Ibid., 8.
98 Rousseau, Identifying Threats, chap. 2.
99 Glenn and Howlett, ‘Neorealism,’ 34.
argue, instead, that we should theorise specifically about state agency from a cultural perspective. This, then, is the most general justification for my study.

One of the few direct realist challenges to the strategic culture tradition from a realist was delivered by Michael Desch. His main argument was that cultural approaches would never supplant realism and that at best they could only be used to supplement it.\textsuperscript{101} He finds culture hard to isolate and operationalize as a variable and complains that cultural theory is fundamentally sui generis and not widely generalisable.\textsuperscript{102} With regard to this latter matter, however, Desch has largely missed the point: strategic cultural theorising is specifically predicated on avoiding the problems associated with unreflective universalising theorising. But in any event he assumes that realism is a largely coherent theory that only needs some occasional cultural tinkering, implying that IR scholars should continue to use culture in an ad hoc manner by throwing it into their accounts to save them when they are failing.\textsuperscript{103}

With regard to Desch’s first claim, that strategic culture cannot be easily operationalized, I agree but I only accept that this is a serious problem from his traditionalist-positivist perspective. I argue in the following two chapters that culture should not be strictly defined and treated as just another variable, only an ideational one, to be assigned a definitive weight and unproblematically operationalized alongside material variables. But this need not rule out analytical attention to the cultural aspects of strategic decision-making. Indeed, one of the implications of my conceptual model is that cultural similarity/difference perceptions should be considered first in any strategic analysis because only when friends/foes are known can meaning be given to the external strategic environment. Desch would surely disagree, perhaps because I see realism and other IR theories as supplementing, or more properly working in tandem with, strategic cultural approaches (see Chapter 3 on this point). For these reasons I dismiss his attempt to pigeonhole cultural approaches to strategic decision-making or confine them to a role as mere ornaments on a realist edifice. A more properly cultural approach has more to offer than this.

**Constructivism: A Philosophical Basis for Strategic Culture**

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 150–5.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 166–9.
of constructivism. This IR tradition has grown quite rapidly recently
and, put most simply, it does not treat the international system as a ‘natural thing’ that occurs independent of human consciousness: it is instead assumed to have arisen out of human choices and interactions. A central insight is that agents and structures are mutually constituted. This can be conceptually mind-boggling yet it means that agents are socialised to accept existing structures but that, effectively simultaneously, those structures require for their existence that most agents generally act in accordance with them despite that humans obviously have some degree of agency. These structures are effectively ‘culture,’ and they vary from time to time and place to place, meaning that any theory about the social world is temporally and spatially contingent. Constructivists also take seriously the insights of the hermeneutic tradition by accepting that ‘reality’ is just a matter of interpretation that can (and does) vary across both time and space. They can be roughly categorised into two general traditions, with the structural constructivists focusing on the intersubjective understandings underpinning the international system. They build ‘middle range’ theory, and the key axis of variance (for want of a better phrase) is primarily temporal because they examine the changing normative basis of the whole system. The second broad constructivist tradition is more unit- or agent-focused, studying the cultural distinctiveness of simultaneously existing states or other identity groups. Strategic culture research is obviously of this second type — the theory produced is even less generalisable than that from structural constructivists (i.e. because there is another axis of variance, space). There is no clear dividing line between these traditions; constructivism has a relatively ‘open ontology’ so some scholars mix

104 Stephen Walt, ‘International Relations: One World, Many Theories,’ Foreign Policy, Special Edition: Frontiers of Knowledge, 110 (Spring 1998), 29–46. In a recent survey, 21 per cent of American IR scholars described themselves as realist, 20 per cent as liberal and 17 per cent as constructivist. Richard Jordan, Daniel Maliniak, Amy Oakes, Susan Peterson, Michael J. Tierney, One Discipline or Many? TRIPS Survey of International Relations Faculty in Ten Countries, The Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations, The College of William and Mary (Feb 2009),

105 Alexander Wendt, Social Theory of International Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), esp. chap. 4.


107 Note that some constructivists consider themselves more ‘critical’: see Buzan and Hansen, Evolution, 194–200.


But common to many studies is the concept of cultural identity and because this plays a role in my strategic cultural model it is important to discuss it briefly.

James Fearon tells us that identity has tended to be used to both describe the characteristics of one’s self (i.e. any identity is X) and to define social categories (i.e. they are Ys). Unfortunately, he also notes that many people assume incorrectly that certain social categories are natural, inevitable and unchanging facts about the social world with pernicious normative effects. But for my analytical purposes the second meaning conveys information about cultural groups in a sort of snapshot: it tells us about rules of membership; the social role typically played by members of certain groups; and the intrinsic type that such members are assumed to be in terms of appearances, behavioural traits, beliefs, attitudes, values, skills (e.g. language), knowledge, opinions, experience [etc]. An identity thus acts like a cognitive short-cut, conveying information in a psychologically digestible package (see Chapter 3). For their part, Alastair Johnston and his collaborators advise scholars to conceptualise identity across two primary dimensions — content and contestation. The first deals with the substance of an identity to which I spoke directly above, while the latter dimension of contestation recognises that identities are not fixed and instead are constructed, in effect, by competition between identity-promoters like Finnemore and Sikkink’s normative entrepreneurs. Brubaker and Cooper argue that the fact of identity contestation means identity should be discarded lest unreflective scholars essentialize particular ones, deepening the oppression of sub-altern groups. I concede that a degree of essentialism is unavoidable when describing a state’s dominant cultural identity, but I proceed anyway being sensitive to the potential for it to change; indeed, the

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110 An excellent example of this done well is David D. Laitin’s Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).
112 The most obvious example is apartheid-era South Africa, where blacks were assumed to be ‘naturally inferior’: ibid., 15.
113 Ibid., 17.
114 I.e. constitutive norms are common values that are ‘held dear’ in a particular community; social purposes provide goals that are collectively pursued; cognitive models intellectually orient individuals and help explain the complex reality they face; and relational comparisons by which one group defines itself ‘negatively’ by noting it is different (and typically superior) to other groups. See Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair I. Johnston and Rose McDermott, ‘Identity as a Variable,’ Perspectives on Politics, 4:4 (December 2006), 696–97.
115 Ibid., 700.
117 Just accepting an ‘identity group’ as an ontological unit for the purposes of analysis may reify or naturalise a dominant identity and marginalise or oppress other sub-altern identities. See Rogers Brubaker and Fredrick Cooper, ‘Beyond Identity,’ Theory and Society 29:1 (2000), 6.
ulted the potential for change is a major plank of my general argument. Ultimately I agree with Johnston et. al. when they say in direct reply to Brubaker and Cooper that we should not be ‘so quick to jettison a generation’ worth of scholarship about identity given that much of it is provocative and valuable.\textsuperscript{118}

Finally, while a central plank of my argument is that traditional strategic theory has been too materialistic, I also do not advocate a radical lurch to the other extreme by arguing that material variables have \textit{no} causal effect independent of the ideas that humans hold about them. It has been observed by Wendt, for example, that there is ‘almost a complete absence of discussion in most postmodern [so my strong-interpretivist] IR scholarship of material forces as independent constraints on state action.’\textsuperscript{119} In effect such scholars argue that in the social sciences an epistemological position whereby reality is ‘ideas all the way down’ is sufficient, perhaps even morally and pragmatically necessary.\textsuperscript{120} I however prefer the position advocated by John Searle who, despite being a professed disciple of Wittgenstein, has also argued that ultimately many ‘brute’ material facts should have ontological priority because much (but certainly not all) of the material world exists independent of what we think about it.\textsuperscript{121}

So, at the heart of my strategic cultural approach is the common constructivist insight that material objects are given \textit{meaning} in social or cultural contexts, but that some material variables have \textit{greater} inherent meaning than others. The phrase ‘a gun in the hand of a friend \textit{means} something different to the gun in the hand of the enemy’\textsuperscript{122} captures this notion nicely because the material object is without \textit{specific} meaning outside of a social context.\textsuperscript{123} Wendt also argues for an ontological position he calls ‘dump materialism.’ To illustrate, consider the gun again: while we cannot know its \textit{specific} meaning without knowing whether a friend or enemy holds it, it is still an object whose purpose is to kill, and so it has some limited but still inherent meaning; contrast it with a situation in which the ‘pre-interpreted factor’ was holding a bouquet of flowers or a water-pistol. This last point needed to be made specifically in the context of this study because while the empirical analysis of Australian strategic culture will be

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\textsuperscript{118} Johnston et al., ‘Identity as a Variable,’ 695.
\textsuperscript{119} Wendt, ‘Anarchy,’ 110.
\textsuperscript{120} See the discussion of Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu and Edmund Husserl in Hopf, Social Construction, 5–6.
\end{flushright}
one brute material fact that stands out above all others as an important influence on strategic decision-making, geography. The fact that Australia is an island (and a big, thinly populated one in the South Western Pacific) is a fact that exists partly independently of what we think about it.\textsuperscript{124}

Conclusion

I have covered a lot in this chapter. But my various intentions were general ones — specifically, I first wanted to explain a few broad assumptions of the study for readers to keep in mind as the dissertation progresses. This led me into a discussion of several philosophical traditions concerned with explaining human decision-making generally and I established that while my study proceeds from a broadly interpretivist perspective it does take state agency in strategic contexts seriously. From there I explored the problems with traditional variants, mainly realist ones, of IR theory about strategic matters to show how poorly they have theorised about this matter of state agency. To the extent I demonstrated this I have established two very general justifications for this study, namely, to both offer a better way of theorising about states’ agency in strategic decision-making contexts and for approaching this problem from an overtly cultural perspective. I then finished with a discussion of constructivism and its general tenets, offering it as a broadly appropriate philosophical perspective from which to carry out strategic cultural analysis. But as the next chapter (which investigates the strategic culture literature) shows, there are problems with existing strategic cultural models, which in turn provides me with a more specific justification for producing the new strategic cultural model which appears in Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{124} Its meaning does change as social changes sweep the globe (e.g., the collapse of the British Empire) or technology advances (e.g., air travel has significantly reduced Australia’s relative isolation). But as ‘brute facts’ go, Australia’s island location is a relatively strong one: if Australia wanted to invade New Zealand, for example, it must have naval and air units capable of crossing the Tasman Sea; it cannot transcend this physical limit no matter how hard it ‘wished.’ In a similar vein, it cannot also ‘drag itself’ into the North Atlantic – its most ‘culturally secure’ region of the globe.
Chapter 2

Strategic Culture in the Literature

In this chapter I explain why existing strategic cultural models remain beset with conceptual problems, and to frame this discussion requires the drawing of a distinction between strategic policy and strategic behaviour. These are both aspects of strategic decision-making, but ‘policy’ suggests a relatively long-term context while ‘behaviour’ is more suggestive of strategic decision-making in the short-term. In particular, sometimes a state’s strategic behaviour is inconsistent with its prevailing strategic policy. Such occurs most commonly when there is a ‘crisis’ demanding an ‘emergency response’ but thereafter sometimes no major policy alterations follow; matters just ‘return to normal’.

We need, therefore, a model to help us understand this phenomenon, and drawing this distinction helps do so. The distinction is not a definitive one: rather, the difference between strategic policy and behaviour is more temporal; the relationship is obviously interdependent since they are both ‘aspects of’ strategic decision-making.¹

This distinction is important because the main problems I identify with existing strategic cultural models are linked to it. Specifically, existing approaches tend to make one of two mistakes about what strategic culture does or causes: it is usually assumed that it causes (or contributes to causing) both strategic policy or behaviour, yet many existing models reveal themselves, upon a closer examination, to be both under- and overdetermined. They are underdetermined in that sometimes strategic behaviour will occur that seems inconsistent with what we are told about that state’s strategic culture, meaning that the theory does not explain that event or instance of strategic behaviour despite ostensibly purporting to. But existing models are also often overdetermined: the way they are explained often suggests, if only implicitly, that a state’s strategic culture causes all of its strategic behaviour; or that strategic culture somehow ‘is’ a state’s historic pattern of strategic decision-making, or all of that state’s strategic

¹ Existing policy guides specific behavioural decisions ‘most’ of the time. But the ‘implications of one’s behaviour’ guides the making of future policy, especially if policy ‘failed badly’. But my point is that sometimes behaviour is ‘somewhat inconsistent’ without causing a major policy rethink, and we need a strategic cultural model that can account for this.
case we are left with the classic problem of a theory that purports to explain everything, meaning in effect that it actually explains nothing.

More specifically, I show that these problems tend to manifest themselves in one of two ways (and in the earliest work often both problems appear). First, existing models commonly assume too much *continuity* in a strategic culture. In many studies it is conceptualised as essentially unchanging over decades, even centuries: or, at a minimum, scholars do not conceptualise or theorise about possibilities for strategic cultural change. This is despite empirical evidence that *strategic policy* does change from time to time so, if strategic culture is said to cause strategic policy, and the latter changes from time to time, then we must be able to account for such in strategic cultural terms too. Second, many studies paint a picture of strategic cultures that are *monolithic* or too *coherent* in the sense of being without internal inconsistencies. This implies that particular instances of *strategic behaviour* will always be consistent with a state’s strategic culture. But, as I noted above, behavioural aberrations do occur and they typically cannot be accounted for by many models (or at least not convincingly).

Put another way, many extant strategic cultural models (where they are even articulated many studies just *throw in* the concept)² are overly deterministic, and occasionally tautological, especially the earliest ones from the first generation of strategic culture scholars. In this chapter I first briefly explore the work of John Keegan, who relies heavily on culture to explain the history of war, before I move to the first generation. I then explore the debate between Alastair Iain Johnston and Colin Gray, the most detailed debate about strategic culture to date, ultimately finding that their models are also flawed (but to different degrees and for different reasons). I then examine several other examples of scholarly work in the strategic culture tradition, noting the best aspects of but also the flaws in each. By the end I will have established why we need a new model of strategic culture, which I explain in Chapter 3.

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² In Chapter 5, I critique a strategic cultural analysis of Australia by Michael Evans to show how he slips from analytical into normative argument; how he sometimes uses it like an independent variable while in other places it appears as a dependent variable; and how he offers three inconsistent definitions. See Michael Evans, *The Tyranny of Dissonance: Australia’s Strategic Culture and Way of War 1901–2005*, Land Warfare Studies Centre Study Papers, no. 306, February 2005.
Keegan begins *A History of Warfare* by explicitly repudiating Clausewitz's classic dictum by saying that *War is not* the continuation of policy by other means. Keegan claims that accepting that it is implies the existence of states, of state interests and rational calculation.... Yet war antedates the state, diplomacy and strategy by many millennia [and] reaches into the most secret places of the human heart, places where the self dissolves rational purpose, where pride reigns, where emotion is paramount, where instinct is king.\(^3\)

Keegan argues that *war embraces much more than politics* it is always an expression of culture, often a determinant of cultural forms, in some societies *war is* the culture itself. He thus provides a very strong formulation of culture's relationship to strategy (or at least to *organised violence*).\(^4\) He examines *war-cultures* like the Venezuelan Yanomamo, whose society revolves around a code of ferocity (*waiteri*). [whereby] Boys are encouraged to be violent from an early age by taking part in ritualized, dangerous games to prepare them for a life of perpetual raiding (typically to steal women). He explores others too, including the Rapa Nui of Easter Island, the Zulus, the Aztecs, the Mamelukes, the Maori and the Samurai, and finds that war-making is often woven so deeply into culture that it becomes its most outstanding and important feature. So, when Clausewitz says war is a continuation of politics, just one *aspect* of public life to be managed rationally, he is describing a *Western* approach to war: the great strategist, therefore, could not escape his own culturally-determined enlightenment worldview.\(^5\)

Keegan's simple thesis that *war = culture* is undeniably attractive. Consider the Spartans: their culture was geared towards war; citizenship was predicated on service as a warrior; and cultural practices like the *krypteia*\(^6\) ritualised organised violence as a sacred duty to state and society. Indeed, Clausewitz himself occasionally, in passages that are typically overlooked, acknowledges the different cultural forms that war has taken in different

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\(^4\) Victor D. Hanson claims that Western preferences for 'attritional' warfare drove technological innovation and eventual global dominance; *Why the West has Won: Carnage and Culture from Salamis to Vietnam* (New York, Faber & Faber, 2001).


\(^6\) Each autumn war was declared on Helots and young Spartans could murder them arbitrarily (as long as no weapons were used in the act). It was both an initiation to manhood and a means of removing troublemakers. See *Ibid.*, 242-43.
For strategic cultural analysis, at least for IR scholars. For one thing he examines the past largely for interest’s sake and his analysis is sweeping, covering a five-millennia-long period, meaning that he investigates many cultures that simply do not exist anymore, at least not as contemporary strategic entities. The strategic culture tradition, by contrast, has been concerned with producing policy-relevant theory: to the extent that strategic culture scholars examine history, they tend to look no further back than a century or so. We should therefore be a little wary of simply applying Keegan’s insight that ‘war is culture’ unproblematically to modern states.

More specifically, most modern cultures are typically not wholly or even primarily predicated on war-making. There are of course modern highly-militarised societies, both contemporary (e.g., North Korea) and in the recent past (e.g., the USSR), but these are isolated examples. The reason seems simple: most modern cultures are not dominated by ‘warrior classes’. This is not to say that warrior classes do not exist: they do, embodied in traditional armed services, and it is also rare for a state to maintain no armed forces. Nevertheless, warrior classes today are usually quite limited in both size and influence compared to, say, what was the case in Spartan, Zulu or Samurai culture. More generally, modern democratic cultures are typically more concerned with creating prosperity and promoting justice than they are with war-making. This suggests that strategic decision-making is just one (albeit often an important) policy consideration among many, implying further that we cannot simply say, as Keegan essentially does, ‘culture fully explains strategy, so cultural difference translates directly into strategic difference.’ IR scholars need a less monolithic model than Keegan’s thick-descriptive one.

‘Proto’-Strategic Culture Literature

The phrase ‘strategic culture’ did not emerge until 1977, but a similar research agenda pre-dated it, usually referred to as the ‘national character studies’ tradition. During the Second World War the US government commissioned

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7 For example Clausewitz notes: ‘Half-educated Tartars, the republics of Antiquity, feudal lords and medieval trading cities, 18th century kings, and finally princes and peoples of the nineteenth century all conduct war in their own way, conduct it differently... and may have quite different aims’; On War, Werner Hahlweg, trans. (Bonn: Dummler, 1980), p. 962
8 The notable exception is Alastair Iain Johnston’s Cultural Realism which I will discuss below and which analyses Chinese history as far back as the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644AD).
9 Only 14 states have no armed forces. All (apart from Haiti and Costa Rica) are ‘micro-states’ like Samoa or the Vatican.
scholars to produce cultural studies of its strategic enemies like Ruth Benedict’s *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Its central thesis was very simple: the Japanese soldier, so skilled and courageous yet also so cruel and pitiless, was a product of the strict punishment routinely inflicted on Japanese children in the home, a society characterized by strong pressure to conform and by absolute deference to authority, and an army that brutally indoctrinated soldiers with semi-mystical, self-sacrificing warrior ethics such as *bushido*. In 1944 Otto Klineberg surveyed this literature, concerned that much of it had been ‘too instinctive, sometimes bordering on racism’. He called for more scientific rigour, to develop a ‘science of national character’ by determining statistically whether certain individual psychological traits (like tendencies towards aggression or paranoia) were present in higher proportions in certain cultures. Yet he also called for study of ‘cultural artefacts’ (plays, movies, novels etc) to determine the degree to which violent symbolism was common in popular culture, asserting that the goal would seem to be not only a *geistwissenschaftliche* understanding of these products, but also a *naturwissenschaftliche* quantitative approach with due attention to sampling and content analysis.

Thus at this early stage we already see a concern for the methodological and philosophical problems associated with studying what was in effect ‘culture’. Yet the behavioural revolution largely put an end to this research agenda, and two articles from 1959 and 1962 illustrate why. The first, by K.E. Boulding, asserted that decision-makers who determine the policies and actions of nations do not respond to the ‘objective’ facts of the situation, whatever that may mean, but to their ‘image’ of the situation. It is what we think the world is like, not what it is really like, that determines our behaviour. He then argues that the ‘national image is essentially a historical image which is often at least a perspective distortion of the truth’. Yet he neglects to investigate the specific content of national images and instead only quantifies in abstract terms the degree of amity/enmity states

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10 *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946). While immensely influential and still commercially successful, it has been heavily criticised because Benedict never visited Japan, read relatively few Japanese texts and based her findings largely on interviews with Japanese Americans, most of whom had also never visited Japan itself. See C. Douglas Lummis, *A New Look at the Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Tokyo: Shohakusha, 1982).
12 Ibid., 154-55.
13 Ibid., 157.
15 Ibid., 122.
examine why they hold these images or what they are substantively, simply noting ‘These questions are difficult, and [I] shall neglect them.’

Ole Holsti arguably came closer to a strategic cultural analysis in 1962 when he investigated how John Foster Dulles’ interpretation of the Soviets was affected by his pre-existing worldview, which acted like a set of lenses through which information concerning the physical and social environment is received [which] orients the individual to his environment, defining it for him and identifying for him its salient characteristics... these are ‘models’ which order for the observer what would otherwise be an unmanageable amount of information.

To determine the content of Dulles’ worldview Holsti carried out a large content analysis of ‘evaluative statements’ about the Soviets made by Dulles, finding his image of them was built on the trinity of atheism, totalitarianism and communism, capped by a deep belief that no enduring social order could be erected on such foundations. Holsti expected to find psychological trends towards interpreting new information in a manner not inconsistent with Dulles’ existing worldview. This was substantially the case. For example, the signing of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955 could have been interpreted as evidence of Soviet good faith, or as a desire to reduce Cold War tension. But for Dulles this was clear evidence of Soviet weakness, and their grudging realization of it; he preserved his pre-existing ‘inherent bad faith’ assumption by ‘interpreting’ the very data which would lead one to change one’s model in such a way as to preserve that model.

Holsti concluded his paper with the following bleak prediction:

These findings have somewhat sobering implications ... suggest[ing] the fallacy of thinking that peaceful settlement of ... international issues is simply a problem of devising ‘good plans.’ Clearly, as long as decision-makers on either side of the Cold War adhere to rigid images of the other party, there is little likelihood that even genuine ‘bids’ to decrease tensions will have the desired effect... Owing to [the Soviets’] image of ‘monopoly capitalism’ they are also pre-conditioned to view the actions of the West within a framework of ‘inherent bad faith’.

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16 He instead constructs a ‘matrix’ to determine what the various levels of amity/enmity mean for global stability: Ibid., 125.
18 The sample included 3,584 statements drawn from 434 documents, such as congressional testimony, press conferences, and speeches Dulles gave. See Ibid., 246–47.
19 This ended the Allied occupation of Austria on the condition that it remain neutral but not join the Warsaw Pact or NATO, effectively leaving it in the Western ‘camp’ in every sense other than in the realm of security policy.
20 Ibid., 250.
This study also approaches a strategic cultural position but does not reach it. Holsti is largely interested in a single, individual decision-maker's psychological disposition, a common approach at the time associated especially with Joseph de Rivera's work, and we have no idea whether Dulles's belief system was common to the State Department, or the Republican Party, or American society more widely. Why did scholars from this era stop short?

The reason seems simple: behaviouralist philosophy dominated IR, so when Boulding called questions about the content of his national images difficult, what he may have meant was that it was difficult to gather reliable statistical evidence about them. Similarly, Holsti's focus on Dulles alone reveals similar concerns: he was able to satisfactorily prove Dulles's worldview statistically using the time-consuming but philosophically acceptable method of quantitative content analysis. But to determine the American worldview (i.e. its strategic culture) would have been prohibitively costly. In 1971 Colin Gray bemoaned the effect of behaviouralism on strategic studies, reserving his harshest criticism for the universal-rational strategic man assumption common to scholars writing for RAND. He called for more attention to specific cultural and historical contexts and criticised the 'whiz kids' like Robert McNamara, noting that 'the methodology and thought processes of theorists have been dominated by inappropriate economic models... [they have] sought science where it was not to be found.' Yet by the 1970s there was little academic interest in anything like the modern concept of strategic culture: opponents of behaviouralism like Gray, who found inspiration in Hedley Bull's critique, were emerging; but they did not yet have a clear, theoretically coherent alternative to offer.

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**Jack Snyder’s ‘Soviet Strategic Man’**

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21 *The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy* (Columbus: Charles Merrill, 1968).

22 Gray claimed that they just kept escalating or 'upping the ante' by deploying more troops or dropping more bombs, failing to properly consider the war of 'hearts and minds' or the historical basis of the intense Vietnamese nationalism they encountered. See Colin Gray, 'What RAND Hath Wrought,' *Foreign Policy* 4 (Autumn 1971), 124. This criticism was accepted as substantially accurate by Robert McNamara thirty years later in Errol Morris's Oscar-winning 2001 documentary, *The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert McNamara* (Sony Picture Classics, 2001).
In the 1970s the US began examining how to avoid uncontrolled nuclear escalation after outright deterrence had failed (i.e., after an initial but limited nuclear exchange had already occurred). But after years of SALT talks it had become abundantly clear that Soviet nuclear strategy was very different. The Soviets relied less on mutual deterrence and instead seriously explored unilateral deterrent options.

This should not be overstated – mutual deterrence was still their most preferred doctrine. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union developed more elaborate strategies designed to actually win a nuclear war. This left the Americans confounded, and Soviet nuclear strategy was likened to a loose gun cannon on a rolling ship. Indeed, in the American view, if the Soviets were fundamentally irrational, then many conclusions drawn from universal-rational game-theory models would have to be revised. So the Pentagon engaged RAND Corp (ironically), which engaged Jack Snyder. He argued that strategic problems are not assessed objectively; they are seen through a perceptual lens provided by the strategic culture and also attacked behaviouralism, while at the heart of his conclusion was the insight that

Soviet and American doctrines have developed in different organizational, historical and political contexts, and in response to different situational and technological constraints. The Soviets and Americans have asked somewhat different questions about the use of nuclear weapons and have developed answers that differ in significant respects.

He then uses the phrase strategic culture: we should look at Soviet nuclear strategy, he suggests,

as a unique strategic culture. Individuals are socialized into a distinctively Soviet mode of strategic thinking. As a result of this socialization process, a set of general beliefs, attitudes and behavioural patterns

24 Soviet renunciation of the ‘inevitability of war’ assumption, hitherto central to orthodox Marxism, had followed the full understanding of nuclear weapons. Ibid., 6.
25 Or to survive in ‘better shape’ by widely distributing gas-masks, deliberately (and inefficiently) dispersing strategic industries, and developing industrial ‘redundancy’ planning (i.e. stockpiles of machinery and minerals, bunkers for skilled personnel, etc).
27 Snyder, ‘Soviet Strategic Culture,’ v.
28 I.e. ‘generalizations about patterns of human interaction are only useful when tied to very specific situational contexts and viewed as cognitive propensities rather than as hard-and-fast rules for behaviour’; Ibid., p. 14.
29 Ibid., v.
The US, he argued, should not be sanguine about the likelihood that the Soviets would abide by American-formulated rules of inter-war restraint. But there were wider implications. He found that Soviet leaders and strategists are not culture-free, preconception-free game theorists. They were not generic strategists who happened to be playing for the Red Team. This meant that abstract, game-theoretical conceptions of American strategy do not represent universal truths. American strategy has been developed in large part by civilian intellectuals. Soviet strategy ... by professional military officers whose natural inclination would be oriented more toward military effectiveness than game-theoretical elegance.

Similar insights were also expressed by Ken Booth in 1979. He prefaced *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* with a quote from Montesquieu, who said if triangles had a god, he would have three sides. This captures nicely the book’s central theme, namely, that most strategists are culture-bound and narrowly rational. In Booth’s view these ethnocentric strategists typically project their own cultural values onto others, but one can only predict the behaviour of a rational man if both observer and observed share the same values, priorities, and logical powers which, he adds, is not an empirically sustainable position in the context of international politics. He notes that to know the enemy has always been a cardinal tenet of strategy which modern IR scholars seduced by behaviouralism ignore. Like Gray, Booth reserves his harshest criticisms for the intellectual imperialism of the RAND mind by which alternative strategic assessments were dismissed as perverse or foolish, no matter how geographically or culturally remote they were from Santa Monica. His intent was primarily critical and he does not conceptualise strategic culture or even use the phrase. Booth’s book, then, is fairly loose in that he offers

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30 Ibid., 4.  
31 Ibid.  
33 Ibid., 65.  
34 Ibid., 37.  
35 He notes that historical/institutional inertia caused defence bureaucracies to fall into path-dependent patterns; the ‘normal state of affairs ... [is for] conventional wisdom’ to be followed unproblematically and change occurs only when an acute crisis precipitates a ‘tipping point’ by forcing an uncomfortable re-evaluation of the prevailing strategic logic. Ibid., 61.
drive further research. Yet the interest of others was piqued, prompting the emergence of what is now known as the first generation of strategic culture scholars.

The First Generation

Most of the first generation was content to examine the differences between the superpowers.37 Among this group was Carnes Lord, whose approach to strategic culture was, I argue, flawed in both the senses that I noted earlier: it is too consistent and too coherent to stand up to analysis of the empirical facts that it purports to explain, so I hold it up as an example of some of the difficulties the first generation scholars, who had not really agreed yet on how to approach the study of strategic culture, faced in trying to grapple with the deceptively simple concept of culture.38

Lord began by saying that a state's strategic culture was a reflection of its political culture. He contrasted the very different strategic style of the ancient Greek democratic/egalitarian polis (i.e. straightforward clashes of hoplite infantry) with the later Byzantine (cunning, duplicitous etc) Greeks who preferred superior naval technology (i.e. Greek fire, diplomatic manoeuvring and strategic deception. He also attacked strict behaviouralism, claiming that we should understand these differences as reflections not merely of changing material circumstances, but also of the social, political and ideological characteristics that are centrally constitutive of a state... [T]he military behaviour of most societies has reflected to a high degree the political culture of those societies.39 His definition of strategic culture reflects this concern with big picture analysis: he claims that fundamental assumptions [about politics etc] ... establish the basic framework for ... military forces and military operations. Strategic culture consists in the traditional practices [i.e. behavioural patterns] and

military force is organized and employed by a society in the service of its political goals."

At this point Lord’s argument is relatively simple: a state’s strategic culture reflects its political culture, and so implicitly all strategic decision-making must be consistent with this. But Lord then launches into a confused explanation of all the ‘factors’ that cause a state’s strategic culture, including a mix of ideational (I) and material (M) variables:

1. Geography (M): differences between maritime/island and landlocked states etc.
2. International relationships (I/M): these are a state’s alliances or hostile relationships, suggesting this variable is ideational. But it also includes the relative place of a power within the relevant international system, ostensibly a material consideration (i.e. structural realists focus on this).
5. Weapons technology (M): includes total technical skills in the population generally.
6. Political culture (I): the basic goals, values, purposes dominating political discourse.

Unfortunately, the reader is left wondering what causes which. Lord essentially asserts that strategic culture is the product or the outcome of political culture interacting with other variables; that it is all state-behaviour of a strategic nature. But this is problematic for several reasons. First, how can strategic culture contain ideas and behaviour if the former, in the guise of political culture (which he defines as wholly ideational) caused the latter? Should strategic culture not just include behaviour, and be an outcome? After all, he claims that a strategic culture is all things strategic – all strategic policy and all strategic behaviour – it is the product (he suggests) of a number of diverse variables.

In short, the way Lord has explained the factors that cause a strategic culture implies that it does not actually do or cause anything: it is nothing more than a description of a state’s strategic history. Indeed, it suggests that the under-theorised aspect of the whole strategic picture is political culture. The causal affects of the other

\[40\] Ibid., 271.
\[41\] Ibid., 272–74.
Here and by other theories, so the ‘missing piece’ must therefore be political culture. But if this is the case, why should we even bother with strategic culture? It seems redundant in that it is just a fuller picture of strategic decision-making over time, one that takes account of a state’s political culture instead of ignoring it like realist theories usually do. We are also left unsure of how political culture interacts with the other material factors: at times he treats it as an independent variable, implicitly discrete and isolatable from other variables and therefore interacting with them to produce strategic culture; while elsewhere he says it is centrally constitutive of a state suggesting a more interpretivist approach. Lord’s argument thus becomes wholly tautological. He is essentially saying that ‘Americans behave like Americans because they are American,’ leaving readers with a tangled understanding of causation.

When strategic culture is not defined clearly and placed in a clear conceptual framework we become hopelessly confused. Yet it is worth illustrating further how problematic this situation can become by examining Lord’s substantive claim that US political culture is and has historically been liberal-democratic and that this feature has caused its strategic culture to be fundamentally defensive. Quite apart from the fact that he then goes on to partially contradict himself by exploring some examples of American offensive strategic behaviour without explaining how these inconsistencies could occur, by testing his broader claim against historical evidence we can appreciate how his sweeping claims and failure to properly explain what strategic culture does (if anything) leads to a naïve and misleading oversimplification of American strategic history. More specifically, because he does not conceptualise discontinuity in strategic culture, so how (or even if) it may change, he has no possibility of explaining the strategic policy changes which have obviously occurred many times in the past two centuries. Because he presents strategic culture monolithically, as containing everything (i.e. all ideas about strategy and all instances of strategic behaviour) then when he says it is fundamentally defensive he implies that it is largely coherent, meaning

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42 Ibid., 273.
43 Ibid., 270.
44 This formulation begs the question of what caused them to be ‘American’ in the first place; but we also do not know if being American causes them to behave in a certain way, or whether behaving in a certain way makes them American.
46 Ibid., 278.
Has US strategic culture always been fundamentally defensive? One can easily find plenty of evidence to contradict Lord’s claim. Only in the narrow context of nineteenth century great power politics, or openly violent interactions with the most powerful foreign states, was US strategic culture at all defensive: after 1789 it avoided (apart from the War of 1812) any major wars against European powers until the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898. Yet at times it was also prepared to engage in quite belligerent ‘gunboat diplomacy’ to stop other great powers’ efforts to penetrate non-Western societies, of which Admiral Perry’s expedition to Japan in the 1850s was the most famous. If this sort of behaviour seems incongruous with Lord’s claim that US strategic culture (i.e. all the instances of its strategic behaviour in his formulation) has been fundamentally defensive, then consider other American strategic endeavours during the 1800s, including relentless continental expansion at the expense of Mexico, a century of tension on the border with British North America (now Canada) in which the Americans were usually the aggressors and, even more tellingly, a series of near-genocidal military campaigns against Native Americans. To this must be added the savage Civil War in the 1860s when the central government ‘reconquered’ the South. During the nineteenth century it seems more accurate to claim that US strategic culture was ‘fundamentally offensive’. At a minimum it showed some ‘quite aggressive traits’.

The situation is less clear-cut during the twentieth century. William Appleman Williams famously argued that after the ‘West was won’ (by the 1890s) America’s expansionist tendencies morphed into overseas expansion, beginning with the Spanish-American war and continuing with the ‘Banana Wars’. Later, liberation leaders like Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana’s first president) argued that during the Cold War the US acted like a ‘neocolonial’ imperialist. Similar claims from contemporary critics like Noam Chomsky or Tariq Ali concerning the US

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48 Involving interventions in a number of small Central American and Caribbean nations in support of US commercial interests; states invaded (sometimes more than once) included Cuba, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Panama.
49 It allegedly ran an ‘informal empire’ through its global alliance system and through its influence over the IMF and World Bank and IMF etc; Neo-Colonialism, The Last Stage of Capitalism (London: Thomson Nelson & Sons, 1965).
We must not ignore, however, the fact that for much of the twentieth century the US enjoyed a staggering relative power advantage over its rivals. Despite this it did not exercise direct control over other lands and peoples. Nor did it rule an alliance with a Soviet-like iron fist: no NATO members were punished as Hungary or Czechoslovakia were; indeed, the US had to simply put up with France’s departure in 1966 and it was continuously troubled by Turkish-Greek relations. Having said this, the US is clearly the most powerful state in the world, with interests in every corner of the globe, the ability to play the indispensable nation on most international issues, and it deploys the most awesome military machine. At a minimum the US sphere of influence extends far wider than it did two centuries ago, hardly what we would expect from a fundamentally defensive strategic culture.

In short, Lord’s approach, and by extension that of most of the other first generation strategic culture scholars, assumes far too much continuity in both political and strategic culture and fails to provide any clear way for us to understand why, how and when a particular strategic culture may change. A more accurate account of US strategic culture should explain the ebbs and flows in strategic policy: it must account for the general absence of overseas adventurism before the 1890s; the spurt of such from then until around 1905; the isolationist period from then until 1941 (broken by 5 or 6 years of Wilsonian idealism); the containment period, followed by détente and the second Cold War of the early 1980s; and on into the New World Order of the 1990s and the post-9/11 Global War on Terror. In other words, Lord cannot account for the waxing and waning of different traditions that have exercised varying degrees of influence over US strategic policy.

Lord’s conceptualisation also fails to capture the incoherence of strategic culture in short-term, strategic-behavioural contexts. By portraying it monolithically, with no contradictory elements, Lord leaves us with an overly deterministic formulation by which all instances of strategic policy or behaviour have to be assumed to be consistent with a state’s strategic culture (or its political culture? It is not clear). But then we cannot explain why, for example, the US was readily prepared to intervene regularly in Latin America in the early twentieth century (suggesting an aggressive strategic culture), while during the same period it refused to enter either of the world wars for several

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defensive strategic culture). Or why it reacted so angrily towards the French and British in the Suez crisis, effectively ending those allies' hopes of restoring their previous influence in the Middle East, but otherwise generally supported the restoration of European colonial rule elsewhere in the first two decades after 1945. My point is not that these aberrations are not explainable—they are, by realist theory, for example52—it instead, Lord's monolithic approach to strategic culture gives us no way of doing so.

So, the seemingly simple concept of strategic culture, when used carelessly, leads to empirical confusion and analytical chaos. What is needed instead is a model that can account for discontinuity in strategic policy and the occasional aberrant instance of strategic behaviour, and the best way to do so, I submit, is to recognise and theorise about how a state's strategic culture changes over time. We should also recognise that a strategic culture is not always perfectly coherent or completely free of inconsistencies. Put simply, we need a model that takes account of domestic competition between contradictory elements in the public sphere: perhaps this explains both phenomena.

For example, it is common for observers to note a Red state/Blue state divide in America,53 implying that two political cultures, reflecting views that differ profoundly on a whole range of policy issues (gun control, abortion, religion in schools, gay marriage, healthcare etc), can coexist within a state's borders.54 There is considerable debate about the extent to which this divide also affects voting on foreign policy issues. While McCormick and Wittkopf found some evidence of foreign policy bipartisanship during the 1950s, they also concluded that thereafter Congress increasingly divided along party or ideological lines on foreign policy matters. Noting that the interwar period had been very partisan too, they concluded that the bipartisanship of the 1950s was probably not the normal state of affairs and had much to do with the strategic hysteria of the Cold-War/Nuclear age creating a sort of artificial conformity55 (no doubt the memory of the traumatically divisive McCarthy period also contributed). More recently Peter Beinart has argued that partisanship in the US foreign policy sphere is painfully normal and that the war on

52 Realist theory would suggest that with respect to the first scenario, the US intervened in Latin America because it had the ability to intervene, but feared taking on much stronger European powers; in the second scenario the Soviets were much more heavily involved in the Middle East than they were in those other parts of the world in the 1950s, making 'Western aggression' in Suez much riskier.

53 This characterisation is a little misleading; the divide is more urban/rural, so states with predominantly rural populations end up being red/Republican and mainly urban states are blue/Democrat. See 'Battlefield America', The Economist, 29 May 2009.


In the world of foreign policy, they think of military threats and suggest coercive, unilateral responses. Democrats see a different world, marked by economic and humanitarian dangers; outsourcing, AIDS, and global poverty. Their favoured responses are multilateral and less militaristic.  

Recognising domestic competition over US strategic decision-making is not a particularly controversial notion amongst historians. Walter A. McDougall, for example, claims that US foreign policy history can be roughly split into two periods (pre- and post-1900) and that during each at least four traditions coexisted and competed for influence. Franz Schurmann’s analysis of the three schools of thought—imperialist, universalist and nationalist—that he says characterised US foreign policy in the mid-twentieth century and which all contributed in various ways to the Vietnam quagmire is a similar approach. And, of course, there has been much talk of the waxing and waning of various traditions in the Australian strategic debates too (see Chapter 5). In Chapter 3 I adopt a similar approach and assume that strategic culture is a singularity which contains competing and inconsistent traditions or strategic sub-cultures whose influence over strategic decision-making rises and falls over time relative to one another. And if we conceptualise strategic culture in this way we can better explain both discontinuity in strategic policy over the long-term and incoherence in strategic behaviour in the short term.

The Second Generation

By the mid-1980s, a more critically-inclined scholarship on strategic culture emerged. For example, Bradley Klein claimed that the first generation had overlooked the possibility that decision-makers could use strategic culture instrumentally, even cynically, to cast particular strategic (in this case nuclear non-proliferation) policies in

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other international actors when in fact they (in this case US decision-makers) were ‘cloaking’ their real, self-interested motives. He says the US justified non-proliferation on the basis that unchecked proliferation would be destabilising, but it really wanted to institutionalize the ‘nuclear umbrella’ to control the states sheltering beneath it. Klein adopted a Gramscian perspective, claiming that certain classes of states dominate public discourse, creating an ‘ideational hegemony,’ and in so doing ‘normalize’ what is actually a self-centred domination of the political process. References by politicians to military traditions, myth, rituals and symbols, he claims, establish ‘widely available orientations to violence and to ways in which states can legitimately use violence against putative interests.’ A strategic culture for Klein, then, is based on the political ideologies of public discourse that help define occasions as worthy of military involvement. Thus a nation’s strategic culture... constrains the range of activities comprising the political economy of domestic society.... And these constraints are interpreted by the public ï and by realists ï as comprising the ‘realities’ the givens, of international relations.

Klein therefore adopts the explicitly normative mission of exposing the ‘cultural hegemony’ through which the US dominates international politics in the non-proliferation context. However, his approach to strategic culture can be considered flawed, mainly because the supposed ‘radical de-linkage’ between the professed strategic culture of a state and its actual strategic decision-making may, to my mind, not be very radical. Instead I suspect that often politicians sincerely believe the justifications that they provide because they have been thoroughly socialised by a particular culture. In short, we should not just assume that political leaders always have cynical or dishonest motives or that such motives are the entire reason that they promote a particular policy.

60 John F. Kennedy’s 1963 warning is the most famous. See George Perkovich, ‘Nuclear Proliferation,’ Foreign Policy, 112:3 (1998), 12-23.
61 According to Klein (‘Hegemony,’ 140-43), the US allegedly wants to secure continued access to its allies’ economies.
63 Klein, ‘Hegemony,’ 134.
64 I am not alone on this point. Constructivists recognise that elites can be ‘users’ of culture and identities, as I will discuss below. But it is also generally accepted that elites are ‘encultured’ beings too, sharing many of the cultural characteristics of their constituents. Indeed, this may partly explain their popularity and success as public figures. Martha Finnemore, National Interests in International Society (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 128–32; Ted Hopf, Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002),37–38.
In my view, Klein takes the concept of strategic culture too far away from its roots as an analytical concept, and the dearth of similar research since the mid-1980s suggests that other scholars have recognized this too. Nevertheless, two matters deserve special mention. The first is his insight that a strategic culture is made up of discourses and is not a pure reaction to the objective strategic circumstances facing states. Klein examines only one such, the official (he says cynical) discourse. But he has, simply by writing his piece (and getting it published), arguably provided an alternative contrary or competing discourse; in Gramscian terms, then, he is creating a counter-hegemonic bloc. The second matter concerns the manner in which policy-makers may use a particular discourse strategically. While I do not accept they are always acting entirely cynically, I concede they do (at least in democracies) take public opinion into account and may promote certain discourses instrumentally, in order to garner electoral support. More recent research building on this point will be discussed below.

The Third Generation

There was an expansion of interest in strategic culture from the mid-1990s onward, and Peter Katzenstein’s The Culture of National Security provides an excellent example. A general implication of this edited collection was that strategic culture should be seen as nested within the broader constructivist research agenda that had recently thrust its way into the IR mainstream. Contemporary strategic cultural work therefore rests on a firmer philosophical basis than first generation literature which was more united by opposition to behaviouralism than by commitment to a common alternative position. Elizabeth Kier’s chapter provides an interesting variation on the strategic culture theme by taking account of domestic competition for influence over strategic decision-making. Asking why France abandoned its traditional offensive strategic doctrine (the cult of the offensive) in 1929, Kier noted that leftist civilian cabinets preferred a predominantly conscript force less likely to stage political coups while the military

65 He argues that non-proliferation should be pursued, but by NGOs and not states; he wants to create a 'counter hegemonic bloc' (an alternative discourse) based around the European Peace Movement. See Klein, ‘Hegemony,’ 143–45.
66 They may not just promote a particular discourse 'purely on its own merits,' but may also be aware that by doing so they will also 'build political capital' for use on other issues, or perhaps successfully 'wedge' their opponents.
68 She investigates 'how the culture of an organization affects organizational behaviour,' claiming that 'the military's organizational culture is not equivalent to the national character... [its] powerful assimilation processes can displace the influence of civilian society.' See Elizabeth Kier, 'Culture and French Military Doctrine before World War II,' in Katzenstein, ed., Culture of National Security, 202–203.
The civilians prevailed and the military was forced to make this ultimately disastrous shift to a defensive strategic doctrine that was centred on the Maginot Line. Crucially, the change arose out of domestic debates pitting two organs of the state with very different ideological commitments against each other and it was not prompted by changes in the relative international distribution of power. Instead:

Making sense of the French defeat [in May/June of 1940] ... requires casting aside traditional theoretical approaches [i.e. realism]. Neither civilians nor the military behaved as hypothesized by structural or functional analyses. Instead, changes in military doctrine are best understood from a cultural perspective.69

The Katzenstein book also includes a chapter by Alastair Iain Johnston.70 We should see Johnston’s entry into the strategic culture debate as an effort to bring order to it because he advocates adopting overt positivism. Specifically, he treats strategic culture like an ideational explanatory variable that causes strategic behaviour. Note also that he is not using a strictly behaviouralist approach — this would exclude the causal effect of ideas — but he nevertheless wants to isolate and measure the causal effect of this strategic-culture-as-ideational-variable entity relative to the contributions made to the eventual outcome (i.e. strategic behaviour) by other more traditional material variables like geography, relative power etc.

Johnston argues that strategic culture is a system of symbols or ideas/beliefs of two general sorts. First, there are basic assumptions about the orderliness of the strategic environment,61 and second, more specific ideas/beliefs at the operational level about which strategic options are the most efficacious for dealing with the threat environment as defined by the central paradigm.62 At this second stage we can, he suggests, discern how strategic culture begins to affect behaviour directly.63 Put another way, Johnston is arguing that usually strategic culture is assessed alongside the other variables by providing goals or purposes towards which the state will work.

69 Ibid., 186–215.
70 Alastair Iain Johnston, ‘Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China,’ in Katzenstein, ed., Culture of National Security. It should be noted that I examine his approach to strategic culture as described in the Katzenstein volume rather than as it appears in his earlier book-length treatment of Chinese strategic culture, Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). The conceptual explanations are essentially the same, but the treatment in Katzenstein is the most recent and concise.
71 I.e. is strategic competition typically zero-sum? Is force generally useful in securing a state’s interests?
73 Ibid., 222–24.
other variables may override a state’s strategic cultural preferences and force it to act contrary to them. He thereby avoids the tautological or deterministic formulations by which a state’s strategic culture *always* caused *all* instances of its strategic policy or behaviour.

His methodology involved identifying formative texts or classics of Chinese military strategy which policy-makers from that culture were or are likely to be familiar with. He carefully coded these texts to identify their central strategic ideas/beliefs, and concluded that two traditions coexist within Chinese strategic culture: one is a *parabellum* or *realist* tradition; the other is a *Confucian/Mencian* tradition closer to a liberal (or even classical *idealistic*) position. Yet, intriguingly, he found the latter tradition typically exercised only very limited influence over strategic decision-making. Instead, it appeared more as an *idealized discourse* suggesting virtue or benevolence in accordance with Confucian traditions (i.e. the culturally dominant Chinese moral or ethical philosophy) while *actual* strategic behaviour has historically been more consistent with the parabellum tradition.

Several aspects of Johnston’s work deserve mention. First, there is a hint of Klein’s assertions that strategic culture is used *strategically* to smoke-screen a state’s real intent by painting its strategic policy or behaviour in a *virtuous* light. I will return to this point below. Second, Johnston’s work suggests that realist theory is *right* in the sense that China’s historic strategic behaviour is consistent with its tenets, yet he maintains that the realist explanation is wrong. In Johnston’s view it is not systemic pressures but the force of Chinese cultural tradition that causes China to behave in a manner only *superficially* consistent with realism. There is in China, he says, a long-term deeply rooted, persistent and relatively consistent set of assumptions about the strategic environment and about the best means for dealing with it. Moreover, these assumptions have a nontrivial influence on grand strategic choice in several different historical periods. These parabellum assumptions have persisted across different state systems in Chinese history from the anarchical Warring States period, to the hierarchical imperial Chinese system, to the increasingly interdependent post-Cold War period.

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74 In China’s case he focuses on the *Seven Military Classics* of which Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War* is the most familiar to westerners; Ralph Sawyer (trans), *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview, 1993).
75 *Comment. Qui desiderat pacum, praeperat bellum* (‘He who desires peace should prepare for war’).
76 Johnston, ‘Cultural Realism,’ 220.
78 Johnston, ‘Cultural Realism,’ 256–57.
So, despite enormous changes in the structure of the international system (and China’s relative power and influence within it) over the last six centuries, the Chinese have consistently acted realists because their strategic culture has been realist. And when they have not done so it is because it was overridden by the more pressing effect of other material variables: after such pressure abated, he argues, the pattern of Chinese strategic policy and behaviour typically reverted readily to its realist-strategic-cultural-type.

I believe Johnston mirrors the first generation’s work by assuming perhaps a little too much strategic cultural continuity. At a minimum his conceptual framework contains no mechanism for explaining with hindsight (let alone predicting) when, why and how a strategic culture changed. But to critique his claims effectively, I would need to demonstrate empirically that Chinese strategic culture has changed since the fourteenth century. I concede that I am not a China specialist (and Johnston is), yet it is at least arguable that China’s strategic decision-making reflected a broadly Marxist interpretation of international politics for a time because its decision-makers were so steeped in Marxist-Leninism(-Maoism). Lenin’s theory of imperialism, for example, rests on negative assumptions about global capitalism: perhaps its influence explains much of China’s strategic policy and behaviour at times?

In 1949 the CCP adopted an ideologically-inspired, explicit lean to one side strategic posture. Subsequently, China stubbornly (and very painfully) resisted much better armed American-led UN forces in Korea in the early 1950s, attempted to bring the Non-Aligned Movement into the anti-capitalist camp at Bandung in 1955, and then began offering substantial support to various Marxist liberation movements after Mao’s 1957 East wind now prevails over the West wind speech. During most of the 1950s, however, someone unaware of the ideological situation may have thought that the Soviets were a greater strategic threat: after all, they had larger, closer land forces and shared a long, historically disputed border with China. Until the late 1950s, however, relations

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79 In Cultural Realism Johnston examined the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) while in his chapter in The Culture of National Security he found that these traditions influenced Mao, meaning they had ‘survived’ into the twentieth century.
83 Mao celebrated what he believed (erroneously as it turned out) was the point at which Soviet raw power had begun to overtake America’s, suggesting the impending victory of communism was at hand. Ibid., 236–43.
...led for reasons that are, admittedly, partly consistent with the parabellum/realist tradition, but much of the Sino-Soviet split was also caused by Chinese perceptions of Soviet ideological revisionism, beginning with Khrushchev’s overtures towards Yugoslavia and acceptance of many roads to socialism (1955), deepening after his denunciation of Stalin (1956) and worsening further after he formally renounced the assumption that the conflict between capitalism and communism was inevitable (1957) leading eventually to the withdrawal of Soviet advisors (and financial support etc) in 1960.

Chinese strategic decision-making during this period, then, seems to have been influenced more by Communist ideology broadly put than by deep, centuries-old cultural-realistic traditions. Indeed, truly realist-like behaviour does not really begin until the pragmatic policy shift towards detente with the US in the early 1970s, after which China began to deliberately balance against the Soviets. The period in which a Marxist strategic sub-culture was dominant was, of course, only a short one of perhaps fifteen years (recall that Mao’s CCP also enjoyed close relations with Stalin’s USSR in the years between 1945 and 1949), and so it constitutes more of an aberration than a significant departure from the Chinese strategic cultural norm. Still, it resulted in some quite important strategic behaviour on China’s part, especially in Korea, and this sort of deviation cannot be easily accounted for in models like Johnston’s.

The reason may be related to his desire to use strategic culture to create positivist, predictive theory. If he conceded that strategic culture was highly changeable then attempts to isolate its effect, to measure its weight relative to other causes, would be compromised — he would be trying to build theory with a variable that is shifting unpredictably. He seems to have been more interested in what I will later call the dominant strategic cultural tradition, the parabellum, and also to some degree in the subordinate strategic sub-culture, the Confucian/Mencian, and less so in other fleetingly influential traditions like Marxism or, delving further back into history for another example, the confused mix of Christian-traditional dogma that drove the Taiping rebels in the mid-nineteenth century. This should not necessarily be seen as a serious failing on Johnston’s part, merely as a preference for a more utilitarian-positivist analysis of the dominant strain of a strategic culture and its influence on strategic

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84 The two communist behemoths engaged in ‘zero-sum competition’ for influence in the Third World, adopted essentially mercantilist policies towards each other, and they heavily militarised their border, occasionally exchanging fire across it.

attention to subordinate or even latent trains of strategic culture provides a more detailed picture of particular states’ strategic decision-making processes.

The other problem I discern in Johnston’s strategic cultural approach is both more pragmatic and more philosophical. His efforts to isolate strategic culture may be difficult to operationalize in practice because it is not clear that we can, indeed that we should, try to assign definitive, quantitative values to ideas or beliefs (i.e. his strategic culture). At a minimum, while it is relatively easy to quantitatively measure material variables (i.e. we can count tanks, or measure the range of a howitzer, etc) it is far from clear whether ideas or beliefs can be definitively assigned weights in a similar, directly-comparable way. A better explanation is that ideas or beliefs do not interact mechanistically with material variables. Instead, they provide meaning to or guide interpretation of the material world, which is not quite the same thing: they cannot be so easily overridden in this formulation because they operate prior to or affect the whole process of the rational consideration of material variables (see Chapter 3 on this point).

On the other hand, Johnston differs from first generation scholars who assumed unproblematically that a strategic culture was internally consistent and coherent. Instead, he is able to explain instances of behaviour that are inconsistent with a state’s prevailing strategic culture (i.e. when its effect was overcome by the force of other variables), and he does identify multiple, potentially competitive traditions or strategic sub-cultures (although I feel he doesn’t go far enough). I build on these basic insights from Johnston’s work below and develop them further in Chapter 3, but for now I move to discussion of the debate over strategic culture that took place between Johnston and Gray about a decade ago now.

The Johnston vs. Gray Debate

The dispute between Johnston and Colin Gray is the central or at least the most prominent and vociferous debate in the strategic culture literature. Its most basic feature is disagreement about how strategic culture should be defined, which itself reflects very different philosophical approaches to how it should be studied. As we saw above, Johnston prefers a wholly ideational definition, deliberately excluding behaviour: this is his dependent variable; the
are just one among other (material) causes of strategic behaviour.\textsuperscript{86} Gray, however, includes both ideas and behaviour in his definition, arguing that strategic culture should be understood contextually, by which he means (broadly) interpretively, as a product of all the variables, both ideational and material, that Johnston is seeking to keep discrete and isolated. Gray is sceptical that strategic culture can be isolated and treated as a variable, and he even warns scholars not to follow Johnston lest they end up in an intellectual wasteland.\textsuperscript{87} He prefers the following definition; strategic culture, he says, comprises the persisting (but not eternal) socially transmitted ideas, attitudes, traditions and habits of mind and preferred methods of operation [i.e. behavioural patterns] that are more or less specific to a particular geographically based security community that has had a necessarily unique historical experience.\textsuperscript{88}

Which definition should be preferred? Gray’s definition of culture is not only closer to a dictionary definition,\textsuperscript{89} but is also closer to that usually preferred by sociologists and anthropologists like Raymond Williams and Clifford Geertz.\textsuperscript{90} After reviewing multiple fields of social science, three cultural psychologists advise other scholars to look at cultures [as] mental representations (and attendant behaviours) that are distributed across individuals in a population... this view focuses on the stabilizing role of cognitive structures and schemas in the production and transmission of ideas (and attendant behaviours) that achieve widespread cultural distribution.\textsuperscript{91} But this does not definitively determine the debate in Gray’s favour: while using academic jargon consistently is commendable, we should also not just arbitrarily close the book on debates. We need to examine Gray’s definition further to determine whether it should be preferred over Johnston’s.

Gray relies upon the etymology of the word context to show that it reflects two similar but slightly different meanings. First, culture is something that surrounds an actor, so is akin to environmental pressures that push actors in certain directions. But context can also, he notes, mean that which

\textsuperscript{86} Johnston, ‘Thinking,’ 46.
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{89} The Oxford English Dictionary defines culture as ‘the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.’
weave together), implying that it exists within an actor, a position closer to an internalist rational choice approach. Ultimately, he says strategic culture should be approached both as a shaping context for behaviour and itself as a constituent of that behaviour. The latter half of Gray’s formulation, then, seems relatively uncontroversial: strategic culture exists as ideas/beliefs which drive strategic policy and behaviour; the domain of strategic behaviour is shaped by the strategic attitudes held in the heads of policy-makers, meaning that at this point there is little difference between him and Johnston.

Yet the claim that strategic culture simultaneously surrounds an actor is more problematic. He seems to suggest that strategic culture includes (or is the product of?) all the various factors that cause strategic decision-making more broadly. This suggests that strategic culture is just short-hand for a description of a state’s historic pattern of strategic decision-making, or all the instances of strategic policy and behaviour, or a description of a state’s strategic history that includes cultural matters. More specifically, Gray claims that the beliefs and behaviours of the human and organisational agents of culture(s) can best be understood with respect to seven non-exclusive categories. He does not go into great detail about what each is in the article under discussion, but in his book Modern Strategy he describes seven dimensions of strategy, and they include what Johnston would consider independent variables, both material (geography, technology, economic size, logistic capability) and ideational (politics, ethics, strategic doctrines). Gray ultimately concludes that strategic culture... [emerges] from the kind of mixed stew of ingredients that Johnston finds, and finds so methodologically frustrating.

So, when stated in this manner, Gray’s formulation seems very close to Lord’s tautological or deterministic approach to strategic culture. Indeed, Gray openly embraces this position, claiming a critic would be correct in observing that if a strategic culture is everywhere it is, in a practically researchable sense, nowhere. He also makes the openly tautological claim that Germans are Germans and ... have certain strategic cultural tendencies... Germans

92 Gray, ‘Strategic Culture as Context,’ 50-51.
93 Ibid., 50.
94 Ibid., 56.
95 Ibid., 67-68.
97 Gray, ‘Strategic Culture as Context,’ 58.
In reply to Johnston’s assertion that he leaves no ‘space’ for non-strategic culture explanations, Gray states: ‘Let us state the methodologically appalling truth that there can be no such conceptual space... The unity of cultural influence and policy action denies the existence of the boundaries needed for the study of cause and effect.’ However, if strategic culture causes everything, indeed ‘everything strategic (i.e. all ideas about and all instances of strategic behaviour) then isn’t it just a mere description of a state’s strategic history? How do we know what it actually causes? Which policies? Which instances of behaviour? It becomes difficult to answer these basic questions.

Although Gray admits that tautologies are unavoidable, on at least one other occasion he does seem to recognise this as a problem and attempts to offer a solution. He does so by exploring Britain’s grand strategic behaviour in the two world wars of the twentieth century. Noting that Britain’s overwhelmingly maritime strategic culture has historically led it to prefer indirect strategies of national defence, such as the use of naval power, he argues that circumstances in the first half of the twentieth century twice ‘obliged’ it to play an uncharacteristically major continental military role by deploying large armies in confrontational and attritional combat (i.e. during the World Wars). In this account, British strategic culture was ‘overridden’. While it does not explain Britain’s strategically extraordinary behaviour, it does explain why after both wars it returned rapidly to its culturally preferred, traditional strategic mode. Unfortunately, this position is logically untenable and inconsistent with his own explanation of what strategic culture ‘is’. As Stuart Poore points out, if strategic culture is context, a product of ‘all the variables, then where did the pressures that forced Britain to act contrary to its strategic culture come from?’ Gray leaves no conceptual space for any such ‘external sources of pressure’ — all possible contenders have already been characterised as part of the ‘strategic-cultural context.’ Johnston, however, is at minimum potentially able to explain such inconsistencies: because he defined strategic culture as a discrete, isolatable variable plenty of conceptual ‘space’ remained for other variables to override it.

98 Ibid., 52.
99 Ibid., 56.
So, with Gray’s formulation we are left with a theory suggesting that sometimes states follow their cultural preferences and at other times they do not but we have no idea when which will occur, or why. His British example is a post hoc attempt to save his formulation by explaining away a serious inconsistency. As Johnston notes, a tautology is a tautology, whether or not it is wrapped in some holistic faux anti-positivism. This is a very serious problem for Gray because, as I have noted, a theory that purports to explain everything actually explains nothing. Gray clings to the notion that strategic culture per se is something that cannot be subjected to any sort of rigorous analysis, no matter how contingent or limited: it is nothing more than a fuller description of a state’s strategic history; we are condemned, he says, to either use it in a tautological and deterministic manner, or not use it at all. I simply don’t agree, and will demonstrate in later chapters that a falsifiable model is possible.

There are two aspects of Gray’s advice to scholars regarding how to study strategic culture which offer greater promise: his definition and his related commitment to interpretivism. Dealing with the former first, I have noted above that by excluding behaviour Johnston had no apparent way of conceptualizing strategic cultural change. Gray, on the other hand, is at least potentially (he does not explore this matter) able to do so because his formulation is generally consistent with the agent/structure debate. With respect to the second positive aspect, while I think Gray is wrong to rule out the possibility of building positivist theory entirely I do agree that a strategic cultural approach should be fundamentally interpretivist; I substantially agree with Poore (who supported Gray on this point too) that strategists and their institutions cannot be acultural and hence will continuously perceive and interpret the material realm culturally. This implies that we should, at least as a first stage of strategic analysis, immerse ourselves in that culture in an effort to see the world through their eyes, after which a second stage of analysis can begin whereby one pulls away to determine the objective implications of the subjective beliefs identified or understood. This is essentially a scientific realist variant of an interpretivist position and it is also broadly consistent with Clifford Geertz’s adaptation of Dilthey’s concept of the hermeneutic circle into a hermeneutic spiral by which

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101 Johnston, ‘Strategic Cultures Revisited,’ 520.
102 Poore, ‘What is the context?’, 282.
subjective understandings can be transformed into objective explanations. But there is more discussion of these matters in Chapter 3: now I will begin considering some promising approaches to strategic culture produced by scholars in the last decade or so.

Conceptualising Strategic Cultural Continuity and Change

Although Thomas Berger does not use the phrase ‘strategic culture’ in his contribution to the Katzenstein volume, his work should still be categorized as part of this research agenda. Berger’s contribution is notable because it attempts to grapple with the empirical fact that both Japanese and German strategic cultures have been characterised by long periods of remarkable continuity, albeit punctuated by a radical change in the mid-twentieth century caused by their defeats in the Second World War.

In my view, Berger’s work represents an improvement on the conceptualisations of strategic culture considered above: unlike Johnston’s, it can accommodate change; and unlike Gray’s, it is not inherently tautological. Berger concedes that realism adequately explains why West Germany and Japan were compelled to join and stay within the Western alliance from 1945 to 1970 in that their relative weakness and geographical proximity to the Soviet Union largely explain these outcomes. Yet he says realism cannot explain why since about 1970, after which both states’ economies had fully recovered from the Second World War and were still growing impressively, or even more pertinently after the Soviet Union collapsed after 1991, they did not begin to chart a more independent strategic path. Berger explains this behaviour – which would be unexpected from a realist perspective – by reference to the existence of relatively unique norms that informed the public discourse or ‘public culture’ of these two states, finding that as a result of their historical experiences and the way in which those experiences were interpreted by domestic political actors, [Germany and Japan] have developed beliefs and values

104 Dilthey said scholars should immerse themselves in an alien culture to understand it before then ‘pulling away’ to draw more objective conclusions about the behavioural implications of those subjective beliefs. Clifford Geertz’s advice is to repeat this process many times, enabling the scholar to keep refining his theories (hence the ‘spiral’: it goes ‘back and forth’ and also moves ‘forward/up’); ‘From the Native’s Point of View: On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding’, Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, vol. 28:1 (1974), 43–45.


106 To do otherwise would have left them susceptible to conquest by the Soviets (or in Japan’s case, China too), and access to American capital and markets was quite obviously the most effective way to rebuild their economies.
the use of military force.\textsuperscript{107} In effect, then, Berger is arguing that since 1945, their strategic cultures have been essentially pacifist or at minimum strongly disposed towards multilateral, nonviolent solutions to their strategic problems.

Berger focused on the observed \textit{continuity} of strategic culture in post-Second World War Germany and Japan. But when he touches on how \textit{changes} in strategic culture occur he concludes that most Germans and Japanese, after the best part of a decade of very heated debate in the 1950s, largely accepted that their pre-Second World War strategic cultures had not worked indeed, most people determined that they had failed catastrophically, causing both states to recklessly initiate hostilities that led ultimately to heavy, traumatic defeats. Stefano Guzzini has argued that a key constructivist insight is that humans do not behave in strict compliance with \textit{timeless laws.\textsuperscript{108}} Rather, humans are \textit{reflective} creatures who can recall the ideas/beliefs that motivated their past behaviour and, if the consequences of such were \textit{bad}, then they are capable of exercising their agency to consciously abandon such ideas/beliefs, replacing them with others that they expect (or hope) will \textit{work} in future.\textsuperscript{108} Berger agrees, noting that \textit{cultures} are not static entities immune to social, economic and political forces. \textit{[They] are under constant pressure from both external developments and internal contradictions.\textsuperscript{109}} If a culture totally fails to meet the expectations of its members, large-scale defections to other cultural systems are likely.\textsuperscript{109}

Berger developed these ideas in a 1998 book,\textsuperscript{110} which argued that cultural beliefs and attitudes towards foreign policy act like Snyder's \textit{perceptual lens} by shaping perceptions of events and informing standard societal responses to environmental pressures. Berger concluded that \textit{cultures} enjoy a certain degree of autonomy and are not merely subjective reflections of concrete \textit{objective} reality.\textit{Yet, again, he acknowledges that cultures occasionally change in response to \textit{environmental signals}, as did the German and Japanese cultures, meaning that they are also \textit{not} fully autonomous entities sealed off from the effect of environmental pressures.\textsuperscript{111} Nevertheless, he also argued that most strategic cultures (or his norms about strategic matters\textsuperscript{11} he still wasn't using the phrase

\textsuperscript{107} Berger, ‘Norms,’ 318.
\textsuperscript{109} Berger, ‘Norms,’ 326.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 9.
strategic culture) tend to demonstrate relative continuity for two reasons. First, cultural attitudes are widely shared and alternative sets of ideas are relatively few and enjoy little support. ... thus limiting the possibility that a given political culture might be ... supplanted. Second, the evaluative and affective components of norms/culture are difficult to definitively disconfirm while, finally, psychological tendencies towards consistency seeking lead policy-makers to readily assimilate data that is consistent with their pre-existing worldview while inconsistent data is ignored, rejected or distorted (i.e. as John Foster Dulles did). Berger concludes that if a shock to a cultural system is strong enough, as the Second World War was for both Germany and Japan, then substantial and rapid cultural change is possible — otherwise cultures tend to only change slowly. So, he begins to offer theoretical explanations for both strategic cultural continuity and change.

Jeffrey Legro has also investigated why certain foreign policy ideas or beliefs become sticky and resistant to change. He concedes that a serious exogenous shock may dethrone them, citing Berger approvingly. But Legro also notes that sometimes particular ideas/beliefs continue to persist even when careful, properly rational analysis should reveal their failings. He found that a subtle psychological process was at work whereby humans typically accept the accuracy of collectively held ideas/beliefs until they fail catastrophically. He says;

When events generate consequences ... that deviate from their collective expectations and the consequences are starkly undesirable ... change becomes more likely. ... There is a difference between unexpected failure and unexpected success. Both ... involve unfulfilled expectations, but in the former case cognitive reflection is more likely. People are more sensitive to losing something they expected to have than to gaining something they did not expect to have.

Legro concludes that in three out of the four general scenarios he considers strong incentives to change ideas/beliefs are typically not present despite that a purely rational actor should, logically speaking, discard the relevant failed idea/belief in two of those four. In short, he is able to offer theoretical reasons for why cultures tend towards continuity without ruling out the possibility of change entirely.

112 Ibid., 24.
114 Ibid., 420.
115 Ibid., 426–29.
So, these two scholars explain how and why a strategic culture might change. Yet in terms of the strategic policy/behaviour distinction I drew earlier they are only dealing with the strategic policy or longer-term causal effect of strategic culture. So, it is arguable that their formulations still remain flawed in two senses: first, we may know that an idea or belief is failing and is likely to be replaced but we still do not have a clear picture of what will take its place; neither spend much time attending to subordinate traditions within a state’s strategic culture which could step into the breach, so to speak (although such are nevertheless implicit in their approaches). Second, their formulations remain a little deterministic in a short-term, strategic-behavioural context because they can really account for a single or just a few aberrant instances of strategic behaviour but which do not cause the collapse of the dominant idea. Again, Berger almost reaches this position, acknowledging the existence of alternative traditions in addition to the dominant one may coexist, but then he says that they enjoy little support within society, and Legro recognises alternative traditions too but expects that the dominant one will often be quite sticky. Discussion now turns to two scholars, Jeffrey Lantis and Beatrice Hauser, whose work has begun to explore the manner in which alternative traditions coexist within a strategic culture.

**Heuser and Lantis: Alternative Traditions within a Strategic Culture**

Beatrice Hauser examined differences in Cold War-era British, French and German strategic nuclear policy. She found each saw their external strategic environment in similar terms—the Soviets were the enemy, and they worried about the reliability of American strategic guarantees but despite these similar structural pressures their nuclear-weapons policy responses were nevertheless very different. We should understand these differences in outcome, she says, as a product of their quite different strategic cultures. Her analysis is quite straightforward: she concludes that different domestic cultures cause different strategic responses to similar strategic threats. But two aspects of her article merit further attention.

The first is her notion of strategic belief-clusters. She notes that the occasions are rare when completely coherent ideologies or beliefs systems dominate strategic policy-making, and that in the open, democratic political

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coherent belief-clusters predominate because inevitably ... elements of the predominating culture will have their critics, so that a culture can be seen as containing within itself several cultures. So, a typical belief cluster contains

several half-digested ideologies, traditions, folklore, parental dicta, bits read here and there, persuasive soundbites generated by propaganda.... Such belief-clusters are rarely logically coherent, nor are they universally shared by all members of the group, let alone a country. However, in many contexts a culture can be clearly identified by a belief cluster common to most of its members, which overall distinguish them from other groups.117

In all the states she examined an alternative strategic tradition, dedicated to achieving complete nuclear disarmament, also coexisted in the public discourse. Crucially, its proponents were able on a few (admittedly rare) occasions to influence policy-makers enough to alter strategic-nuclear policy in certain narrow issue-areas, such as the location of nuclear-armed bases or the state of missile readiness.118 In other words, the fact that a state’s belief-cluster (in my terms, its strategic culture) is not coherent or consistent may explain occasional inconsistencies with the prevailing pattern of strategic policy not inconsistent enough to justify us finding that the dominant tradition, or strategic sub-culture, had been wholly replaced. The subordinate sub-culture has merely extracted concessions from a dominant one.

Yet Heuser does not confine herself to consideration of the odd instance of inconsistent behaviour; she also claims a dominant strategic sub-culture can be wholly replaced by another in a long-term policy context. She illustrates with reference to Pakistan, noting that at least three strategic sub-cultures coexist uneasily together within the borders of that state. One is close to that of Western liberal culture and is mainly found in business, political and academic elites educated in Western traditions. Another is fiercely nationalistic, deeply suspicious of India (and of ex-colonial Western powers, but less so) and it is strongest in the army and other security institutions. While Heuser does not specify the relationship between the two, the Pakistani state has traditionally been dominated by (typically uneasy) compromises between these two sub-cultures despite that at times one has been more prominent

117 Ibid., 77; emphasis in original.  
118 Ibid., p. 84.
antagonistic sub-cultures allied is common fear of the third sub-
culture which manifests itself, broadly speaking, as Islamism. This worldview differs substantially from the others

do the point of basing arguments on the assumption of an afterlife. and Heuser then asks:

How unlikely or likely is it that [the other strategic sub-cultures] will be replaced by religious fanatics I not madmen, but people whose confidence in their religion and its teaching about an afterlife determines their attitude towards risk-taking and potentially sacrificing lives, their own and countless others, in this world?119

Two general points also emerge from Heuser's work. First, a state's strategic culture may not reflect the absolute dominance of a single, coherent, consistent worldview or ideology. Instead, it may actually reflect compromises between competing strategic sub-cultures or traditions. Second, there is always a possibility that a group whose worldview (i.e. their strategic sub-culture) differs markedly from that of the now-dominant group (or alliance between two groups in Pakistan's case) meaning there are competing traditions waiting in the wings waiting to capture the state so to speak.

Jeffrey Lantis' work shares some similarities with Heuser's. It examines how German elites used strategic culture strategically or instrumentally when determining how to respond to the various crises in the Balkans, with particular emphasis on the Kosovo War in 1999.120 He argued that the left-leaning government a coalition between Die Grüne (the Greens) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) found itself caught on the horns of a dilemma in 1999 because a country with interpretive codes of support for democracy and an aversion to the use of military force faces a strategic cultural dilemma when confronted by a challenge to democracy that necessitates a military response.121 As it became clearer an absolutist aversion to the use of force was deeply flawed in the Bosnian context, figures like Gerhard Schroder (SPD) and Joschka Fischer (Greens), formerly committed pacifists, were increasingly uneasy with these contradictions. The outcome of the debates was that the German Luftwaffe engaged in offensive military operations, alongside its NATO allies, for the first time since the end of the Second World War.

119 Ibid., 94.
121 Ibid., 39.
Lantis concedes that radical strategic-cultural changes will usually be precipitated by a catastrophe (such as the Second World War) yet he also claimed that German strategic culture still changed fairly rapidly in the course of the debates about the Kosovo operation (even though this ‘troubling’ crisis was not even remotely similar to the horrendous shock delivered by the utter defeat and devastation Germany suffered in the Second World War). He concluded that ‘the evolution of strategic culture may be more abrupt, less difficult and more prevalent than traditional scholarly orientations would allow’ because leaders negotiated a ‘new reality’ relatively easily. In other words, the Germans rapidly negotiated a compromise between the ‘pacifist/defensive’ strategic sub-culture that had been dominant during the Cold War with the more ‘activist’ strategic sub-culture (associated with former Chancellor Helmut Kohl) which urged the adoption of a more ‘normal’ strategic posture. But Germany did not revert overnight back into a ‘rapacious conquest-state’ it adamantly refused to even contemplate sending ground forces into battle, meaning that the strategic cultural change was not completely unrelated to external pressures because a ‘continuing crisis in the Balkans’ created the conditions for change, but it was mediated through compromises between pre-existing strategic sub-cultures which were promoted by domestic institutions committed to particular conceptions of how Germany should behave strategically. The Germans did not make a new strategic culture ‘from scratch’. Instead, strategic cultural dilemmas define new directions for foreign policy and demand the reconstruction of embedded historical narratives. In the spirit of paradigmatic shifts, these changes take time and energy for common acceptance, but they are distinctly new paths. Today … German strategic culture is founded upon an aversion to the unilateral use of significant military force.\textsuperscript{122}

Lantis also concluded that ‘elite behaviour was consistent with the assertion that leaders may be strategic ‘users of culture’ who redefine the limits of the possible in key foreign and security policy discourses. In a later article he argued that

\textsuperscript{122} Lantis, ‘Moral Imperative’; emphasis in original.
ELITES ARE OFTEN THE PURVEYORS OF THE COMMON HISTORICAL NARRATIVE... [THEY] PAY RESPECT TO DEEPLY HELD
CONVictions SUCH AS MULTILATERALISM AND HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY, BUT THE RECORD OF PAST BEHAVIOUR FOR MANY
COUNTRIES SHOWS THAT LEADERS CHOOSE WHEN AND WHERE TO STAKE CLAIMS TO STRATEGIC CULTURAL TRADITIONS.¹²³

This suggests that policy-makers are ‘instrumental users’ of strategic culture, a position first articulated by Klein and
also suggested by Johnston. We therefore need to also be aware that a policy-makers’ support for a particular
strategic sub-culture may not be wholly on the basis of its merits (or their own ‘enculturation’ or immersion in a
state’s culture) but may also be affected by the degree to which they believe that the particular tradition ‘resonates’
with the public. They may even manipulate the public cynically, although Lantis does not suggest that this occurred
to any great extent in the Kosovo debate—it is merely a possibility that cannot be discounted. Interestingly, he also
observed that public opinion played an important ‘limiting’ role, providing a check on what sort of strategic behaviour
was ‘politically possible’, and in particular how German public opinion remained unequivocally against sending
ground forces. This was so initially and remained so even when the quick and easy hoped for Serbian capitulation
did not eventuate because sending ground forces was a ‘defy in the sand’—German politicians could not cross, even
if doing so was necessary to achieve their strategic aims (as it turned out they were not required, but that is not the
point—it looked like they might be for a while). Lantis concluded that

elites consistently viewed public opinion as a condition that might be manipulated through concerted
political action, and they sometimes endeavoured to widen the zone of acceptable German foreign policy
behaviour. Public opinion is best understood as defining the outer limits of acceptability with regard to
breaks from traditional strategic cultural principles.¹²⁴

Two aspects of Lantis’s work are of particular importance. First, he explains how alternative and inconsistent
strategic sub-cultures, associated with and promoted by domestic institutions or political parties, compete against
each other for influence over strategic policy. Changes in the external pressures that act upon a state may therefore
require a ‘change’ in strategic behaviour, but the actual response is mediated through existing ideological/political
traditions with the new strategic culture (or in my terms, the newly dominant strategic-sub-culture) emerging from a

¹²³ Ibid., 7.
¹²⁴ Ibid., 38.
while public opinion can be swayed, it also limits the range of strategic options deemed reasonable or relevant in a technical sense. Certain options (such as deploying the Bundeswehr in Kosovo) are almost unthinkable for strategic-cultural reasons. So politicians who are generally aware of these limits largely limit their advocacy to strategic options that are likely to resonate with the voting public. While Lantis does not articulate the linkage in these terms, in my view he can be interpreted in this way.

Consuelo Cruz also explores the relationship between policy-makers and the public in a similar manner to Lantis. She notes that, short of absolute reliance on crude coercion, all political leaders have to engage in persuasive rhetoric to mobilise support. But they cannot just engage in random rhetoric: they have to demonstrate that their solutions are realistic descriptions of the world in both a substantive sense (i.e. they must be relevant) and a normative sense (i.e. they must also resonate). In this way they are appealing to both the public’s practical competence (i.e. about what it thinks can and can’t be done) and also to its normative commitments (i.e. whether a proposal is right or wrong). Thus, elites situate their struggles within a dominant rhetorical frame, political contests between them engender a collective field of imaginable possibilities, which I define as a restricted array of plausible scenarios of how the world can or cannot be changed and how the future ought to look.... [T]hey redefine the limits of the possible, both descriptively and prescriptively.125

Cruz explains that the boundaries delimiting this acceptable range are not set in cultural stone: rather, she argues that rhetorical struggles can introduce disorientation into the field and, by extension, challenge the dominance of a particular rhetorical frame. Indeed, while leaders commonly (re)cast a particular agenda as the most appropriate to a given collective reality sometimes they seek to (re)cast reality itself. It should be noted, however, that Lantis, reviewing Cruz’s work, argues that the former is much more common. He notes that there is a general consensus in the literature that elites are cognitively predisposed to maintain the status quo. Nevertheless, he concedes that the latter is possible: indeed, this is in part what occurred in late-1990s Germany.

125 Consuelo Cruz, ‘Identity and Persuasion: How Nations Remember Their Pasts and Make their Futures,’ World Politics 52 (April 2000), 277; emphasis in original.
In different ways, then, Heuser and Lantis provide formulations of strategic culture that I consider the best available in the contemporary literature. I now briefly consider several other approaches to conceptualising strategic culture before I conclude the chapter.

**Alternative Contemporary Approaches**

The prominence of the Johnston-Gray debate has prompted several scholars to offer their own formulations of strategic culture. Stuart Poore, as we saw above, argues that the crux of the dispute between Johnston and Gray concerns how much 'conceptual space' there is for competing, non-cultural explanations of strategic behaviour. He suggests that Gray’s approach implies that culture provides an 'interpretive prism through which decision-makers view the strategic landscape'. Moreover, as we saw above, Poore thinks that policy-makers cannot substantially or easily escape the cultural biases and assumptions they acquired in the process of socialisation. Accordingly, he favours Gray’s approach but, as we also saw above, he has also noted problems with it. To remedy them Poore advises scholars to adopt a 'context all the way down' or 'ideas all the way down' approach whereby strategic culture 'continually constitutes and gives meaning to all material factors'.

Yet Poore also says 'if strategy cannot fail to be cultural, then non-cultural or material variables can have no meaning outside of the cultures that condition them. Hence a tautology is inevitable: everything cultural does matter and cannot be disconnected from anything else'. So Poore is applying the sort of assumptions about the social world that underlie what I have earlier called the strong-interpretive tradition of social inquiry. I find this problematic for two reasons apart from its overtly tautological aspect. First, it leaves no space for rump materialism, so in this sense scholars following Poore’s advice may end up confining themselves entirely to discourse analysis, thereby overlooking the effect of important material variables like geography or relative power differentials. Second, and for the reasons explored in Chapter 1, Poore’s formulation also eradicates space for human agency: the logical implication that we must draw from his comments about policy-makers being ‘inevitably encultured’ is that they act

\[127\] Poore, ‘What is the context?’, 280–81.
\[128\] Ibid., 282.
\[129\] Ibid.
Iver B. Neumann and Henrikki Heikka have arguably presented a better approach. They also reject Johnston’s formulation, saying it presupposes behaviour (as something out there) would not itself be a constitutive part of culture, and that it can be studied separately from culture. This assumption is simply not tenable. They generally endorse Gray’s approach and claim that our understanding of strategic culture should reflect the mutually constitutive relationship between agents and structures, however they articulate it differently, arguing that scholars should follow practice theory. This focuses on the dynamic interplay between practices and discourses, introducing an understanding of [cultural] change rather than stasis as the normal state of affairs. I think their approach is better than most, but their claim that cultural change rather than continuity should be accepted as the normal state of affairs is problematic because, first, it flies in the face of Berger and Legro’s work which provided good reasons for expecting that cultural continuity is more common than change. Further, if we accept that cultures are in constant flux, then practical impediments to analysis arise: specifically, we may lose confidence in the freshness of our findings. Finally, there is no explicit recognition in their model that a strategic culture may contain alternative and contradictory sub-cultures that compete for influence, although such are implicit (i.e. there are multiple practices) in their model.

David Haglund, by contrast, does not seek to offer specific instructions to scholars interested in pursuing strategic cultural research. He examines the Johnston-Gray debate more broadly within the classic debate in German philosophy between Verstehen (interpretivist-understanding) versus Erklären (positivist-explanation), positioning Gray and Johnston, respectively, as rough proponents of each. He (cautiously) endorses Gray’s approach, but ultimately plumps for a middle-of-the-road philosophical approach that he says seeks explicative understanding. He also muses that IR scholars may find some of the path-dependent analysis methods developed by historical sociologists useful in the sense that an examination of the past in a careful process tracing manner may reveal

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131 Ibid., 11.
132 Haglund, ‘What Good Is Strategic Culture?’, 487–89.
specific, historically and/or culturally significant aspects of a particular case. But it is Haglund’s final thoughts that provide the most useful seeds for fruitful research. He suggests that the strategic culture tradition should follow the political culture tradition, where scholars have largely abandoned the ‘explanatory variable’ approach to understanding culture that Johnston favoured and instead study ‘symbols’ and ‘political myths’ which act as mechanisms for expressions of feelings or (quoting Michael Walzer) packets of information about the strategic world which ‘tell us more than we can easily repeat.’ He calls this approach ‘strategic culture as cognition,’ and argues that these myths/symbols/images are essentially heuristic, typological or organising devices which, while they may not prove capable of serving as anyone’s independent variable, can still do valuable scientific duty as a specifying, or conditioning element, in explicative understandings of strategy, just as political culture supplies a conditioning element in political choice.

The only mention in the strategic culture literature of the tradition, borrowed from psychology and sociology, by which cultures are conceptualised as ‘sets of collective cognitive schemas’ is made by Forrest E. Morgan. He claims that these schemas (which I discuss at great length in Chapter 3) act like ‘cognitive maps’ buried deep in our subconscious that ‘guide the processing of ... and the retrieval of stored information.’ But because there are typically more than one of these schemas in a particular culture, Morgan’s approach to strategic culture is suggestive of what I will call in Chapter 3 the ‘toolbox’ approach to culture: a culture (including a strategic one) is seen as containing a number of somewhat different and competing schema that define the world and tell us which aspects of it to perceive or notice, how things work, and how we should behave or respond to the strategic situation thus defined. However, Morgan does not explain why decision-makers would prefer one over another, or whether alterations in the relationships between them may occur. Rather, he explains that there are particularly powerful factors which mitigate variations between sub-cultures in strategic contexts, meaning that a powerful ‘rally round the flag’ effect tends to homogenize strategic preferences. The rest of his analysis then

133 Ibid., 499–501.
134 Ibid., 501.
135 Forrest E. Morgan, Compellence and the Strategic Culture of Imperial Japan: Implications for Coercive Diplomacy in the Twenty-First Century (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 22.
136 Ibid., 27–28.
powerful in the Japanese case, and why it led them to discount surrender as a viable option for so long and with such awful consequences.137

Morgan, then, does not account for discontinuity or incoherence in strategic culture; indeed, by the end of the book he is explaining how his findings could be imported into game theoretic models to make them more accurate in ‘compellence’ contexts (i.e. so the stronger strategic actor can ‘understand’ their enemy ‘better’, in this case culturally).138 He is only interested in discussing a dominant strategic sub-culture (or schema, or tradition) and not in theorising about the relationship between it and other subordinate or latent schemas that may have become influential or dominant. In fact he analyses ‘incidentally’ one that did in the form of the Peace Faction which eventually succeeded in convincing the Emperor to surrender;139 but his point was that this always subordinate and often latent strategic sub-culture140 was so comparatively weak that it took extraordinary circumstances (i.e. the dropping of the atomic bombs plus the Soviet entry into the Pacific War) to make it dominant and thereby make the Japanese ‘accept the unacceptable’, namely, unconditional surrender. However, Morgan’s approach suggests important ideas about the role of cognition that inform the model I outline in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

This chapter has established that the concept of strategic culture as it presently stands requires significant reconceptualization. To this end, I have shown that Keegan’s ‘strong’ conception of culture’s relationship with war is mistaken, or at least overly simplistic. I have also explored how the national character studies research agenda withered and died under the behaviouralist onslaught, and shown how the concept of strategic culture re-emerged from Snyder’s work. I then examined the first generation and argued that Lord (and other scholars, to greater and lesser degrees) made the crucial twin errors of assuming too much strategic-cultural continuity and coherence. I also suggested that the second generation was not analytical enough. An examination of Johnston’s conceptualization of

137 Ibid., 211–14.
138 He explores how an overwhelmingly strong actor, like the US was in mid-1945, could use more subtle ‘compellence’ strategies; in short, it would have to first recognise (which he says the US did not in the Second World War) that it was facing an actor who was particularly ‘strategically stubborn’ for cultural reasons. See ibid., chap. 7.
139 Ibid., 185–88; and chap. 6 more generally.
140 He explores how this ‘peace’ schema (very broadly put) always existed, but was consistently ‘beaten’ by the expansionist/militaristic sub-culture, beginning with Japan’s successful defeat of China in 1895. See ibid., chaps. 3, 4 & 5.
largely successfully) to create a falsifiable, non-tautological and less deterministic approach to understanding strategic culture. However, I also argue that his approach was lacking in two aspects: it failed to conceptualise how a strategic culture may change; and it required ‘measurement’ of ideas and beliefs, which I find problematic for philosophical reasons. I then explored the work of his great rival, Colin Gray, and found that his formulation was flawed because he openly embraced a tautological approach as the only possible one. Nevertheless, I did agree with his assertion that scholars should adopt an interpretivist philosophical position as a fundamental starting point for investigating culture. In a related sense, then, I also found that his definition, conflating ideas and behaviour, was also preferable to Johnston’s wholly ideational one. And I will explain in more detail in the next chapter why we should favour this approach to studying culture generally, and strategic culture in particular.

I then explored Berger’s and Legro’s examination of continuity and change in strategic culture, and ultimately determined that their approaches had considerable utility for explaining both continuity and change in strategic cultures. Yet I also felt that they did not explain instances of aberrant strategic behaviour, meaning that they could solve the ‘too much continuity’ problem but not the ‘too coherent’ problem. To resolve this I explored Heuser’s and Lantis’s work. In particular, Heuser’s approach to seeing strategic culture as a ‘belief cluster’ containing multiple, competing, contradictory traditions provided a means of understanding both long-term continuity and change in strategic culture and also provided a way of understanding isolated examples of aberrant strategic behaviour, although this aspect of her work was not very clearly articulated. Lantis, however, explored how strategic sub-cultures are tied to domestic institutions which compete for influence over strategic decision-making, and he also provides us with a sense of how public opinion limits the range of strategic options deemed ‘reasonable’. I finished with a quick examination of several recent attempts to contribute to the Johnston versus Gray debate, and concluded that both Haglund and Morgan offered ideas that contained useful seeds for the development of a new model for strategic culture, which is offered in the next chapter.
Chapter 3

A New Conceptual Model for Strategic Culture

In this chapter I offer a new model for strategic cultural studies. First, I examine recent literature probing the relationship between culture and human cognition and behaviour from the fields of psychology and sociology, examining the "collective cognitive schemas" that shape our thinking about all social matters, including strategic ones. I argue that collective cognitive (strategic) schemas are analogous to the competing "foreign policy traditions" discussed in Chapter 2 which influence strategic decision-making. I move on to show why strategic cultural studies should be approached from an interpretivist philosophical position, and then I define strategic culture to include both ideas and behaviours, explaining why we should favour this over the more mechanical "explanatory variable" approach. In particular, I argue that contemporary sociologists have largely abandoned the latter approach to understanding culture, and they tend to accept the findings of the psychologists who urge that we think of schemas as "pre-packaged cognitive shortcuts" that define social situations, explain what (or who) causes which and suggest appropriate behavioural responses. This discussion leads to a "macro" explanation of strategic culture which explains the dynamics between the sub-cultures and within a single strategic culture: so, which sub-culture is dominant, which others may be subordinate but still influential, which are latent and therefore largely ineffectual etc. In this way the macro explanation explains both how strategic policy changes over time as various sub-cultures rise and fall in influence relative to one another, while it can also account for occasional aberrant instances of strategic behaviour.

Yet this only raises other questions, namely, how does the choice-process occur? Why do strategic decision-makers favour one sub-culture over another to define, explain and react to whatever "strategic situation" in which they may find themselves? How does one sub-culture dethrone another to become dominant in a policy context, or perhaps just become "fleetingly influential" in a behavioural context? To answer such questions I also provide a "micro" explanation of strategic culture by explaining what is occurring within a particular sub-culture.
in strategic analysis generally † the social or cultural aspects of threat perception which is itself the starting point for strategic decision-making. I argue that at the core of every strategic schema is a different cultural orientation, meaning that each sub-culture tends to assume that certain states are natural allies while others are assumed to be likely enemies. This process of populating a state’s external strategic environment with social actors who can be trusted or feared is in large part due to perceptions of cultural similarities and differences between states, and I call this process the friend/foe calculus. Once complete a state has an idea who its allies and enemies are, who it can work with and who it should be wary of (and who it can ignore). In other words, the cultural orientation has given meaning to that state’s external strategic environment. The source and severity of strategic threats can be determined more precisely once one knows whether one’s friends or one’s enemies are close, powerful or advanced† and once these things are known normal strategic planning can begin.

So, for a strategic sub-culture to be chosen by strategic decision-makers it must not just be relevant to a state’s external strategic environment (i.e. it must have some prospect of actually achieving strategic security). Its cultural orientation must also resonate with the state’s dominant cultural identity. The friends and foes the sub-culture identifies, either explicitly or implicitly, must be culturally or intuitively acceptable to the decision-makers and, more remotely, their constituents.2 Otherwise the strategic sub-culture will not even be considered as a candidate to inform or drive strategic decision-making and it will dismissed as crazy or totally contrary to who we are. In this way a whole slew of strategic options that may otherwise be rationally available are culturally unthinkable, like Australia invading New Zealand or replacing the US with China as Australia’s great and powerful friend. These matters are not ignored in the Australian strategic discourse † most scholars would reject either option out of hand, providing a whole range of more or less cultural arguments (i.e. focussing on cultural similarities and differences) when they did so† but such matters are still undertheorized at present.

I will leave the details for later, save for noting that there is only some very tentative, disparate work in IR investigating how cultural or identity-comparisons between states affect threat perceptions and therefore strategic

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† Occasionally another ‘entity’ may take the ‘psychological role of Self/Other’ – this may be an international institution (i.e. the UN) or, perhaps an even more abstract entity like ‘international law’ – but I discuss this specifically at the end of the chapter.

2 Recall that my model is designed to be applied to democratic states.
ition towards the end of this chapter and then move on to discuss how to apply the methodology of discourse analysis to understanding the ebbs and flows of Australian strategic culture over history. But first we must begin, as promised, with the psychological literature to examine the central place that culture now occupies in this field.

The Psychological Literature: Culture and Cognition

It remains common for social scientists to assume a universal standard of rationality and then build theories about the world that typically purport to have universal validity or applicability. Scholars as far back as Herodotus recognised, however, that most humans exhibit inherent ethnocentric bias: they automatically favour the in-group over the out-group; or tend to assume that ‘we’ are better in some way (more holy, more ferocious, more honourable, etc.) or have superior insight into ‘reality’. Modern psychologists now consider an essentially universal psychological propensity for ethnocentrism, the root causes of which have been explored by scholars interested in social identity theory (discussed below).

Another reason for the prevalence of ethnocentrism more particular to modern societies, relates to the development of the modern scientific mind-set. For much of the twentieth century biologists assumed that species generally, including the human, could be best distinguished from one another with reference to differences in behavioural traits rather than just physical appearances, especially if the latter were relatively superficial, like differences in pigmentation or typical facial-features. In other words, it was assumed that human cultural differences were essentially epiphenomenal manifestations which reflected the fact that different cultures had developed in different environments, just as the geographic dispersal of early humans caused skin-colour or nose-shape to diverge. It was therefore assumed that below these superficial cultural differences our thought processes were all essentially similar.

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4 Dogs are the classic example of behavioural similarity despite quite considerable physical differences between breeds. See Ara Norenzayan, Incheol Choi & Kaiping Peng, ‘Perception and Cognition,’ in Kitayama and Cohen, eds., Cultural Psychology, 569.
Yet it is now generally accepted in fields like psychology, sociology, evolutionary anthropology and evolutionary biology that human thought-processes, apart from the very most basic 'animal instincts' (to sleep, eat, procreate etc) vary considerably between cultural groups. One reason for this new consensus is the realisation that modern humans seem to have evolved quite recently, probably around 120,000 years ago. The crucial insight emerges when one fully appreciates how rapid the rate of subsequent social evolution, in the sense of changes in general ways of life of our species, has been in the intervening millennia. Even more astounding is the rate of change since the first farmers sowed the first seeds about 12,000 years ago; humans went from domesticated dogs and flint weapons as high technology to nuclear weapons and men on the moon in the blink of an evolutionary eye. This rapid progress cannot be explained by biological evolution, at least not in the ordinary sense. Instead it can only be explained by the highly developed modern human ability for transmitting cultural knowledge and skills through formal instruction, mimicry and imitation, gossip, folk-lore and, later, communication technologies beginning with writing. These distinctively human attributes mark us apart from all other species, even those very close to us biologically. So, our species biologically evolved a range of higher cognitive functions in the recent evolutionary past and then ran with them, developing ever more complex social organisations, more diverse intellectual pursuits and artistic sensibilities, and achieving steady technological improvement, leaving us where we are today with many and diverse, complex and amazingly productive (and destructive) modern cultures. So, much of our everyday reality, our understandings about what causes which and why other people do what they do, as well as the skills we acquire and the types of behavioural patterns that we fall into have been developed, and then passed down by our forebears as culture; much of the edifice of each and every one of our lives is cultural.

This line of reasoning emphasises that culture profoundly affects our thoughts and behavioural routines, and because cultures provide many of our basic cognitive functions (other than deep-instinctual ones, to eat and sleep for example) also vary along cultural lines. This insight is reinforced by comparisons of early human

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share over 98 per cent of their genes and there is little difference between the cognitive and functional abilities of each until about age 3 (although humans are always a little ahead cognitively before then). But typically a bit before age 3, or whenever the human child begins to talk properly, it races ahead and never lets up. The spurt that really sets us apart cognitively from our closest genetic relatives, then, came from the early development of the ability to interact with others more effectively and efficiently by talking, enabling the human child to begin accessing the vast store of cultural knowledge accumulated over the ages. As reviewers of these studies put it in 2006, unlike other primates human children can and do make use of a richly structured and highly developed cultural context as they grow which channels their innate cognitive capacities in new directions, subsequently altering their behaviour and cognition in profound ways.

So, biologically, we have some improved ‘hardware’ (and it is universal) to better acquire, make and use culture. But experientially, culture is served up to us on a platter during childhood, even force-fed to us in modern education systems, all nicely pre-packaged and refined by the countless generations that came before us. These insights have led many scholars from the fields mentioned above decisively away in recent years from the belief that human cognition is universal. Instead, it is now seen as heavily affected by the culture that the human mind is exposed to at a young age, and beyond. And I must stress that this general consensus has only emerged fairly recently, in the last decade or so. This means that when the main debates about strategic culture were taking place in the second half of the 1990s these findings from the fields which examine culture much more closely than is common in IR were not available or were far more tentative then. Certainly neither Gray nor Johnston so much as mentions the traditions that I explore below. But some scholars (outside IR) have always argued that it was so.

As early as 1916 Wilhelm Wundt was arguing that the higher thought functions were deeply imbued with culture, causing significant variances in reasoning processes to manifest themselves between cultures (his Völkerpsychologie or ‘folk-psychology’ theorem). Then in the 1950s linguistic relativity theory, associated with

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10 Apes go through the same phase too, communicating better with each other, but not to the same extent (i.e. they never actually talk) while other developmental stages like the ability to see or to walk/climb generally occur at similar times and humans do not ‘leap’ forward in these realms; Ara Norenzayan, Alan Schaller and Steve Heine, ‘Evolution and Culture,’ in Mark Schaller, Jeffrey A. Simpson and Douglas T. Kenrick, eds, Evolution and Social Psychology (New York: Psychology Press, 2006).
12 Norenzayan, Schaller and Heine, ‘Evolution and Culture.’
Whorfian hypothesis, contended that the language a person spoke fundamentally affected their cognition and shaped their behavioural patterns accordingly.\textsuperscript{13} The "strong" early versions that held cognition was entirely determined by language were not evidentially supportable, but anthropologists have recently reconsidered this tradition and the general consensus now emerging is that a weaker version is largely accurate, namely, that linguistic differences between cultures cause habitually differentiated ways of thinking because different languages force their speakers to attend to strikingly different aspects of the world.\textsuperscript{14}

So, culture affects our perception, the way our very senses and mind interact, as we will see from the following studies.

Consider that Robertson et al. studied the Berinmo tribe of Papua New Guinea, whose language only has five colour terms outside of green (which can be described in many ways – they lived in a tropical rainforest). The researchers found they performed poorly compared to English-speakers when asked to categorise variously coloured objects despite similar performances in other visual but non-colour categorisation tests. The authors determined that the Berinmo were culturally ill-equipped to notice minor colour differences despite having exactly the same biological visual capacity as English-speakers. In other words their minds, not their eyes, struggled to differentiate subtle gradations of any colour other than green.\textsuperscript{15} Other scholars examining spatial reasoning found that speakers of Indo-European languages (English and Dutch) typically locate objects with reference to relative terms, like "the tree is to the right of the house," while hunter-gatherer peoples as the Yiimithir of Australia and the Tzeltal of Amazonia use cardinal or absolute references, like "the tree is to the west of the house." The researchers first devised tests which favoured cardinal reasoning by showing subjects a picture and asking them to describe the location of various objects – they then rotated the images and told the subjects to describe where is X now. Indo-European-speakers typically had trouble describing the new location of the object while the other groups did not. Yet the former were usually able to switch to a cardinal spatial-frame, especially if prompted (and many subjects did so automatically) enabling them to handle subsequent iterations of the experiment quite well. It was determined that Indo-European

reasoning does exist in their cultures, it is just not as culturally familiar as it was to the non-Indo-European subjects. One reviewer of this concluded that the habitual ways of reasoning are systematically related to the dominant ways of talking about space in a given culture.

This evidence concerns cultural differences with respect to basic perceptive thought patterns. But similar results have been obtained when scholars sought to test the cultural availability of more complex reasoning processes, such as the attribution of causality (i.e. folk epistemology). One famous example was conducted by Alexander Luria: he wanted to measure the effectiveness of Soviet education by testing whether young educated Uzbeks were better at using deductive logic than their uneducated older relatives. He asked young Uzbeks questions like "Bears are white in the far north. Novaya Zemlya is in the far north. What colour are the bears there?" and found they all answered "white" easily. But their parents typically refused to try on the basis that they simply could not be expected to know this, or they gave answers like "Mr X went to Archangel when he was young. He probably saw a bear, so why don't you ask him?" Luria concluded that because Uzbek peasant culture did not contain any tradition of deductive reasoning, and instead virtually all reasoning was based on direct experience (or the unproblematic acceptance of others' so, rumour) such people were culturally ill-equipped to reason about or attribute causality in a deductive-logical form. Some adults, especially the cleverest, could painfully learn deductive reasoning but when researchers returned years later they had lost this ability: no one else in their local village culture did so, suggesting the priming effect being immersed in a culture has on individuals. In other words if you don't use it, you lose it.

There has been an explosion of experimental psychological research recently exploring cognitive differences between East Asians and Westerners (usually Americans). The general consensus is that Asians favour collectivist reasoning while Westerners are typically more individualistic. For example, when subjects were asked to describe themselves Asians favoured group-contextual explanations, like "I am a Fudan University student" or "I am one of four brothers" while Americans preferred individualistic descriptions like "I want to go to university."
or

'I like U2.'

Researchers now agree that, statistically speaking, social harmony really is more culturally valued in Asian societies than frank, honest, direct and confrontational debate. Open confrontation makes Asians less comfortable and more anxious than it does for Westerners. Indeed, Westerners often show the opposite psychological and physiological effects: presumably having had a 'good debate' or 'agreeing to disagree' can thus be comforting to Westerners because it reinforces, by others recognising, one's own individuality.²⁰

Plenty of research has also demonstrated that Asians tend to be more 'contextually-sensitive' than Westerners when interpreting causality, or who did what and why, in ordinary social contexts; the latter, in turn, prefer more analytical modes like logical reasoning from premises. To illustrate, consider that when Americans are asked why they think a person committed a murder they typically cite previous anti-social behaviour and/or internal psychological reasons (like 'he was a psychopath'). Asians, however, are likely to provide more contextual reasons (i.e. the accused was under pressure after he lost his job and his wife left him) and generally refer less to past behaviour as a guide to predicting likely future behaviour: indeed, Asians tend to expect constant flux and circularity rather than 'linear progress.'²¹ Another study found that when subjects were asked to choose the most relevant of 97 pieces of evidence to explain a murder Asian subjects typically discarded significantly less, leading the researchers to conclude that East Asians have holistic assumptions about the universe, dictating that an event or object cannot be understood in isolation from the whole. In contrast, Westerners hold that the universe contains separate objects that can be understood in isolation from each other.²²

Yet East/West cultural-cognitive differences are clearly not absolute: each culture does not always reason in one way, nor is each incapable of reasoning in the other; instead, complex modern cultures like Western or East Asian typically also contain cognitive schemas more commonly found in the other culture, which has important behavioural implications. For example, while Chinese subjects in one experiment tended to prefer contextual

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19 One study found that over 50 per cent of Japanese self-descriptions referred to group-connections while just under 20 per cent of Americans' responses did so; see Hazel R. Markus, Patricia R. Mullally and Shinobu Kitayama, 'Selfways: Diversity in Modes of Cultural Participation,' in Ulric Neisser and David A. Jopling, eds, The Conceptual Self in Context: Culture, Experience and Self-Understanding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

20 For a summary, see; Carl B. Becker, 'Reasons for the Lack of Argumentation and Debate in the Far East,' International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 10:1 (1986), 75–92.


Reasoning, judging that the persons whose opinions were derived by this process were ‘wiser,’ they could still use deductive reasoning when given more historical/internal psychological than current-contextual data.  

Nevertheless, while Japanese can argue with deductive logic, doing so is still less ‘culturally acceptable.’ One anthropologist has argued that in Japan one argues with logical consistency is discouraged, and if one does so continuously one may not only be resented but be regarded as immature, noting that many sub-conscious assumptions about appropriate behavioural patterns are unique to Japanese culture, or at least very different from Western assumptions.

In this last sense, then, culture affects not just our perceptions, our causal attribution processes but also the behavioural patterns that we rely on to make our way in the social world, telling us how we should interact with others and what they expect of us. Culture provides Wittgenstein’s ‘rules of the game’ although of course the rules vary from one issue area to another and may also do so over time. But the immediate point is not philosophical so much as pragmatic: the complex cultures that characterise modern states should not necessarily be differentiated strictly in terms of differences in the content of their culturally-ingrained cognitive processes; this may be possible in a modern versus primitive culture dyad, but it seems that the modern cultures are complex enough to have diverse and overlapping cognitive habits. Perhaps these complex cultures historically valued intellectual inquiry highly and explored all (or most) of the options for reasoning about the world, or perhaps centuries of mutual exposure have facilitated cultural diffusion. Whatever the case may be we should understand cultural differences between modern states largely as ones of degree or preference for or familiarity with one mode of thought or reasoning over others, so as differences in taste for the various items on the menu rather than as reading from different menus, so to speak. Yet as the reader will see later, we need to account for choices between strategic schemas or sub-cultures, for why one would tend to dominate while others generally remain subordinate, and another study provides a hint of how we might do so.

These psychologists wanted to explore the ‘multicultural minds’ of persons exposed to two different cultures when young, on the assumption that subjects would have internalised two sets (i.e. East Asian and Western)
could be triggered, distinguished from one another and examined in an experimental setting. They sampled ethnic-Chinese Hong Kong citizens who had attended English-speaking schools, and second-generation Chinese-Americans in California, dividing subjects into three groups. The control group was primed with culturally ambiguous images (like triangles and squares), the second with Chinese cultural images (e.g. the New Year Dragon, Confucius) and the third with American cultural images (e.g., the Statue of Liberty, Mickey Mouse). After 5–10 minutes of looking at and describing these images they were all shown another picture in which one fish was well ahead of a shoal of the same species of fish, then they were asked to attribute human motivations to all the fish and then explain why the lone fish was out in front. The group primed with Chinese symbols showed a surprisingly significant propensity to attribute collectivist motivations (like ‘it was bad and is being chased away’), the group primed with the American images gave more individualistic explanations (like ‘it was bored’) while the control group showed a very even mix.

The results suggest that within the multicultural minds cultural-causal-attribution biases can be quite easily triggered by simple and seemingly innocuous environmental cues or prompts. A perceptive reader may at this point object, noting that ‘real’ humans can overcome their cultural biases: indeed, we have probably all consciously rejected some of the received cultural assumptions we accepted when young, like negative stereotypes of other groups. But the point is that most of the deep cultural biases that affect our perceptions, causal attributions and behavioural choices are largely triggered subconsciously and affect the entire cognitive process cultural biases affect our thinking before we try to think rationally, shaping the pathways in which we do so and affecting our behaviour too.

This last point has two important implications. First, it provides further justification for approaching strategic culture from an interpretivist position, one in which strategic culture would be defined as including a number of sub-cultures which themselves contain both ideas (both about what to perceive/notice and what caused which) and behavioural patterns on the premise that the two are largely intertwined. In other words, ideas and the

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25 I.e. fish are culturally ambiguous ‘actors’ – they do not trigger latent understandings of the real world like, for example, showing a similar picture of full of eagles or bulldogs (i.e. suggestive of ‘American’ and ‘British’ actors respectively).

tricably in what psychologists and sociologists now call cognitive schemas. So from a cultural-cognitive perspective humans and human collectivities do make choices, but not in a mechanical way whereby ideas/values/beliefs are given and only then do they choose between behavioural options in an objectively rational way. Instead, ideas and behaviours are interconnected: in a cultural-decision-making sense, then, agents choose between the ideas/values/beliefs at the same time as they make behavioural decisions because each informs or is partly constituted by or implies the other.27 What choice there is occurring is between the culturally available schemas, or in the strategic cultural context, between the various sub-cultures which each compete to provide a complete picture or interpretation of strategic reality in which differing values and their attendant varying behavioural patterns are imbued.

The other important implication flowing from the recognition of culture’s deep effect on our cognition is more theoretical than philosophical. The degree to which culture affects our sub-conscious cognitive processes and affects our perceptions, causal attributions, and behavioural patterns confirms my earlier suggestion that the cultural component of strategic decision-making needs to be considered first, as the initial step in any (or perhaps just many) strategic analyses. If multi-cultural minds can be switched from one cultural frame to another so simply, thereby causing significant differences in understandings of the same simple, hypothetical social context (i.e. represented by the fish-picture) we can begin to appreciate the pervasive effect of the constant cultural cues that we see on television, hear in our conversations with others or view on billboards as we drive by, almost every minute of every day. Our cognition is immersed in cultural signals, we are being continuously pre-primed to think through long-established traditions of thought, or cognitive schema, to which I turn now.

**Cognitive Schema – The Building Blocks of Thought**

What do these collective cognitive schemas actually do in the real world of social interactions and relationships? According to Bradd Shore, the accepted position among psychologists now is that they are the building blocks of our understanding of the world and cover literally everything we comprehend, from the more individualistic schemas

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one is a little different but we are still supposed to love and support
them all) to the more obviously collectively-shared beliefs about, say, how global financial markets work. These
schemas subconsciously (and to a degree also consciously) guide what we perceive, tell us how to interpret it and
attribute causality, and provide accepted patterns of behaviour or common sense solutions to ordinary social
problems. Schemas therefore act like cognitive shortcuts: given the mass of information with which we are
confronted, and the complexity of the social world it is now generally accepted that humans do not, indeed cannot,
approach each situation they confront anew, seeking to gather information and build a comprehensive understanding
of it from scratch, so to speak. Instead, John Anderson tells us that we subconsciously categorise objects and
experiences and sort them into cognitive schema to maintain order in our mind so that when a problem or
opportunity confronts us we have a ready-made package (the schema) which can be taken off the cultural shelf and
used, enabling us to infer outcomes quickly from limited data. It must be stressed, however, that each one of us as
individuals does not actually develop many of these schemas ourselves: we typically encounter them as pre-existing
culturally-available categories; so, we use much more culture than we make. And because individuals grow up in
different cultures they tend to acquire (or at least use regularly) different schemas, developing different cultural
skill-sets.

Consider, for example, the everyday restaurant schema. It is common in western cultures to follow a
schema that involves waiting to be seated, ordering something like a salad first, then a larger savoury dish, followed
by sweets and finishing with coffee, after which one pays (and in North America a tip is commonly left). Of course,
we could chose to do things differently if we thought hard enough about it by, for example, by eating dessert first, or
not leaving a tip. But typically we do not depart from the schema, or we only do so consciously when we
deliberately choose to eat at, say, a Lebanese restaurant where (if it is authentic) we will sit on the floor and eat with
our hands from communal dishes..

29 Douglas L. Medin, Sara J. Unsworth and Lawrence Hirschfeld, ‘Culture, Categorisation, and Reasoning,’ in Kitayama and Cohen, eds, Cultural
Psychology, 615–44. This parallels Herbert Simon’s critiques of rational choice theory (see Chapter 1).
31 Obviously some individuals – artists and entertainers, for example – ‘make’ more culture than average. Ibid.; Medin et. al., ‘Culture,
Categorization and Reasoning,’ 630–4.
A more political example is the ‘DWB’ (i.e. ‘driving while black’) schema, which black Americans may use to explain why they are more likely to be pulled over by the police than the average citizen. Obviously this is a controversial and contested example of a collective cognitive schema – police departments in America will typically deny its validity outright – but legal researchers have noted that while this was, before the 1990s, largely an offence known and discussed almost exclusively among African-Americans, DWB has risen from relative obscurity following the publicity that ensured after the black attorney Robert Wilkins successfully sued the Maryland State Troopers in the late-1990s. A recent 2010 study found that, on a single stretch of the New Jersey turnpike, blacks comprised 12% of the drivers and 15% of the ‘speeders’ (i.e. those seemingly most likely to be stopped); however they constituted 35% of those actually stopped and 73% of those arrested, while a similar study conducted in Maryland found that blacks constituted 17% of speeders, 29% of those pulled over and 71% of arrests. Other researchers, after exhaustively surveying all existing studies in 2003, noted that the racial profiling debate has produced more rhetoric than research. But to date the findings support the argument that race influences police behaviour. They point out, however, that women are much less likely to be pulled over or arrested than males of all races, while white males of visibly low socio-economic status are almost as likely to be pulled over as blacks. They concluded that profiling is definitely about race, but is also about sex and social status. Nevertheless, several recent decisions by US courts have been made on the basis that DWB is a real and troubling phenomenon.

Whether or not the DWB schema is always true or false, or whether it is common in America or not, however, is not really the point. What matters for this discussion is that certain groups (i.e. obviously blacks, many Hispanics and an increasing number of whites in the legal profession) accept it as largely accurate and interpret interactions between the alleged ‘target groups’ and the police in accordance with it. This is a politically-charged schema which acts in a particular way upon the cognitive processes of the alleged victims. First, it defines the social

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32 He and his family were stopped by police despite not breaking traffic rules. A search found no drugs but police sniffer dogs were called in and the men were strip searched. Ultimately they were allowed to proceed; Kathryn L Russell, “Driving While Black”: Corollary Phenomena and Collateral Consequences,” Boston College Law Review, 40 (1998-1999), 718-9.
35 Ibid., 22.
36 A New Jersey court has accepted that blacks were the targets of racial profiling and in 25 cases involving black defendants the evidence gathered after such stops was ruled inadmissible. An appeal of this decision remains pending; Lambeth, ‘Driving’, 32.
situation (i.e. as an unfair, unjust or illegally-arbitrary one), then it aids the interpretation of the event and suggests causation (i.e. the police officer, especially if they are white, is assumed to be racist) and, finally, it provides an appropriate or normal behavioural response (i.e. in the past the reaction was to ‘put up with it’ so as not to further upset the officer but now many blacks are now threatening and often initiating legal action\(^{37}\)). It is, in short, a collective cognitive schema which provides an interpretive short-cut for understanding instances which belong to a particular ‘racially-charged’ category of common social interaction in contemporary America.

Sociologists, like Harrison White, have characterised the more unambiguously social or collective schemas like this as ‘communicable speculations by actors about the recurrent patterns of behaviour exhibited by others’\(^{38}\) while Paul DiMaggio has called them ‘consensually validated interpretive tools, shared more or less widely amongst a group and which aid one’s understanding of what is happening in social interactions between different groups.’\(^{39}\) whether such individuals are likely to be friends or foes; whether they can be trusted or not etc. From this, it can be argued that the strategic realm or strategic social context is no different, in a fundamental sense, to all others that we encounter in the course of our social lives. It too is populated by collective cognitive schema, each one of which guides our perception, suggests what (or perhaps more importantly in the context of this study, ‘who’) causes wars or conditions of peace, and prescribes certain behaviours as ‘conventional solutions’ to such problems. Differences between culturally different states’ strategic decision-making, then, are related to differences in the ‘schema set’ that populates each state’s strategic culture and not just to differences in the objective strategic circumstances that different states face, as conventional IR theories typically claim.

It is important to note, however, that most cultures are not necessarily fully coherent and consistent entities. Instead they are disaggregated, disparate and to some degree internally inconsistent, and this is why it has become common to conceive of culture as a ‘toolbox’ containing diverse and sometimes contradictory schemas from which we pick and choose when confronted by challenges or opportunities. For this reason I reject the more traditional approach to culture, which treats it as a discrete, isolatable, consistent and coherent explanatory variable, and to

\(^{37}\) Ibid., 34.
I now turn to consideration of another field that investigates culture very closely, sociology.

**The Sociological Literature: Culture as a ‘Toolbox’**

Sociologists have also been revising their understanding of culture, but to properly grasp their new approaches we must first explore the out-of-favour traditional approaches, starting with Max Weber. For Weber, modern humans are motivated by either \( \text{real, tangible or material interests} \) or by \( \text{ideal value-oriented interests} \) (indeed, people are motivated by a mix of both \( \) but he was describing ideal types). He wanted to analyse the objective behavioural implications of subjective beliefs, so he reduced values to an \( \text{explanatory variable, expressed most famously by his ‘switchman’ metaphor, by which [n]ot ideas, but material and ideal interests directly govern men’s conduct. Yet very frequently the ‘world images’ that have been created by ideas have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest.} \)

So, cultural ideas and values define the destinations or goals towards which humans direct behaviour. Talcott Parsons, in the late-1930s, was concerned that economic approaches (e.g. rational choice theory) could not explain human preferences so he developed his \( \text{voluntaristic theory of action} \) which also used culture as an explanatory variable.\(^{41}\) He argued that actors make choices which are to some degree limited by objective, environmental, material conditions. But these choices are also affected by \( \text{normative regulations} \) which provide the ends towards which action is directed and which \( \text{are culture in whatever situation or cultural context is under consideration, and they are wholly ideational, meaning behaviour is treated as a dependent variable.} \)

This approach was adopted by other sociologists working with the concept of \( \text{political culture} \) in the 1960s.\(^{43}\) Gabriel Almond specifically credited Parsons for inspiring his approach to political culture as a \( \text{pattern of orientation towards} \)

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defined political culture wholly ideationally, excluding behaviour (i.e. which remained the dependent variable) as the manifestation in aggregate, measurable form of the psychological and subjective dimensions of politics. Others developed complex mathematical formulae to explain preference stability for the rate at which a new idea or value spreads throughout political communities.

At present, however, this way of understanding political culture began to be the subject of intense critique in the 1970s, and is now generally considered a moribund approach. Indeed this field was only able to reconstitute itself as a viable research agenda after scholars began paying more attention to the collective ideas or myths or symbols that are so important in real political contestation, and in doing so they borrowed largely, or at least initially, from the hermeneutic or interpretivist traditions. When offering his opinion that strategic cultural studies may do well by emulating the cognitive turn in the political culture research agenda, David Haglund points to Lowell Dittmer and Michael Walzer work in particular, which examined how political symbols and myths (which are both really just terms describing collective cognitive schema-like things) become depository[ies] of widespread interest and feeling and argued that they transmit meanings from person to person.

Nevertheless, scholars working in this tradition, including Dittmer himself, continued to analyse these subjective ideas or beliefs in a generally falsifiable manner, just as I do in this study with Australia’s strategic culture.

The explanatory variable approach to cultural analysis was both relatively simple and intuitively appealing (and generally analogous to Johnston approach). Yet it has nevertheless been largely rejected by modern sociologists, and to illustrate why we need to consider the classic culture of poverty debate. In 1966 Oscar Lewis used an explanatory variable approach to explain why poor people often fail to take advantage of opportunities to

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slum children are age six or seven, they have usually absorbed the basic values and attitudes of their sub-culture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of changing conditions. But this simple explanation flew in the face of empirical evidence which overwhelmingly confirmed that, when actually questioned, poor people typically report that they do have aspirations to middle-class values (i.e. good educations, steady jobs, stable marriages etc.) and that they are not deliberately misleading pollsters. Why, then, does poverty persist across the generations when structural inequalities are not so rigid as to remove any and all opportunities for betterment? In 1986 Ann Swidler claimed that despite the similarities in stated aspirations between the poor- and middle-classes, these groups have different cultural tools.

Culture is more like a style or set of skills and habits rather than a set of preferences or wants. If one asked a slum youth why he did not take steps to pursue a middle-class path the answer might well not be I don’t want that life but instead, Who, me? One can hardly pursue success in a world where the accepted skills, style and informal know-how are unfamiliar.

Many sociologists now conclude that poor people honestly report that they share middle-class values, but they lack understanding of what they actually entail as well as the skills or behavioural experience. So despite wanting to have the same values and behaviours as the middle class poorer individuals lack both.

What Swidler proposed in 1986 was a new way of conceptualising culture as a toolbox containing multiple strategies of action which are culturally available ways of organizing collective behaviour rather than treating culture as a discrete, isolatable, purely ideational variable. Likewise, for Charles Tilly, cultures are like repertoires that contain most, if not all, the strategies we need to successfully navigate our way through the social world of everyday collective human interaction.

Paul DiMaggio, after reviewing the debates about these matters in the late 1990s concluded that research in cognitive psychology strongly supports the toolkit picture over the

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56 Ibid., 277–9.
Given the weight of opinion in this and other fields about how culture, broadly put, should be conceptualised and studied, I urge that a similar stance towards the study of strategic culture be adopted by IR scholars.

The ‘Macro’ Formulation of Strategic Culture

I have just strongly endorsed the toolbox conceptualisation of culture. But we also need to take account of states’ capacities for agency in strategic decision-making situations, so we must explore the dynamics between strategic schemas to see why one is chosen or activated over another. This is the macro-dimension of strategic culture and it explains what happens within a singular strategic culture. To understand the macro strategic-cultural perspective requires examination of the competition between schemas that are more properly political and collective than, say, the restaurant schema. Consider again the DWB schema: it is collective because it tells one group (black drivers) how they are likely to be treated by another group (white police officers), and what they should do about it; and it is clearly political given it concerns issues of justice and order. But note that a rival schema has arisen too: white police officers are aware of the DWB schema and some may assume that any black person who raises it is engaging in reverse racism. These two schemas, then, co-exist within American culture as competing ways to define such social situations. It is also usually fairly clear which group will favour which schema, although some individuals (i.e. black police officers) exist in an ambiguous relationship to each.

In short, multiple, collective, competing, politically-oriented cognitive schemas co-exist within culture because states’ populations contain sub-groups who, while they may have more in common with each other than with groups in other states, still differ in important ways and adhere to or support different schemas or, in the strategic context, competing sub-cultures. In a more practical sense these strategic sub-cultures are typically attached to or supported by or perhaps even define prominent domestic institutions which compete to influence or, if they are political parties, to control the state and the formal strategic decision-making processes associated with it. And in the case of political parties this assumes also that their approach to strategic decision-making, their favoured schema or

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54 DiMaggio, ‘Culture and Cognition,’ 267.
policy-plank of their election-winning platform it was still an important one which the public took some interest in.

Put most simply, in my macro formulation of strategic culture every state has a ‘schema set’ or menu of strategic sub-cultures for decision-makers to choose from when they confront strategic challenges or assess strategic opportunities. Some of these choices crystallise and the schema becomes dominant, driving strategic policy for years or even decades while others have only fleeting influence in particular strategic-behavioural instances. Crucially, however, such choices are made from essentially the same strategic-cultural decision-making menu despite differences in temporal context between strategic-policy and strategic-behavioural choices. And the variations between the strategic cultures of two different states should be seen, in this macro-dimension of strategic culture, as differences between these sets of strategic sub-cultures although, as noted above, complex modern states may have overlapping menus that contain many of the same options. The main differences will likely be more between preferences for or familiarity with the various options, meaning that while one may be dominant in a certain strategic culture it may be available yet subordinate or latent in another.

In this manner, we can begin to understand both continuity and change over the long-term: continuity in strategic policy suggests that a sub-culture has become dominant while change occurs when the relationships of dominance and subordination between strategic sub-cultures alter. With respect to strategic behaviour the situation is obviously similar because in this case a normally subordinate strategic sub-culture has been chosen from the strategic cultural toolbox to drive the specific response to those particular strategic circumstances, probably because it is determined by strategic decision-makers that the ordinarily dominant sub-culture doesn’t really fit or work in this particular instance. But, importantly, it becomes an empirical question whether a newly influential sub-culture will become dominant in a longer-term policy context it may be the case that the conditions which precipitated an unexpected emergency pass, allowing things to return to normal.

If we think about strategic culture this way, we can begin to unravel the problem that confounded Gray, namely, that British strategic culture was overcome during both world wars (see Chapter 2). We can begin to understand how, in pressing circumstances, a state may well be forced to act contrary to its dominant strategic sub-culture and choose another culturally available or acceptable strategic option. After all, Britain has had to send large
...campaigns, for example – and in the Boer War the Empire had deployed over 500,000 troops), so there were strategic cultural precedents for the British to draw upon. Put another way, Britain’s confrontational-attritional strategic behaviour in the two World Wars was inconsistent with its normal maritime/manoeuvre strategic sub-culture, which had been dominant for several centuries, but it was nevertheless consistent with an available, previously subordinate sub-culture whose time had come (twice as it turned out surely because Germany, the quintessential continental power, was the enemy on both occasions). This subordinate schema had also been influential enough to force a degree of compromise in Britain’s general force structure even before each war. And when the extreme crises posed by both world wars of the twentieth century passed, the British reverted rapidly back to what was for them the strategic normal, just as Gray explained.

The Macro Mechanics of Choice: Relevance and Resonance

If we accept the toolbox approach to culture it suggests that we should direct attention to determining how and why one schema was activated (which suggests a more sub-conscious process) or chosen (which is suggestive of more conscious-decision-making), so how and why certain sub-cultures become dominant, why others are subordinate etc. For a strategic sub-culture to be influential it must be judged to be both relevant to a state’s external strategic environment and it also must resonate with decision-makers and (more remotely) the public’s dominant cultural identity. Lehman, Chiu and Schaller, when discussing schema choice and activation in the psychological literature strongly endorse the toolbox approach and claim that culture does not rigidly determine the responses of its group members. Instead, culture provides interpretive perspectives for making sense of reality and for them, an individual schema’s epistemic value in a particular situation also affects how likely it is to be adopted in the situation. A particular cultural paradigm [i.e. schema] is also likely to be adopted when it offers a consensually

59 The British developed plans to expand of their ‘core force’ into a mass army, and they retained ‘mothballed’ industrial stocks and supplies to enable this to occur quickly: Basil Liddel Hart, Strategy (New York: Fredrick A Praeger, 1954), 168–9.
By ‘epistemic value’ they mean ‘relevance.’ Certain schemas are likely to seem more relevant to solving particular strategic problems while others will seem to be more relevant in different circumstances – the schema must not, at a bare minimum, be hopelessly ill-suited to the state’s external strategic environment. This relevance aspect of a sub-culture is the more ‘technical’ side of the story or the explicitly or narrowly rational aspect of schema-selection, concerning whether the proposed definition, explanation and solution (recall, schemas contain all this information) of and to a strategic challenge really will solve it.

To return to the British example in both World Wars this state’s decision-makers were forced to recognise that the ordinarily dominant strategic sub-culture did not provide the solution they sought to the problem of a continental power, Germany, with a large and very proficient conventional army, expanding aggressively and impervious to diplomatic and economic pressure. Britain could have, strictly speaking, adopted other rationally possible strategic schemas, including: a strict neutrality or ‘island fortress’ approach; action in the League of Nations, at least in late 1939; a sustained maritime amphibious campaign in the Baltic; even an insurgency-schema was rationally available. The point is that none of these seemed particularly relevant to Britain’s external strategic circumstances, while raising a conscript army was more so and it eventually made a significant contribution to the final victory both times – and we can understand these matters in a fairly conventional sense.

This is all quite straightforward, and much of the theoretical work regarding these technical aspects of strategy already exists in the traditional IR literature. And note that for experts like the strategic theorists, military staff officers and senior civil servants who make strategic decisions the process of choosing between schemas based on their technical attributes is probably more conscious than sub-conscious – they pay greater attention to this matter of relevance than the higher strategic decision-makers (i.e. elected politicians are rarely strategic experts) and the public that the latter represent. So, the concept of relevance has been theorised about many times before. For

61 The events of the 1930s would lead one to doubt the efficacy of League of Nations action. An ‘island fortress’ strategy making ‘Britain safe’ would have imperilled its ‘economic lifeblood,’ while a Baltic campaign would have faced stiff German resistance from the Luftwaffe operating from closer bases (and would have required the British occupying Denmark, Norway and possibly even neutral Sweden). And a guerrilla/insurgent strategy presupposes the occupation of Britain, and so is self-defeating.
in has historically and for geographical reasons pursued a sea-control strategy while France has favoured sea-denial\textsuperscript{62}: why a rapidly-mobilising, \textit{semi-guerrilla} strategy was adopted by small yet mountainous Switzerland\textsuperscript{63}; or why modern guided anti-ship missile technology is challenging the relevance of large naval surface-vessels so acutely.\textsuperscript{64}

Rather, in this study I focus more on the undertheorized \textit{resonance} aspect of strategic decision-making. Lehman, Chiu and Schaller also argue that an individual schema must not only be relevant but that it must also be \textit{consensually validated} if it is to become influential. It must, in short, also \textit{resonate} with a state\'s \textit{dominant cultural identity}. Analysis of these instinctive \textit{gut reactions}, as well as explicit verbalisations about who poses a threat and who doesn\’t, who can be trusted and who can\’t, are at the heart of the model proposed here, and are encapsulated in the micro dimension of strategic culture.

**Threat Perception: A \textit{`Micro'} Conceptualisation of Strategic Culture**

A schema\'s cultural orientation identifies a state\'s friends and enemies and may also encompass a wider range of social relations, such as who can be trusted, what/who \textit{we} want to be like, \textit{what} \textit{role} the state sees itself and others \textit{playing} in international politics and so on. The dominant cultural identity of a state is similar, but it is more like the \textit{prevailing understanding} of these things favoured by decision-makers and their constituents - these actors essentially \textit{translate} or interpret the international environment, adapting social-schemas they are familiar with from their own personal experience and thereby \textit{populating} it with actors they recognise as certain types (i.e. friend/ally, untrustworthy/enemy, shy/isolationist etc). So, put most simply, the micro-aspect of my strategic cultural model explains how, if the cultural orientation implicit (and sometimes explicit) in a schema \textit{resonates well} or \textit{fits with} a state\'s dominant cultural identity that strategic sub-culture is likely to be influential.

\textsuperscript{64} ‘Peril on the Sea,’ \textit{The Economist}, 12 June 2010.
To actually analyse how and why a particular sub-culture resonates (or doesn’t) I focus in the case-study chapters which follow on the friend/foe calculus, the process by which decision-makers determine which schema their cultural orientation best fits with their state’s dominant cultural identity. This is the most undertheorized (because it is the most cultural) aspect of strategic decision-making. I argue further that decision-makers naturally focus on intercultural similarities and differences between their own and other states and, simply put, the more different another state is perceived to be the more threatening it is usually assumed to be. Further insights from the sociologists into group dynamics in more general, non-strategic circumstances demonstrate why from a psychological perspective similarities and differences between groups matter so much.

Social Identity Theory

In the late 1960s Henri Tajfel decided to investigate realistic conflict theory by devising an experiment in which he first randomly divided subjects according to completely arbitrary, meaningless categories like ‘red’ and ‘blue’ teams. He wanted a control group and expected that the arbitrary nature of the divisions would avoid triggering latent prejudices. He was astonished to find, however, that inter-group prejudice emerged spontaneously as a result of mere arbitrary division into groups. His many repetitions of the experiment (dividing subjects according to, say, preference for Wassily Kandinsky’s art over Paul Klee’s) all delivered very similar results. And these were overwhelmingly confirmed by many other scholars, including in studies which tested relationships between multiple groups: these showed that groups prefer and trust (and thus discriminate less against) they usually still favour their own in-group absolutely) other groups that are defined in more-similar-terms compared to more different-Others who are typically viewed with suspicion or considered less worthy of resources. Indeed, subjects from every

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65 I.e. inter-group conflict was assumed to be wholly rational; ‘objective relations of material interests’ caused groups to compete for resources; Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Sherif, Groups in Harmony and Tension (New York: Harper, 1953); Muzafer Sherif, In Common Predicament: Social Psychology of Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966).
though variation in average degrees of in-/out-group animosity or prejudice does occur across cultures.69 The conclusion flowing from two generations’ worth of work is that individuals naturally coalesce into groups, and that they form and maintain these groups by focusing on (perhaps even fetishizing or obsessing over) differences between the groups even if these are trivial or arbitrary. Individuals want to belong to a group that is distinguishable from other groups, and even if the point of difference isn’t really all that sharp or of great import they make it so.70

It is now generally accepted that rational competition over material resources is merely a sufficient condition for inter-group conflict: largely automatic, unreflective self-categorization into opposed identity groups is the necessary condition. Having said this we should not overstate the impact of insights from the social identity theory (SIT) tradition and claim that mere division into groups inevitably causes violent inter-group conflict.71 Key figures in the ethnic conflict tradition, like James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin,72 and Donald Horowitz,73 all warn about taking this leap too readily. Jonathon Mercer, for example, notes in the context of the relative/absolute gains IR debate:

The argument is not that groups always prefer relative gains in nonexperimental intergroup situations but that categorization requires comparison, which in turn leads to competition. Although this competition can take different forms it can be cooperative or conflictual it is an inescapable feature of intergroup and interstate relations.74

Humans therefore tend to coalesce into groups and then to instinctively police their group’s boundaries by emphasising inter-group differences, and the more different a group is perceived to be the more prejudice towards it

69 Polynesian test subjects still show in-/out-group bias, but less than the average for Americans. Yet Saudi Arabians show more on average than Americans. Note, however, that such differences while consistent across studies are not statistically enormous: Jonathan Mercer, ‘Anarchy and Identity,’ International Organization, 49:2 (1995), 243–6.
likely to be assumed to be natural allies or more reliable or at minimum less threatening. I now return to the IR literature to develop this point further in strategic contexts.

The Friend/Foe Calculus and Trust

I noted above that perceptions of cultural similarity and difference were driving the friend/foe calculus and in turn the processes by which decision-makers choose between strategic schema or sub-cultures. And I showed how the SIT tradition supports this contention. At the core of these determinations, then, is the concept of trust, which is at the heart of all social relationships. And notions of trust between states underpin both the security communities and democratic peace theory research agendas. Regarding the latter, Karl Deutsch first claimed in the 1950s that the NATO partners were developing expectations of peaceful change vis-à-vis each other. To be sure, some of this trust between like-states is said to be due to substantive democratic effects, or so the democratic peace literature claims with the general consensus being that the democratic values of compromise and non-violent conflict resolution spill over into the international arena. Scholars studying security communities generally agree and some even argue that even when states' internal-regime-types differ, as is the case within ASEAN, if all adhere to similar external polices of non-interference then a security community can endure.

Yet another part of the process by which it is determined whether another state is trustworthy (or not) comes from the mere fact that the states are alike (or not alike). This bare dimension of cultural similarity/difference perception obviously has its limits i.e. an aggressive state is likely to be made more insecure if it thinks its neighbour is just like it (i.e. dangerous). But it is generally easier to trust another actor if you understand

their reasoning processes because yours are similar. On the other hand, culturally different actors are more likely to behave in unfamiliar, unsettling ways, making them inherently more difficult to trust. This powerful insight was at the heart of Ferdinand Tonnies’s social theories. ⁸⁰

The discussion to date of the micro-dimension has been largely intuitive, presenting isolated examples and arguing by analogy to already existing IR traditions that cultural difference undermines trust and leads to higher perceptions of threat. But there is also experimental evidence that perceptions of difference affect overall threat strategic perceptions (i.e. when relative material capabilities are also considered). David L. Rousseau wanted to distinguish the effect of cultural similarity/difference perception from the consideration of relative differences in material capabilities and then quantify the relative contribution of both to the total perception of strategic threat. He notes that

[IR] is deeply divided between those who believe that material factors such as the balance of power determine the perception of threat and those who believe that ideational factors such as shared democratic values determine [this. He presents] a model of identity formation that can explain when ideas will (and will not) have a decisive impact on threat perceptions. ⁸¹

In his first experiment he found that perceptions of cultural similarity/difference had a strong effect on his (American) subjects’ threat perceptions towards states like China, Russia and Japan. ² ⁸² Interestingly, when asked to explain why they felt threatened by these real states many more cultural as opposed to material reasons were provided by his subjects. ² ⁸³ This may suggest that cultural differences are generally more salient than imbalances in relative material capabilities, although note that the study only measured the average frequency of such responses,

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² China was seen as most threatening by test subjects (79%), then Russia (63%) and then Japan (31%); ibid., 104.
³ The most common responses regarding ‘points of difference’ were: political structure, language, religion, culture, economic structure, the justice system and general political ideology (all basically ideational factors) and existing military capabilities, economic strength and population size (all material factors).
Nevertheless, the greater the perception of identity difference the greater the threat-perception.

A second experiment showed similar results. To avoid triggering latent biases his subjects were told State A’s identity was a former colony of Great Britain and then told to assess the threat posed by neighbouring State B following a hypothetical crisis. The scenarios varied over two dimensions: relative balance of forces (i.e. material capabilities); and identity similarity/difference (so, ideational factors). Subjects responding to the first scenario were told that State B’s identity was very different from State A’s but that State B’s armed forces were only half the size, and then they rated how threatening State B seemed to them. Other subjects were told that different-State B’s armed forces were twice the size and the latter two scenarios were also played out but in these State B was said to have a very similar identity (so, in the third scenario it was said to be half as strong, and in the fourth twice as strong etc). His findings were consistent with those from his first experiment. Threat-perceptions increased significantly when different-State B was twice as powerful and, intriguingly, even when it was only half as powerful many subjects still concluded it was a quite serious threat. Conversely, when similar-State B was only half as powerful most subjects reported very low threat levels, and when it was twice as strong subjects felt only marginally more threatened.

Rousseau ultimately concluded that the results ... strongly support the constructivist claim that a shared identity decreases threat perception independent of the balance of power.... Both power and identity play a central role in the construction of threat perceptions. These findings are significant for this study because I argue that a similar process is occurring in the micro-dimension of strategic culture, namely, evaluations of assumptions about other states’cultures are contained within the strategic sub-cultures, and the various sub-cultures’influence relative to one another is in part (i.e. because technical relevance also matters) determined by how well this cultural orientation resonates with a state’s dominant cultural identity. I now explore how the macro and micro levels interact by explaining how a schema’s cultural orientation gives meaning to the world or provides an interpretation of objective reality, arguing simply that only once this is established can ordinary strategic decision-making proceed.

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84 i.e. existing armed forces, economic strength and population size may well be commonly felt, especially in a strategic context, to be ‘especially important’; the six ideational factors may each be relatively ‘unimportant’ considerations on their own.
A schema’s cultural orientation gives meaning to the external strategic environment. This captures the essence of the basic philosophical insight that a gun in the hand of an enemy means something different than a gun in the hand of a friend: material objects are interpreted and given meaning at least in part in accordance with one’s understanding of who one’s friends and enemies are. And decision-makers choose between the competing schemas in part by considering how well the various cultural orientations on offer accord with their state’s dominant cultural identity, meaning they are choosing between alternative interpretations of social reality. Finally, they need to establish basic agreement about these social or cultural matters before they can proceed to the technical consideration of a sub-culture’s relevance.

To demonstrate I return briefly to critique of Johnston’s approach to strategic culture. Recall that he argued that the isolatable, discrete and wholly ideational variable, strategic culture itself did not really change much (over centuries and even millennia), but that at some points its influence was overcome by the force of other material variables. Yet this formulation is artificial and implausible: policy-makers don’t actually sit around a table purely rationally assigning definitive, relative weights to the various relevant material factors (geography, relative power, technology etc), then consciously do the same for the strategic culture variable to assess whether the combined weight of the former overrode the latter with mathematical certainty. Of course, Johnston never said this is what actually happens and all conceptual models are simplifications of or abstractions from reality. Still, it is hard to operationalize his approach to test whether it is consistent with the empirical evidence of actual strategic decision-making.

If one accepts that we should approach the cultural aspects of strategic decision-making from an essentially interpretivist position then it is possible to imagine a much more realistic picture of what is happening in real-world strategic decision-making contexts. Those decision-makers are assigning relative weights to the variables that make up the state’s external strategic environment and then they do consciously weigh them up against one another in deciding how to act. But how and why they actually assigned those weights to each material variable, and in particular whether such will be interpreted as threatening or reassuring depends upon the decision-makers’ beliefs about what their state’s dominant cultural identity is or should be. Strategic culture, then, is not
instead, it gives meaning to them. Much of this will be determined sub-consciously, although there may be some verbalisation about who can or can’t be trusted, who is reassuring and why etc.

So, after the friend/foe process is complete and a strategic schema has been chosen to define the situation in international-social terms, explain it and offer behavioural responses, the external strategic environment has been given meaning. If one’s friends are located close by (i.e., the geography variable) and have strong economies and large standing armies (i.e., aspects of the relative distribution of power variable) and deploy the most modern weapons (i.e., the technology variable) then these variables have been interpreted, in the social context just described, as reassuring. But if the cultural orientation were reversed, with enemies close by, strong and advanced, that state would interpret its strategic situation differently (i.e. it would feel insecure). Accordingly, we should attend to these cultural matters as a first analytical step: the degree to which particular schemas resonate provides social context and gives objective reality meaning, after which the other aspects of the sub-culture, the technical stuff, can be assessed more in terms of relevance and so in a more traditionally-rational manner. For example, Organski’s power transition theory becomes more comprehensible when filled with what (as in culturally-similar/different) states. We can understand why it is China’s rise which currently causes most consternation amongst Western states, and why India’s also-impressive economic growth worries them less (i.e. it is a democracy and its elites speak English and profess liberal values). Indeed, India’s rise has been interpreted, most notably by the administration of George W. Bush, as good in the sense that it could at minimum counter-balance China and may possibly one day even be considered a like-minded ally were the latter to make a play for hegemony in the Asia-Pacific.

Returning to our hypothetical Cabinet meeting, because one sub-culture is generally dominant and accepted as a sort of basic strategic logic, strategic friends are largely accepted as givens: everyone in the room intuitively knows who the enemies are; plenty of other states, probably most, will be effectively ignored. There may be some explicit verbalisation about the extent to which the friendlies can be fully trusted, or doubts may be aired about

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typically take place in a condition of relative agreement or understanding about what those decision-makers collectively understand their state’s dominant cultural identity to be. These decision-makers are and have been for some time operating in general accordance with the logic dictated by one dominant, or perhaps just a few competing strategic sub-cultures that have shaped defence policy and force structure, university curriculums, as well as party affiliations, for decades or even centuries. Obviously when a different group of decision-makers enters into office they may have a somewhat different view of what now is effectively their state’s dominant cultural identity, and they may favour a different strategic sub-culture. So, some individuals in the new government may occasionally argue for a different schema by promoting a different cultural orientation: they may succeed in persuading others on occasions; and similar successes over time may even herald the arrival of a newly-dominant sub-culture. But in general one schema will dominate, perhaps for a long time, which provides a reasonably consistent cultural orientation and therefore a fairly persistent interpretation of the external strategic environment.

**Untangling Causation in a Mutually Constituted World**

In discussing the manner in which schemas are activated I have deliberately kept analytically separate the processes by which they are judged to be relevant or to resonate. But, of course, in the real world they are mutually constitutive properties. However, recognising this obviously complicates analysis because if they are continually affecting each other it becomes difficult to definitively isolate or measure the effect of each on the process of schema-choice. Nevertheless, while we may well accept in theory that both can affect each other simultaneously, experience tells us that in practice they are typically not equally strong at all times, allowing us to draw at least contingent conclusions about likely future behaviour given which schema is dominant now. As long as we keep the analysis embedded in a historical context we should be able to tell whether the relevance of a schema is declining (i.e. because the external strategic environment is changing fast) or whether it is resonating less at a particular historical juncture.

Finally, strategic schemas may be special and distinguishable from most other schemas at work in other aspects of life. Specifically, they may be more likely to show continuity, they may be a particularly sticky sort of
The powerful effect of geography upon strategic decision-making because it may be the material variable to which Wendt's notion of rump materialism applies most strongly. This is not to suggest that the facts of geography are not open to interpretation. They are, as we shall see in the Australian case study below. But geography may be relatively immune to alternative interpretations because it is hard to think away mountains (and expensive to tunnel through them) and futile to demand that an ocean be less stormy, as several ancient despots discovered.  

A second reason for the relative stickiness of strategic schema may be that strategic matters are especially important in that they concern the very survival of the political community (i.e. as Waltz stressed see Chapter 1). Contrast a strategic choice with the obviously much more trivial choices made in restaurants which are more likely to be guided by fleeting tastes and urges. The inherent importance of strategic decision-making may well result in additional caution, conservatism and resistance to change in this social context: indeed, anyone familiar with most armed services may be prepared to accept this proposition outright. Strategic pressure from an Other may cause normally antagonistic domestic groups to put aside their parochial disagreements in strategic contexts more readily than in others: the rally-round-the-flag effect may be much weaker in a trade-dispute context, for example.

Finally, strategic sub-cultures may be more prone to continuity rather than change because of the special nature of military procurement. The lead-times involved in the development of modern weapons systems are long, typically a decade or more (except when the pressure of actual combat forces more rapid readjustment), creating pragmatic constraints on rapid changes to force structure lest billions of dollars of research and investment be wasted. Extremely expensive weapons systems like jet fighters or attack submarines are also built tough and are intended for use over several decades. The mere possession of particular weapons may therefore limit the possibility that change in strategic policy will even be considered. These issues together may mean that the toolbox conceptualisation of culture is particularly useful in a strategic context compared to other social contexts if only

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88 Reputedly these included Xerxes at the Hellespont in 480BCE and Caligula at the English Channel in 40CE.
89 Forrest E. Morgan, Compellence and the Strategic Culture of Imperial Japan (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 27.
90 This is exactly what David Rousseau and Rocio Garcia-Retamero found; Spanish subjects were quite likely to favour a trade treaty with a culturally different Russia in which Russia gained relatively more; in a strategic context, however, Russia’s difference mattered a great deal more; subjects were much more likely to only favour treaties in which Spain gained relatively more; ‘Identity, Power and Threat Perception: A Cross-National Study,’ Journal of Conflict Resolution, 51:5 (2007), 744–71.
are observing, the patterns of dominance-subordination-latency between sub-cultures, are not constantly or unmanageably shifting right before our eyes.

Types of Strategic Sub-Cultures: Dominant, Subordinate and Latent

I maintain that sub-cultures fall into one of three general categories: dominant, subordinate or latent. Given that one sub-culture will probably be dominant this in turn implies that there are also likely to be other subordinate sub-cultures out there in the discourse jostling for attention and influence, and because these alternatives are on the toolbox, so to speak, they may be used fleetingly in emergencies. These subordinate strategic schemas are also candidates to become dominant: they seem quite relevant and resonate reasonably well or are considered at least arguable alternative perspectives on strategic matters etc, and certain key decision-makers and institutions are probably lobbying on their behalf too. They also may be strong enough sometimes to cause persistent compromises in strategic policy, meaning that there are likely to be degrees of subordination explainable only in their specific historical context. A subordinate sub-culture may also exercise near-dominance in a single aspect of foreign policy, like the conduct of humanitarian relief activities, while other more properly strategic-focused institutions, like a defence department, remain wedded to a traditional sub-culture concerned more with war-fighting.

There is also the possibility that a subordinate sub-culture will slowly die a quiet death if it seems to be less relevant, or to resonate less (or both) by drifting into latency. Latent sub-cultures are a special category: they do exist in the public discourse but they have very little or no impact on strategic decision-making; history may indicate, therefore, that their favoured cultural orientation was never (or rarely) accepted by higher decision-makers. Often these latent schemas are promoted by very small, uninfluential groups (i.e. the Communist Party of Australia) or by just a few individuals (often academics) engaging in radical critique. Of course, some sub-cultures will hover between a subordinate status and latency and it will be a matter of judgement regarding which category they fall into. Yet these latent sub-cultures should not be thought of as completely irrelevant; they make my study’s findings generally falsifiable because there will be possible circumstances in which the dominant or subordinate schemas could fail, be it because the external strategic environment changed radically (making it less relevant), or because Australia’s dominant cultural identity changed substantially (making it resonate less).
This logic of varying relationships of dominance, subordination and latency between the sub-cultures applies most obviously to my 'grand narrative' or the macro-dimension of strategic culture, the explanation of what has happened, in a state's past, in the sense of interactions between the schemas. But it also implies that if we know that aspects of that state's external strategic environment, or its dominant cultural identity, were changing steadily and measurably⁹¹ in a particular direction it may be possible to predict how this will affect its strategic culture in the future. We may be able to predict which subordinate schemas have a good chance of one-day becoming dominant or perhaps we get a good enough feel for a strategic culture to know that there is a long-shot whose time may come in the right circumstances. Having said this, such predictions will obviously have to be made cautiously using most/less/somewhat likely rather than hard-and-fast probabilistic terminology.

General Forms of Identity Comparison: An Interpretive Methodology

The chapter finishes now with an explanation of what we should consider evidence of the friend/foe calculus occurring (i.e. the micro-dimension) I adopt an explicitly interpretivist methodology when exploring those matters of cultural similarity and difference perceptions or judgements that are at the heart of my strategic cultural model. I prefer this to the sort of overtly positivist-statistical snapshot survey approach favoured by Rousseau, although I am not saying he was wrong to take this approach: quite the opposite, his work provides important support to my general argument. His method does not, however, make longitudinal or historical analysis possible (or at least cheap or retrospective) meaning I must adopt a fundamentally different approach.⁹² Ted Hopf has argued that perceptions of cultural similarity and difference are important influences on states' foreign policy behaviour. He uses the word social instead of cultural, but at the heart of his approach are Self/Other calculations for understanding the competing identities and discursive formations behind Russian foreign policy.⁹³ I adopt a similar approach,

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⁹¹ We may confidently say 'China is rising fast' or 'new aviation technology is emerging.' It may also be possible to say 'State X is debating its identity' or 'rapid immigration from very different ethnic groups is changing X's society profoundly.'

⁹² One could carry out the first experiment every six months for ten years. Then the results could be correlated with knowledge of what other states did during that period to cause the shifts in subjects' perceptions of them. But this would not be easy in the sense of knowing who should be included in the sample and a decades-long study would clearly not be cheap either. And survey research of this nature cannot be retrospective, or at least reliably so, for obvious reasons.

although it differs a little in that Hopf delved into popular culture (novels, films etc) in the course of his discourse analysis, while I stay much closer to the more explicitly ‘strategic discourse’ (the parameters of which I define in Chapter 5).

Put simply, I search the Australian strategic discourse for evidence of both explicit and implicit statements about cultural orientations, including both which states are enemies and who Australia’s strategic friends are. Both need to be known to make proper strategic decisions: it is unfortunate that Rousseau did not also measure affinity perception specifically in different hypothetical scenarios, or the extent to which subjects may have considered strong-similar-State B as a potential ally when State A was threatened by strong-different-State C in such a scenario subjects may have perceived strong-similar-B strength to have been reassuring. But he didn’t, and while we can be sure that similar = reassured in exactly the same manner as different = threatened, we can assume that similar dynamics apply.

More specifically, I present plenty of examples of overt or explicit cultural similarity/difference judgements, including a few (especially those from earlier ages) which are racially offensive enough to make modern readers blush. But I also present examples where it is obvious a cultural orientation or a dominant cultural identity is being alluded to. This may occur by way of analogy or metaphor, as when most Australians unhesitatingly thought of and referred to Britain as the mother country before the Second World War, or when a contemporary scholar calls Canada a strategic cousin. Or perhaps the discourse reveals concerns about the reliability or trustworthiness of an ally (which is common in the Australian context). One aspect of this also involves role-assignation: so, the US is often characterised as a guarantor of security, or as the arbiter of regional or global security; and one aspect of one of the sub-cultures (a sub-schema perhaps?) sees Australia playing an international role as a middle power.

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94 Ibid., 23–38.
95 Recall that in Rousseau’s study ‘twice-as-powerful/similar-State B’ still caused perceptions of threat. This may be because strategic matters are so high-stakes and subjects will always be a bit wary of ‘great powers’ even if they are culturally similar.
He cites Wendt approvingly to the effect that norms construct agents [and] those agents will tend to ally based upon norms, which is another way of saying that a state’s dominant cultural identity gives meaning to the external strategic environment. But we have to recognise, as Owen does, that in this historical context, ideology meant essentially religion. The norms in this period had a particular form, namely, they existed or were made manifest in, divisive debates about the divine that regularly descended into organised persecution, mob violence and often war, mixing religious and political convictions and aspirations inextricably and explosively in a complex series of overlapping two-level games played across much of the European continent, especially in the Holy Roman Empire.

These states, then, were clashing over material interests – land, trade, rights of non-interference – but the fault lines of these interests were substantially determined by religious boundaries. In other words, there was an insoluble mix of rationalist and ideational logics at work, as there always is when humans think and act, including in the strategic realm. And, in this historical context, round and round the terrible cycle went until the horrific destruction of the Thirty Years War forced all the exhausted competitors to agree to live and let live.

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99 Ibid., 76. The ‘Germans’ suffered worst – the population in what is now Germany fell by 30-40% between 1600 and 1650.
100 Owen also applies game-theoretical insights within the historical context; he says that each Catholic-Imperial state played a two level game by perceiving internal threats and automatically conflating them strategic threats from external Protestant states; but when Catholic states engaged in domestic oppression their neighbouring Protestant states retaliated in kind, sparking off tit-for-tat oppression, further reinforcing mutual hostility, causing broad alliances to form, morphing into war etc. And the process was extremely complex because there were so many actors each ‘playing their own game.’
In the Australian historical context, however, things are different because religion was not as important an axis of difference as race was in the twentieth century. This applies not just to Australia but also more generally in the global context too, although religion may be becoming as important as a fault-line of cultural difference in the post-9/11 world. Whatever the case may be on this last matter, the point is we need to recognise that while people will, as they did in Rousseau’s study, point to all sorts of similarities with or differences between their own and other states’ cultures to explain their threat-perceptions, there are probably just one or two cultural divisions that, in certain historical contexts, are the most important.

The final matter I want to discuss is a slightly more complex form of comparison which does not involve a comparison with an actual Other like a state. Human cognition, as well as being deeply affected by culture, is also quite capable of very subtle, abstract reasoning (developed for us by learned forebears, and transmitted culturally, of course). Put simply, sometimes the attribution of similarity or difference is directed against an abstract Other rather than a real one. The most obvious example is the use of historical analogies in argument. For example, Ole Waever has argued that when Europeans describe what they want Europe to move towards they will often draw an analogy about what they want it not to be like; in this case they cite as this abstract other the Europe that was a community (but an obviously dysfunctional one) of squabbling, jealous and heavily armed states that savagely tore at each other twice in the first half of last century. Some historical pasts are also treated as Selves. Ted Hopf notes how these structure thinking about international politics, such as the way that contemporary Russians reject as an Other the old, idealized view of the New Soviet Man (i.e. anti-capitalist, concerned only with the general good etc) that was so dominant and so central to Soviet ideology: they see it as phoney, and as a self-serving lie perpetrated by deeply corrupt apparatchiks of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But he notes that the same contemporary Russians do not reject (and indeed they embrace as an aspect of the Self) other aspects

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102 These agreements, made according to the emerging principle of cuius regio, eius religio (‘whose ruler, whose religion’) later formed the basis for the emergence of ‘Westphalian sovereignty’; ibid., 88–93.
103 Laksiri Jayasuriya, David Walker and Jan Gothard, Legacies of White Australia: Race, Culture, Nation (Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 2003).
105 He says specifically ‘the European idea was to a large extent shaped as a revolt against Europe’s past... Europe’s “Other,” the enemy image... is Europe’s own past which should not be allowed to become its future.’ Waever, ‘Insecurity, Security and Asecurity in the West European Non-War Community,’ in Adler and Barnett, eds, Security Communities, 90.
K.M. Fierke has applied similar logic in a deft and interesting fashion to explain Western reactions to the various crises in Bosnia in the early 1990s, showing how these were often explained using historical analogies. For instance, in 1993 Martin Shaw drew an analogy with the Second World War, implicitly suggesting that the Serbs were acting like the Nazis had before 1939, and argued that intervention was needed to avoid another ‘Munich Moment.’ In the US another analogy was, at least initially, more commonly drawn: Bosnia was compared with Vietnam, the implication being ‘don’t get dragged in.’ This was also supplemented with warnings to remember recent history too, namely, the fate of US troops in Somalia. But other Americans pointed to the 1991 Gulf War: the argument was that the US needed to step in fast to show resolve and stabilise the New World Order. And so it went: historical analogies were a vital part of the social constructions defining the Bosnian crisis at its various stages, with competing cultural orientations implicitly contending against one another through analogies with history for influence over strategic decision-making. For this reason one must also pay attention to decision-makers, or perhaps other schema-promoters (again, Martha Finnemore may say ‘norm entrepreneurs’) drawing historical analogies with implicit yet strong strategic cultural connotations.

Conclusion
A new conceptual model for understanding strategic culture has been presented in this chapter. Its essential feature is a call for greater attention to be paid to the new directions in the study of culture that have emerged in recent decades in other fields of social science, especially in psychology and sociology, and for these to be imported into strategic-cultural research.

Fierke, ‘Multiple Identities,’ 475.
More specifically, from psychology a general consensus has emerged recently to the effect that human cognition is not marked by universally-similar cognitive patterns other than at the most basic instinctive levels, and some of the evidence presented regarding the effect of culture on our very perception of the world (like colours and spatial-orientation) demonstrates that even these deeply sub-conscious cognitive processes are also affected to some degree by culture. But above this, in the various realms of more-conscious cognition, and especially in the ways that we attribute causality in social settings and determine how to behave towards others in the complex social milieu in which we all live, it is generally accepted now that culture profoundly affects our thinking. These insights were presented to demonstrate why culture should not be assumed away by strategic theorists: cultural-cognitive variance is real; and it affects states’ decision-making; so we should theorise about it in strategic contexts.

The sociologists have built on these insights and borrowed from psychology the notion that we as humans tend to think about the world through cognitive schema. These are intellectual short-cuts of pre-packaged information, developed, refined and passed down to us by our cultural predecessors, which enable us to understand much more about the world than if we each tried to plan our every move from scratch, so to speak. The sociologists, however, in the course of debating how to use culture as an analytical tool have largely discarded the older Weberian or Parsonian approach which treated culture as a coherent, isolatable explanatory variable that could be kept distinct from the behaviour it was supposed to help explain. Instead, most modern sociologists now treat culture like a disaggregated toolbox which contains various contradictory and competing strategies of action (i.e. schemas) from which we choose to guide our way in the world, and further, the accepted approach now is to treat each of these tools as a relatively coherent whole which includes both ideas and behaviour. The implication is clear—we should not try to artificially separate ideas from behaviour and mechanically assess how the former contributed to causing the latter. Instead, we should see them as parts of an indivisible package whose ideational and behavioural aspects are co-constituted, and actors choose between these culturally-available packages or schemas when determining how to go on in the world.

In adapting these insights to the strategic culture research agenda I split my model into two parts. The first, the macro-dimension, explains what occurs within a particular state’s strategic culture and between the various competing strategic schemas, which I called strategic sub-cultures (i.e. these are the tools in the strategic-cultural
and the dynamics between these sub-cultures, which are really just competing strategic traditions or alternative interpretations of strategic reality, by noting that typically one is dominant and tends to drive the making of strategic policy and most instances of strategic behaviour, while several others remain subordinate yet still more or less influential depending upon the circumstances. More specifically, the relative fortunes of these sub-cultures are in part determined by the degree to which they are judged by decision-makers to be relevant to solving the challenges or grasping the opportunities presented by that state’s external strategic environment, and these are matters which are treated extensively by traditional strategic theory.

Yet the question of why one sub-culture or another may become chosen or activated is also, in part, determined by the degree to which it resonates. This is the micro-dimension of strategic culture, which involves looking inside particular sub-cultures. Put simply, each contains a cultural orientation which is made up of various threat- or affinity-perceptions towards other states. If a sub-culture’s cultural orientation fits with or resembles closely the dominant cultural identity of the state in question, which also comprises threat- and affinity-perceptions or assumptions towards other states, then the chances of that sub-culture becoming dominant or at least influential are raised. This process was described as the friend/foe calculus, and these resonance-issues are also the least well theorised aspect of strategic decision-making, at least when one compares the amount of extant literature devoted to them with that which investigates more traditional matters of relevance. For this reason we should devote more attention to investigating the degree to which sub-cultures resonate when carrying out strategic-cultural analyses (although we should not ignore issues of relevance entirely).

More specifically, it was submitted that the easiest way to understand what is driving the friend/foe calculus is to focus on perceptions of inter-state cultural similarity and difference. The SIT tradition tells us that human groups notice, police and even obsess-over their differences, even when such are relatively trivial, and they do so for reasons rooted deep in all our individual psyches (i.e. mainly the urge to belong). New experimental research in IR itself, conducted by David Rousseau, demonstrates that perceptions of inter-state cultural difference have a measurable effect on threat-perceptions, suggesting that a focus on relative differentials of material power alone is an insufficient explanation for strategic threat-perception. In short, the more different a state is culturally the more likely it will be viewed as an enemy, and the flip-side to this insight is, of course, that culturally-similar Others
a minimum are less likely to be viewed with strategic trepidation.

The reason is simple and is related to matters of trust—it is easier to trust like-Others, and the democratic peace theory and security communities traditions were presented as analogous research agendas that contain similar logic at their core.

Putting the two dimensions of my model together, then, helps us to better understand how the entire process of strategic decision-making proceeds, at least from a cultural perspective. The macro- and micro-dimensions actually occur simultaneously and inform one another in a mutually constitutive manner, but for reasons of analytical clarity it is worthwhile retaining the distinction. More to the point, the cultural orientation of a particular schema provides meaning to the material strategic environment that a state faces. From a practical perspective this suggests that we should consider the micro-dimension or resonance aspect of strategic culture first, because it profoundly affects how the external strategic environment and its material attributes will be interpreted. Put another way, only after decision-makers have determined who their state’s friends and enemies are can the more technical aspects of strategic decision-making proceed, meaning a close, powerful and advanced state will either seem threatening or reassuring depending on one’s prevailing understanding of the cultural context one’s state is operating in.

By this point in the chapter I had explained the essential features of my model for strategic cultural analysis, and the rest of the chapter was devoted to providing additional detail about how one would go about doing so methodologically. The following chapters are less theoretical and are designed to illustrate how the model may be applied to understanding the historical twists and turns of Australia’s strategic culture. This is a good state to illustrate the model for several reasons, including that it is and has historically been an open and democratic society, so its strategic discourse is accessible. It is also neither a great power nor strategically insignificant—it is and has been strategically engaged throughout its history without being obsessed by military matters, suggesting that it is (roughly speaking) a good example of a typical middle power. And, finally, Australia has been and still is a relatively mono-cultural society in which the nation accords quite closely with the state, meaning that we are not faced by the analytical confusion which may arise from the study of the strategic culture(s) of a multi-nation state.

For these reasons while the following analysis of Australia’s strategic culture is interesting in and of itself, I urge
readers to keep in mind that the model is designed to be widely applicable to understanding all democratic states' strategic decision-making from a cultural perspective.
Chapter 4

The Australian Case Study – A Brief Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the following five chapters, which together constitute the case study of Australian strategic culture. So, in Chapter 5 I undertake a short review of the Australian strategic culture literature which is necessarily brief, since the concept has not been used much, and it is explored here because this small body of work did not contribute significantly to the wider strategic cultural debates discussed in Chapter 2. I continue Chapter 5 with a very brief institutional explanation of who makes Australian strategic decisions and what I mean by the Australian strategic discourse.

It is in Chapter 6 that the case study proper begins, with exploration of the forward defence sub-culture, although before I preview it below I must explain its general structure, given that subsequent chapters follow a similar pattern. I begin each with a quick explanation of what sort of cultural orientation characterises the strategic schema or sub-culture under examination: which other states are (generally) seen as friends and which are (usually) assumed to be enemies, and why etc. I then explain how the external strategic environment was given meaning by the sub-culture’s cultural orientation, so how the source and severity of strategic threats was determined generally, and what this implied about strategic decision-making. The point of this exercise at the start of each chapter is to provide a snapshot of the particular sub-culture under discussion in order to orient the reader thematically.

So, in each of Chapters 6, 7 and 8 I then move to chronological analysis of the varying levels of influence that the sub-culture under consideration exerted over strategic decision-making across the course of Australia’s history. It is important, however, to remember that I am treating Australia’s strategic culture as a tool-box containing a number of cognitive schemas from which strategic decision-makers pick and choose when they make strategic decisions. This means that I will seek to explain how and why, in a certain historical era or in response to a particular strategic emergency, the strategic sub-culture that I am discussing seemed more/less relevant in a technical sense, which partly explains why it was activated. But I tend to devote more attention to exploring the
in the sub-culture resonated with Australia’s dominant cultural identity, which I have argued earlier also explains in part why a sub-culture was chosen from the strategic cultural toolbox. Specifically, I will investigate closely what occasional changes in Australia’s dominant cultural identity meant for the relative influence the various sub-cultures enjoyed in the historical contexts examined.

Because these processes (i.e. the relevance and resonance of various sub-cultures) exist in a mutually constitutive relationship I always seek to carefully distinguish which is occurring more during a certain era: for example, in the late 1960s Australia’s external strategic environment changed quite rapidly as Britain withdrew from Asia and President Richard Nixon enunciated the Guam Doctrine (i.e. therefore affecting the relevance of the forward defence sub-culture). But, equally, I will show how in the 1970s it was Australia’s dominant cultural identity that was changing more as protests against Australia’s involvement in Vietnam peaked, patterns of immigration shifted, the aboriginal land rights movement gathered strength, and a conservative prime minister, Malcolm Fraser, became a prominent opponent of South African apartheid (i.e. all these affected the resonance of forward defence). If I did not keep the discussion firmly based in its proper historical context then the analysis would become hopelessly confused about causation. And I will explore how each sub-culture under examination itself changes a little in response to these twin pressures to which it is subject over time, although I also argue that the basic cultural orientation of most of sub-cultures, certainly the primary ones, has remained generally stable for the better part of a century. In short, the analysis of each sub-culture discussed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 first shows why it became dominant (or why/the degree to which it was subordinate) by showing why it seemed most/less relevant and why it resonated better (or not) compared to its competitors generally. And I then trace its fortunes over time as Australia’s external strategic environment and its dominant cultural identity changed over the decades.

So, and returning to the substance of the discussion in Chapter 6, its historical sweep is broad, beginning in the 1870s and running up to about 1970. In this chapter, I show that the forward defence sub-culture dominated strategic decision-making for most of Australia’s history. Analysis of the pre-1939 period — including the colonial period before 1901, which I examine briefly — demonstrates how dominant this sub-culture was. It also explains the deep cultural appeal of this tradition to so many generations of Australians, as evidenced by the virtually automatic strategic decisions to enter so many wars with Britain despite Australia’s geographical distance (at least at the outset
of the Second World War) from where hostilities typically raged. And, further, between the late-1940s and the late-1960s forward defence (but by this period more and more òwith Americaòrather than Britain) was clearly dominant and Australiaòòstrategic tempoòòwas also high, with multiple and occasionally overlapping overseas strategic deployments. I examine this era in some depth, especially the 1966 federal election, one of the few in which strategic issues (i.e. specifically, debates about Australiaòòinvolvement in Vietnam) were highly prominent. Its aftermath saw the forward defence tradition triumphant although, ironically, it was to begin òslidingòòfrom grace soon after, so Chapter 6 ends in the late-1960s.

The forward defence sub-culture was essentially òdethronedòòafter about 1970, and continental defence began to become dominant. I examine this process and the subsequent course of Australian strategic history in Chapter 7. Having said this, after providing my òsnapshotòòof the cultural orientation at the heart of the continental defence sub-culture, I so also briefly review its fortunes as a subordinate tradition before the 1970s, although only to add some additional detail to the discussion that took place in Chapter 6. So, In-depth discussion of continental defence in Chapter 7 only really begins with consideration of the period which began with the Tòòteòòoffensive in Vietnam in 1968 and ended with the publication of a key defence white paper in 1976. In this crucial transitional era continental defence rose to dominance, albeit in a halting, confused and never-fully-comprehensive manner.

Later in Chapter 7 I examine Australiaòòstrategic history until 2007, showing that the continental defence sub-culture remained generally dominant, even though it was not given its purest articulation until the defence white paper of 1987. But I will also explain how it has been òwatered downòòand occasionally òdistilled back upòòseveral times since, demonstrating that it was forced into major and long-lasting compromises, not only with the forward defence sub-culture, but also with the internationalist sub-culture, which I preview immediately below. By the end of Chapters 6 and 7, then, I will have provided a picture of the primary strategic schemas or components of Australiaòòstrategic culture and the ebbs and flows of each oneòòinfluence over the past century. In so doing, I will have explained how and why one sub-culture dominated Australiaòòstrategic culture for a century or more, how it was dethroned, at least partially, by another in the 1970s, and how this latter tradition has been generally dominant since then.
the internationalist tradition: this is a sub-culture that first made an appearance after the Second World War and it became more influential in the early 1990s, when the ALP government of Paul Keating pursued a ‘middle power’ role for Australia. For these reasons I examine only brief periods (i.e. like that from 1945 to 1949, and then another in the mid-1970s) when the internationalist tradition was especially influential, despite never becoming dominant. After about 1990 internationalism in a sense ‘solidified’ its influence and became, I argue, a sort of ‘permanent fixture’ of Australia’s modern strategic-cultural mix: indeed, even a conservatively-minded prime minister, John Howard, could be influenced enough by internationalist-logic to embark on the risky strategic adventure to East Timor in 1999. But because Howard never enshrined internationalism as the primary determinant of Australia’s strategic policy either before or after the East Timor operation,¹ the deployment of over 5000 Australian troops there in 1999 serves as a classic example of a strategic behavioural aberration from the ordinary strategic cultural norm. While exploring internationalism sub-culture I also show how disparate it is, in that it includes notions that Australia should, at various times and depending upon who is saying it, place ‘true faith’ in collective defence, or that Australia should act like a ‘good international citizen,’ while another strain argues that Australia should integrate more with its regional Asian neighbours in multilateral settings, and another calls for Australia to play the role of a ‘middle power’ on the global stage.

The second half of Chapter 8 will be taken up by consideration of the latent sub-cultures. I discuss each one briefly, explaining why it has failed to seem relevant or why it doesn’t resonate well. I will also explore how occasionally a few of these sub-cultures ‘limbed out of latency’ for a short period to become ‘weakly subordinate’ by exerting some influence on strategic decision-making, like the anti-American tradition which occasionally rears its head, or calls for Australia to adopt a ‘robust’ (i.e. much more heavily-armed) self-reliant posture. I distinguish these from the ‘truly latent’ sub-cultures which never had any effect on strategic decision-making at all. These latter have been promoted by entities like the Communist Party of Australia or by just one or a few academics working in what can roughly be called the ‘critical tradition,’ as well as those few (like Max Teichmann) who have argued consistently in favour of strict neutrality or peace activists who have at times demanded that Australia should adopt

¹ There was some adjustment to strategic priorities, reflecting some greater influence for internationalism, in the 2000 Defence White Paper. But this was largely swept away or ‘lost’ in the strategic confusion following 9/11 – see Chapter 8.
most fully disarmed. I have to at least mention these and show they exist, of course, to make my study generally falsifiable, as I explained at the very outset.

I conclude with a brief discussion of the state of Australian strategic culture at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Previous chapters will have ended in 2007, when John Howard lost office and Labor’s Kevin Rudd replaced him as prime minister. But in 2009, the Rudd government published a defence white paper, so in this final chapter, Chapter 9, I briefly consider the implications of this white paper which, if it is fully implemented, may herald another milestone by moving Australia back to a less ambiguous (and more heavily-armed) variety of continental defence logic after the drift towards forward defence that characterised Howard’s time in office. But at the time of writing Australian politics was very fluid and uncertain, with Kevin Rudd being dumped by his own party in favour of Julia Gillard in June 2010 and Labor faring poorly in the subsequent August 2010 election which produced Australia’s first hung-parliament since the Second World War. It is not clear, then, when a new defence white paper will be produced or, more importantly, which of the major parties will be in office when it is.

Despite the fluidity of the current situation, I nevertheless conclude the thesis with a short discussion of what Australia’s strategic cultural future may look like in the future or, more specifically, how we would go about answering such a question. In other words, I consider how my model could be used, in future studies, to assess the impact of changes in Australia’s external strategic environment (i.e. like the rise of China) or changes in its dominant cultural identity (i.e. possibly caused by migrant flows) on Australia’s strategic culture in future, but I don’t actually go ahead and make firm predictions. Instead, the final few pages of this thesis, contain my thoughts on what the dissertation as a whole contributes to IR and they explore what my findings about Australia’s strategic culture tell us about my strategic cultural approach generally, including what sort of future studies could be undertaken to further refine and develop the strategic cultural model offered herein. For now, however, the discussion turns in Chapter 5 to consideration of the few extant treatments of Australia’s strategic culture, and then to consideration of what I mean by Australia’s strategic discourse before chapters 6, 7 and 8 begin examining this in detail.
Chapter 5

The Australian Case Study – Three Preliminary Matters

This chapter explores three preliminary matters which require attention before the case study proper can begin. It begins with consideration of three explicit applications of the concept of strategic culture to Australia, and then it explores several more examples of literature from Australia which, while the studies do not actually use the term ‘strategic culture’ are concerned with very similar things (i.e. traditions or current of thought in foreign policy etc). These studies were not included in the literature review undertaken in Chapter 2 because they had little impact upon the wider debates about strategic culture taking place outside Australia, and in any event it makes more sense to deal with them immediately before I present my own interpretation of Australia’s strategic culture in the chapters that follow. After this, and to prepare the reader for the following analysis of more than a century of Australian strategic history in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, I first consider in general terms who makes strategic decisions in Australia by explaining which institutions and key individuals tend to have the most influence over the strategic decision-making process. I then finish with a discussion about what I consider to be the Australian strategic discourse so which sources will be relied upon most, and why.

Strategic Culture in Australian International Relations Discourse

Strategic culture has appeared only occasionally in the discourse about strategy. John Howard referred to Australia’s strategic culture fleetingly in public, and he was forthright regarding how he felt states with similar cultures are likely to have especially close relationships (i.e. he commonly referred to Britain and the US in this regard). Occasionally a respected contributor to strategic discourse, like Hugh White, has used the term, but again

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3 Speech, Howard, ‘50th Anniversary of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, Luncheon,’ Sydney, 30 May 2003.
I focus on the three extant examples of strategic cultural analyses of Australia and touch on several other related studies.

I consider Michael Evans' work first. As I did in the critique of Carnes Lord in Chapter 2, I show how confused strategic cultural analysis can become when the concept is used in an ill-defined manner. Evans argues in *The Tyranny of Dissonance* that political and strategic cultures are mutually dependent variables and he warns against assuming that strategic culture acts deterministically (citing Colin Gray on this point). He notes further that Australia's political culture is reflected in a bifurcated way in a strategic context: first, Australian political values manifest themselves in the country's strategic culture, which he then defines as strategic theory or defence policy expressed in documents like Defence White Papers. He also argues that since the early 1970s this strategic culture/policy has reflected the 'fortress Australia' or continental defence tradition; under Paul Dibb's influence, Evans claims, the most important conceptual determination in disciplining strategy was the narrow focus on the unchanging nature of [Australia's] geographical circumstances.

Evans also suggests there is a second way that Australia's political culture manifests itself strategically, as a way of war-fighting at the operational level. This exists as a predilection to send expeditionary forces overseas, or in other words, Australia's strategic behaviour has been consistent with the forward defence tradition; he cites numerous examples prior to the withdrawal from Vietnam in 1971 and a number thereafter. There is, he writes, a dissonance between Australia's strategic culture and its way of war, between its doctrine [i.e. continental defence]

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5 White, 'Australian defence policy and the possibility of war,' *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 56:2 (2002), 257.
7 Ibid., 7–10.
9 Ibid., 2–4.
10 Evans, *Tyranny*, 61.
11 Ibid., 10.
12 Ibid., 23.
13 Indeed, he claims that apart from during the two World Wars and the Menzies era, when policy reflected forward defence, Australian strategic policy has usually been consistent with continental defence principles; *ibid.*, p. 41.
14 Ibid., 63.
15 Ibid., 2 – 4.
16 Ibid., 51–58 & 42.
17 Ibid., 72.
and its action (i.e. forward defence). He urges that it be eliminated by returning strategic culture (i.e. his strategic theory or defence policy) to a forward defence footing, ensuring policy reflects Australia’s liberal-democratic political culture rather than just its geography. His central argument is that there has been a permanent oscillation between the imperatives of a defence policy defined by geography on the one hand and by Western historical values on the other. The tension has been between defending territory and securing interests, between adopting “continental defence” or embracing that of “forward defence.”

This is where Evans slips into a normative argument or at least open advocacy of forward defence, claiming that the geographically-determinist, continental defence posture had become divorced from the realities of national security interests which on times of conflict and crisis have always demanded that Australia fight overseas, arguing that Australia should make values paramount over geography when formulating strategic policy; it should fight with its cultural kin it shares their values and can trust them. Yet his argument is flawed, not least because he argues Australian strategic culture is distorted by too much focus on geography, a material variable. Why say that strategic culture (i.e. strategic theory or defence policy) is dominated by a material variable while the thing he distinguishes from it – Australia’s way of war-fighting – is said to more properly reflect its values and political culture? It sounds as if the way of war-fighting should be called strategic culture instead.

Later Evans goes into more detail about the relationship between political and strategic culture and claims that Australian strategic culture reflects variations on Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-American ideas about the use of force by liberal-democratic societies which have resulted in there being four main features of Australian strategic culture. The first is Australia’s diminimal geopolitical status, its cultural attachments to the Anglo-Saxon powers, resulting in feelings of vulnerability in Asia. The second is the triumph of a continental philosophy over island consciousness. Australians, he argues, are not a maritime people, which is why they tend to prefer

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18 Ibid., 88
19 Ibid., 95–104.
20 Ibid., 42.
21 Ibid., 67–69.
23 Ibid., 23.
told that these first two features cause the third feature, namely, the dissonance between the theoretical importance of defending geography and the reality of war-fighting practice in times of crisis (i.e. his main theme). So, put this way strategic culture encompasses quite a bit: the first two features of Australia’s strategic culture are analogous to my primary sub-cultures, forward and continental defence, and they compete for influence. Yet the third feature is an outcome, namely, dissonance between them, and the fourth is the ability of past statesmen to overcome the dissonance by deft use of a values-based approach to national security. This last feature of Australia’s strategic culture, then, the behavioural patterns (but not the policy they endorse?) of statesmen, solves the third feature (the dissonance), which itself was caused by the interaction of first two features (the sub-cultures).

In short, Evans uses the concept of strategic culture to describe and explain too much, and ultimately he adequately explains very little. This problem reminds us that the concept must be used carefully and consistently if it is not to be rendered empty or confusing. However, I use Evans to point out how, by arguing that Australian strategic culture/policy should be brought into line with what Evans claims is its political culture, he is actually promoting a particular strategic sub-culture, in this case forward defence. He only presents one set of values as definitively Australian after all, that favoured by Hugh Collins. So, as we saw above, by arguing that forward defence is both more relevant (i.e. it fits our strategic circumstances better) and that such a strategy resonates better with Australia’s political culture and values, he is engaging in the classic norm-entrepreneurial behaviour that we can expect to see occurring within a single strategic cultural discourse, in this case Australia’s.

The micro-dimension of strategic culture, the friend/foe calculus, is also clearly discernable in Evans’ work. As I argued earlier this is the process whereby a schema’s cultural orientation is compared with a state’s dominant cultural identity, and the closer the fit or resonance between the two the more likely it is that the sub-culture in question will be influential. Discussion of the friend/foe calculus appears both explicitly and implicitly in

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25 Ibid., 43.
26 And as an aside it demonstrates that similar mistakes to those made by the first generation continue to be common, calling into question the ‘progressiveness’ of the strategic culture research agenda as a whole in a Lakatosian sense.
that the main precepts of Australia’s political culture are drawn from Anglo-Saxon government philosophy and law, which is not incorrect, but shows who Evans considers comprises Australia’s in-group, and which other states are most culturally similar. He then specifically rejects Huntington’s notion that Australia is a torn country, quoting with approval Prime Minister John Howard’s claim that Australia is a European, Western civilisation with strong links to North America, but we are in Asia. There is also considerable implicit assuming in Evans’s work. For example, he lists all the wars that Australia has fought with its major Western allies, and then asserts that the requirements of pragmatic statecraft have always demanded that Australia fight overseas, by which he is calling a forward defence posture and by implication tagging others (i.e. continental defence) as idealistic or misguided.

Evans also claims that future strategic threats to Australia will be global and asymmetric and networked, and concludes that Australia should align strategic thought with operational practice, translate this new synergy into a larger Australian Defence Force (ADF), and task it with maintaining a favourable global and not just a regional order. And, in Evans’s view, there is, of course, only one real ally whom Australia can assist in this way – the United States. Interestingly, most of Evans’s description of Australia’s cultural orientation involves affinity perceptions, while Australia’s enemies or out-group are not specifically identified. Nevertheless it should be clear what an important part cultural perceptions of similarity and difference play in Evans’s advocacy of the forward defence sub-culture: they provide meaning to the strategic environment; they define what sort of world Australia faces and the major forces shaping it; and they suggest certain strategic behavioural responses, in particular by building a larger and much more capable Army. Indeed, it is perhaps not surprising that Evans puts the

29 Ibid., 32.
30 Ibid., 42.
31 Evans, Tyranny, 88–95.
32 Other than the general ‘terrorist/sub-state actor’ image mentioned earlier, whose values are obviously very different-threatening; ibid., 67–69. Interestingly, he never refers to future threats emanating from states, even China which, because its political values are obviously so different from Australia’s, would seem to be a ‘natural target for anxiety’; ibid., 96–103.
When The Tyranny of Dissonance was published in 2005, he was the Director of the Land Warfare Studies Centre, the Army’s think-tank.

The next application of the concept of strategic culture to the Australian case was written by David J. Kilcullen, a former Australian Army officer whose writings on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism caught the attention of the Bush administration. Unfortunately, however, Kilcullen’s attempt to apply the concept of strategic culture to Australian defence policy is unhelpful. First, his definition is confused: he claims, citing Colin Gray, that ‘inherent in the notion of strategic culture is the idea that a nation’s enduring circumstances give rise to a distinctive manner of perceiving, and using, national power—including military power.’ His approach is basically interpretive: in his view, strategic culture is the product of Australia’s enduring external strategic circumstances (i.e. geography, relative power, demography etc) and how they have been historically understood. This is uncontroversial—external strategic circumstances cause its strategic culture, which drives its grand strategy (or what I term strategic decision-making). Yet he then describes a six-layered statecraft model, in which strategic culture appears as the third layer. Here is where we are told, a dynamic reaction between the levels, rather than a fixed causative relationship. Not only is this confusing given how many layers there are, but it is also inconsistent with his earlier explanation of where strategic culture comes from and what it does, particularly since grand strategy does not reappear in the new model.

He also claims that strategic culture is not directly observable—it can only be inferred from observed behaviour patterns, leaving us even more perplexed about what is causing which (i.e. he has skipped the two levels between)

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35 Thomas E. Ricks, ‘Officers with PhDs Advising War Effort,’ Washington Post, 5 February 2005. Kilcullen was seconded to the United States Department of Defense in 2005 as special advisor on counterterrorism, and from 2005 to 2007 was chief strategist in the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism in the United States Department of State.
37 Kilcullen’s ‘statecraft model’ is as follows: at the lowest ‘unconscious’ level are a state’s external strategic circumstances; these affect the next level up, the state’s ‘national/organisational/group culture,’ which in turn affects its ‘strategic culture,’ which affects its ‘statecraft’—these three levels are said to be ‘sub-conscious.’ Finally, at the ‘conscious’ level are ‘policy’ and then ‘decisions’ by which he means strategic behaviour. For the model displayed diagrammatically, see ibid., Figure 1, 48.
When he slips into normative argument, claiming, like Evans (whom he cites approvingly several times) that Australia’s strategic policy reflects a preoccupation with continental defence and that it has done so for several decades. But he also notes that successive Australian leaders indicate a preference for a strategic culture of forward engagement or defence and we are told that his strategic culture values engagement with culturally compatible, like-minded world powers. He is arguing, then, that there is a dissonance between Australia’s strategic policy and its strategic behaviour, which by this point he has begun to call strategic culture, in direct contradiction to what he said earlier.

In short, Kilcullen uses strategic culture to argue that Australia has traditionally favoured forward defence strategies, that it should unambiguously return to these strategies, and that the Army should be strengthened while the other services should be reconfigured to support its deployment. In other words his thesis is essentially, like Evans’ was, a normative argument dressed up as analysis. He claims that the government in Canberra should recognise that continental defence did not fit Australia’s strategic culture and will continue to be an inappropriate strategic policy/theory into the future. The normative pitch can be seen as a direct appeal to the drafters of the expected new Defence White Paper (which was released in 2009, two years after this article was published) to allow forward engagement … to play a key part. But whatever the purpose of Kilcullen’s article may have been, as a contribution to the strategic culture literature it is problematic because it so sloppily slips from analysis into normative critique or even open advocacy of one strategic tradition over others.

The final analysis of strategic culture appears in a book edited by Ken Booth and Russell Trood, Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region. The chapter on Australia was written by Graeme Cheeseman. However, it should be noted that in the introductory chapter, Alan Macmillan, Booth and Trood explain that they prefer to see strategic culture as the military dimension of political culture because strategic culture produces tendencies, it

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38 Ibid., 49.
39 Ibid., 50.
40 Ibid., 59.
41 Ibid., 63.
42 Ibid., 64.
44 Alan Macmillan, Ken Booth and Russell Trood, ‘Strategic Culture,’ in ibid., 11.
The policy. [It] helps to explain outcomes, since other variables, such as technology, also play a part, and may at any one point dominate. This is reminiscent of an explanatory wholly-ideational variable approach similar to Johnston’s favoured model (i.e. strategic culture can be overridden by the weight of other variables). But later they present strategic culture in a more interpretivist manner, arguing that it acts as an attitudinal and behavioural transmission belt between the deep structures which shape human existence and that group’s actual strategy, a formulation comparable to what I have termed schemas. We are left wondering, then, which philosophical approach to strategic culture should be favoured.

Cheeseman, for his part, claims that the predominant [strategic] discourse is tied to the wider public discourse about White Australia.

It is an elitist, masculinist and largely Anglo-American construct, underdeveloped, narrowly conceived and centred around the twin pillars of fear and dependence. Australia has always been a frightened country [he cites Alan Renouf here]. The constant fear of attack or conquest by external and predominantly Asian others coupled with the belief that Australia cannot defend itself has led Australia’s policy-makers to look for great and powerful friends [to whom Australia] is ready to dispatch its military forces in support of their imperial objectives.

Thus for Cheeseman forward defence has historically been dominant, and he argues that this is largely explained by Australia’s dominant cultural identity as a culturally-isolated, capitalist, masculine and racist international actor. While he does not theorise specifically about such matters, he is clearly specifying in/out groups, and accepting that cultural similarities and differences matter a great deal when explaining Australia’s strategic decision-making. Interestingly, he also claims that other sub-cultures like the nationalist (i.e. continental defence) and the internationalist have until recently [i.e. the late-twentieth century] tended to be either subsumed within or drowned out by forward defence, although he also claims that changes in Australia’s external strategic environment precipitated by the end of the Cold War provided policy-makers with both an opportunity and an incentive to recast

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Cheeseman maintains, forward defence, which is tied to a particular cultural orientation (namely, a racist, misogynist and old-fashioned one) has effectively dominated Australia’s strategic culture, although recently it has been forced to compromise with two other sub-cultures a bit.\textsuperscript{49}

Cheeseman also argues that Australia’s strategic culture derives from two sources. The first, geography, is interpreted as generally threatening, while the second source is Australia’s history and experience so, the country’s convict past, immigration debates, and its Imperialist/protectionist preferences have historically resulted in a deep-seated sense of perceptions of difference from and insecurity in the Asian region.\textsuperscript{50} Cheeseman also explains how these schemas are supported or promoted by different agencies of the Commonwealth government, and by the various political parties.\textsuperscript{51} He even suggests briefly another possible strategic sub-culture, one that he prefers and which is generally more regionalist focused on non-military threats. Cheeseman is, then, also schema-promoting, if only fleetingly. He also suggests that immigration is profoundly changing Australia’s own population which will allow Australia to begin to engage with its Asian others in essence, he is claiming that Australia should change its dominant cultural identity by somehow becoming more Asian.\textsuperscript{52}

While Cheeseman provides a generally good treatment of Australia’s strategic culture, he adopts a very hectoring tone characterised by some quite pejorative language, epitomised by his dismissal of America as imperialist and his claim that Australia has never really grown up. He then only vaguely notes that times are changing and opportunities existed in the new millennium for Australia to take a different course (which he says it should do). But he does not theoretically conceptualise the relationships of dominance or subordination between sub-cultures or explore whether a currently-latent sub-culture could possibly become dominant.\textsuperscript{53} In short, his treatment of Australia’s strategic culture rests ultimately on a normatively critical, anti-establishment position.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 273.

\textsuperscript{49} This interpretation is also generally consistent with another of his earlier works. In 1993 Cheeseman argued that while Australian strategic policy was supposed to be determined in accordance with continental defence logic, Australia’s strategic behaviour was still conducted according to ‘forward defence’ logic. This claim is not dissimilar to those made by Evans and Kilcullen, but Cheeseman comes to the opposite conclusion, namely, that Australia should iron out the dissonance by bringing its strategic behaviour into line with its strategic policy, and not the other way around. See Cheeseman, \textit{The Search for Self-Reliance: Australian Defence Since Vietnam} (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1993).

\textsuperscript{50} Cheeseman, ‘Australia,’ 276.

\textsuperscript{51} For example, DFAT is said to favour the internationalist sub-culture while Defence prefers forward defence; \textit{ibid.}, 282.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Ibid.}, 292.

\textsuperscript{53} I.e. his favoured ‘Swedish-style’ self-reliant strategic posture is basically a latent schema, so I will discuss it in chapter 8.
in a truly analytical or policy relevant manner, so not as I have suggested that it should generally be.

The works by Evans, Kilcullen and Cheeseman are unusual: most works about Australian strategic or defence policy do not mention strategic culture per se. For example, Alan Dupont's history of Australia's strategic threat perceptions is not theoretically rigorous, but this is not the point; the key theme is that they have historically been profoundly affected by recognition of Australia's cultural difference with Asia. Throughout he blends material and cultural causes, noting for example that around 1900 fear of Japan was rooted in the same racial and xenophobic mix which determined the attitudes of the colonists to the Chinese, but was heightened by Japan's rising political and military power. He explains the sort of broad cultural/identity shifts that occurred in the 1970s and how important these were for changing threat perceptions for continental defence to largely trump forward defence logic. He also examines what I consider to be several subordinate sub-cultures whose differences with the historically dominant forward defence tradition are rooted in different cultural orientations towards Asia, explaining in passing who was promoting them (and which institutions these figures represented etc). Finally, Dupont explores the disconnect between high levels of public insecurity and the much more balanced, informed and circumspect official (but often classified) strategic threat assessments.

Michael Wesley and Tony Warren investigate three broad currents of thought which are said to guide Australian foreign policy (i.e. not just strategic) decision-making: traditionalism, favouring close ties with culturally similar states; seclusionarism, stressing autarky and self-reliant isolation; and internationalism, which argues for greater regional/multilateral engagement. They note that in the space of thirteen months the Howard government

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54 Dupont cites Barry Buzan’s People States and Fear, implying he does not belong to the ‘strict' rationalist/materialist school of IR scholars and is prepared to explore ideas and culture; Australia’s Threat Perceptions: A Search for Security, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, no. 167, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (Canberra: ANU Press, 1991), i.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid., 9.
57 Ibid., chap. 4.
58 Dupont ultimately concludes that ‘if one were to construct a scale measuring national insecurity, Australia would stand close to the [high] pole,’ but that this is largely unwarranted, musing that ‘there is no apparent correlation between the [material] ability of states to defend themselves and their perception of vulnerability,’ implicitly leaving the door open for consideration of cultural similarity and difference and how such affect strategic threat perceptions; ibid., 93.
made three seemingly inconsistent, major decisions in various foreign policy fields.\textsuperscript{59} But they say these seemingly dissonant outcomes are understandable because:

By describing three distinct currents we do not suggest that an action informed by one current of thought precludes a person from subscribing to others – it is entirely possible for the same person to enunciate different currents of thought at different times. Some leaders fall more consistently within one current, while others shift regularly between currents on different issues.\textsuperscript{60}

They argue that at the heart of the differences between these currents of thought is the way the adherents of each current view Australia, and its place in the world—which in turn derives from impressions about security and national power; from appraisals about where the state sits in the broader states system and how threatening [this environment] is; the influence of nationalism, identity, tradition, ethnic or racial animosities or sympathies; and economic position.\textsuperscript{61}

This is a broad list and an article does not provide the authors with enough space to develop a coherent framework to explain how these aspects all relate to one another. However, it is clear that they consider material factors alongside cultural ones, and they also refer to the agent-structure debate and to Franz Schurmann's work on schools of thought in US foreign policy (discussed in Chapter 2).\textsuperscript{62} It is not necessary to explore their substantive findings in detail save that they claim the traditionalist current, which manifests itself as forward defence in a strategic context, maintains a steady hegemony over Australian security policy.\textsuperscript{63} I mention their article mainly because my proposed model for strategic cultural analysis shares similarities with their ontological universe: the currents of thought they focus on offer holistic but competing definitions of reality they are long-lasting; and they are tied to or promoted by various domestic groups or institutions. In short, the currents of thought co-exist as alternative tools in Australia's wider foreign policy, rather than just its strategic, cultural tool-box.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{59} In 1996-1997, the Howard government strengthened ANZUS; it gave large aid packages to Thailand and Indonesia (i.e. after the Asian Economic Crisis); and it delayed tariffs reduction despite bilateral and WTO pressure. See Michael Wesley and Tony Warren, ‘Wild Colonial Ploys? Currents of Thought in Australian Foreign Policy,’ Australian Journal of Political Science, 35:1 (2000), 9–26.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 12.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 11–12.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 16.
strategic culture-like studies in the Australian IR literature. For example, in a 2007 article that does not mention strategic culture at all, Michael Evans explains how the debate between forward defence and continental defence was first articulated publicly in 1908. In this debate (to which I return in later chapters), the navalist (in other words, an advocate of continental defence) Captain William Creswell, director of naval forces, was pitted against Colonel Hubert John Foster, director of military science at the University of Sydney, who favoured a strong army able to contribute to Imperial power (in order words, forward defence).\(^6^4\) To be sure, Evans still argues normatively that the forward defence tradition should be favoured, but importantly in this article he claims particular contemporary adherents or schema-promoters in key places (such as Alan Dupont and Robert Hill, minister for defence from 2001 to 2006) are the spiritual heirs of Foster leading the contemporary charge back to forward defence (along with himself, Kilcullen and others, of course).\(^6^5\) Evans concludes ultimately that the Creswell-Foster divide is unlikely to disappear in Australian strategic thought mainly because the divide reflects Australia's broader liminal or in-between geopolitical status, which is broadly consistent with my argument in later chapters.\(^6^6\)

For their part, David M. Jones and Andrea Benvenuti see Australian foreign policy oscillating between the continental and forward defence traditions, with a dash of internationalism at times. However they claim all these traditions seek engagement, not isolationism: overall, in their view, Australia has an extrovert personality which means it typically rejects calls for isolationism.\(^6^7\) Their perspective is perhaps closest to that of K.M. Fierke, discussed in Chapter 3, because their analytical focus is on the way actors use myths to shape foreign policy because they offer a useful shorthand for debate. Ultimately they conclude that the pragmatic and regionalist myths (i.e. forward and continental defence) remain locked in an endless struggle to define Australia's foreign policy.\(^6^8\) In a similar vein, William Tow and Henry Albinski explicitly claim that Australia's cultural similarity with the US not only explains why ANZUS has been so durable, but also why Australia should not alter its dominant


\(^{6^5}\) Ibid., 202.

\(^{6^6}\) Ibid., 194.


\(^{6^8}\) Ibid., 118–21.
explicitly advocate that Australia should change its identity. They are critical of the US’s global role and/or what it implies for Australia’s (usually regional) interests. Implicit in the latter argument, of course, is the cultural orientation—we do not want to be like them (i.e. the Yankee imperialists).

This brief literature review demonstrates that while specific applications of the concept of strategic culture to Australia may be sparse (and of variable quality), there is plenty of other more or less similar work being produced by contemporary Australian IR scholars. Thus, culturalist or perhaps just broadly constructivist/critical studies are attending to these matters, but there is certainly space for a more sophisticated approach to strategic cultural analysis of Australian strategic decision-making. I now move to discussion of the makers of strategic decisions in Australia.

Who Makes Australian Strategic Policy?

Identifying who makes strategic policy in Australia is necessary because it affects which parts of the discourse I analyse. I focus on the specifically-strategic discourse produced by government and a fairly small number of academics, with very occasional reference to political cartoons or films. This is not to say that public opinion never matters: Lantis’s work, discussed in Chapter 2, demonstrates that it can; and even when national elections are dominated by non-strategic issues, strategic issues can still have consequences at the ballot box. David Campbell, for example, has used historical polling data to rigorously explain Australia’s foreign-policy-identity and examine its effects on decision-making. A study published by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), however, concluded that in general attitudes are less well formed on defence [compared to other issues like health, education and economic management] because the issues themselves aren’t regularly and publicly debated by political elites. At times I explore public opinion by reporting polling data. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted

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that it tends to matter rarely in the Australian strategic context. Alan Gyngell and Michael Wesley make this point strongly, arguing that comparisons with the US are of limited value because:

Such assumptions may be justifiable where the strict separation of power, institutional rivalries, and culture of competing interests generate greater controversies over more issues. They are highly problematic for Australia, where foreign policy is heavily concentrated in the executive, is institutionally relatively hierarchic, and for the most part has a pervasive culture of collegiality, especially among the senior officials.\(^{74}\)

They favour Max Weber and Hannah Arendt in preference to the American tradition of political science and find that Australian foreign policy is made in a more consensual manner that, borrowing from Michel Foucault, is like \(\text{a conduct of conducts}\) and a management of possibilities.\(^{75}\) They argue that actual decision-making in Australian foreign policy contexts tends to occur according to a common set of understandings about the nature and subject matter of the policy process. This does not mean that all policy-makers think exactly the same things about foreign policy. Their shared understandings occur at a level below their specific opinions about policy: their words carry a substratum of knowledge specific to participants providing vital information and context.\(^{76}\)

They explain that in Australia, with its hierarchical institutions and the parliamentary system in which the legislative and executive functions overlap, the foreign policy discourse is narrower and the range of strategic options usually considered is generally \(\text{less diverse}\) than it would be in the United States.\(^{77}\)

Gyngell and Wesley also note that the foreign and strategic policy community is small, very collegial and overwhelming dominated by just a few institutions: the Department of Defence, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).\(^{78}\) They also conclude that \(\text{The Prime Minster is the most influential individual in Australian foreign policy making through his or her control over, and influence in, cabinet, and that the executive in general has the final, authoritative decision on all policy}\)

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\(^{75}\) Ibid., 41–47.

\(^{76}\) Ibid., 51.

\(^{77}\) Ibid., 45–50

\(^{78}\) Ibid., 84.
The next most influential individual, partly because this minister is usually a powerful politician in their own right and also because he or she runs Australia’s day-to-day relations with the world. The next most important strategic decision-maker is usually the minister for defence, although the authors note that this minister’s influence is typically only on par with or greater than the foreign minister if the issue is obviously defence-related or otherwise DFAT handles most foreign policy matters.

The intelligence community also rates extended treatment in Gnygel and Wesley’s study. It is also closely integrated with Defence, DFAT and PM&C in a manner very different to the jurisdictional rivalries and turf-wars that characterise the US intelligence and foreign affairs community. The six components of the Australian intelligence community are divided broadly into two analytical and four collection agencies, and of these, only two — the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) and the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) — engage in active or offensive operations. All these institutions collectively produce the Strategic Basis Papers (discussed below) and while I do not discuss the agencies themselves much in the following chapters I analyse these papers in great detail.

Finally, while the authors devoted full chapters to the bureaucracy, the executive and the intelligence community, the effect of other institutions like parliament, political parties, pressure groups, the media and public opinion on foreign policy-making are contained in a single chapter because

The domestic influences on foreign policy are highly varied in terms of their sources and impact. For the most part they remain dormant, significant only in terms of their potential to be aroused and to set the parameters of foreign policy makers’ freedom of action [so] the great bulk of foreign policy [is] formulated and carried out beyond the attention of all but its practitioners.

79 Ibid., 96–101.
80 Ibid., 102–11.
81 Ibid., 133–5.
82 The Office of National Assessments (ONA) has a wider, ‘all foreign policy’ remit and the Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) is more focussed on assessing strategic threats; ibid., 141–44.
83 ASIS operates overseas; ASIO is more focused on domestic security. The Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) collects ‘electronic’ data of all kinds, while the final collection agency, the Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO) coordinates satellites and radar and receives similar data from the US; ibid., 136–41.
84 Ibid., 138.
85 Ibid., 202.
In the Australian case, then, it is appropriate to keep analysis focused on official documents and ‘strategic-focused’
academic literature, with the ‘wider discourse only consulted occasionally.

Regarding who (or which formal institutions) actually make strategic decisions, both in the sense of
‘signing off’ on recommendations put before them and in determining reactions to strategic crises, I return to my
policy/behaviour distinction. Put simply, foreign policy behaviour or immediate responses to emergencies is
generally conducted by the ‘high executive’ most obviously the prime minister and the foreign and defence
ministers. In a more formal sense key decisions are taken in Cabinet or perhaps just the National Security
Committee (NSC) which typically includes about a third to a half of Cabinet (i.e. all the senior political figures) and its meetings are also usually attended by the senior bureaucrats at each ministry, in an advisory capacity. The PM&C also typically manages the initial responses to foreign crises but if one becomes a drawn-out affair DFAT will soon take over and manage the ongoing response.

The formulation of strategic policy, however, tends to be done in a more complex and diffuse manner, with committees like the Secretaries Committee on National Security (SCNS, typically referred to as ‘scones’ in Canberra), the bureaucratic counterpart to the cabinet-level NSC, playing a greater role. Below it, a Strategic Policy and Coordination Group comprised mainly of deputy secretaries and their appointees, produces reports for the higher committees. But when it comes to ‘final decisions’ on strategic policy or what gets put before Cabinet, the defence minister and his Secretary are the key individuals: the former has ‘political clout’ while the latter is a ‘technocratic expert’ and while the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF – i.e. the ranking ADF officer) is also important his influence is limited by the Secretary having better access to the minister and a more direct role in

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86 Ministers who will always be present include the prime minister, the foreign and defence ministers, the Attorney-General, the Treasurer and the Cabinet Secretary, while the ministers for transport or immigration, plus others less frequently, may also be invited at times. See Ross Babbage, ‘Strategic Decision-Making: Optimising Australia’s National Security Planning and Coordination for 2015,’ Kokoda Papers, no. 8, May 2008 (Canberra: The Kokoda Foundation, 2008), 1–3.
87 Gyngell and Wesley, Making Australian Foreign Policy, 96.
88 I.e. the secretaries of DFAT, Defence, Treasury, Attorney-General and PM&C, and others if needed; ibid., 83–85.
89 I.e. the deputy secretaries of the major ministries. It also tends to have academics and/or ex-diplomats as permanent members at times, and it calls a large range of bureaucrats before it: Babbage, ‘Strategic Decision-Making,’ 3.
confined to defence which deal with all sorts of technical matters, and the mix of such is constantly changing.

Finally, all formal strategic decision-making is supposed to be directed by the Strategic Basis Papers which have been produced by various intelligence entities over the decades: now they are largely prepared by the Office of National Assessments (ONA, the peak intelligence-analysis institution)\(^92\) and before this was created in 1977 they were produced by more ad hoc entities like the Joint Committee on Intelligence or the Joint Defence Committee.\(^93\)

These documents provide a general overview of Australia’s strategic position and identify the source and severity of strategic threats quite specifically and bluntly\(^1\) hence why they have to remain classified. After usually six-months or so of drafting and re-drafting these reports have to go back up the chain\(^1\) for approval by Cabinet or the NSC.

Importantly, the Strategic Basis Papers do not necessarily always dictate policy\(^1\) more formal and public policy statements like Defence White Papers or Strategic Reviews (i.e. up-dates\(^1\) released between White Papers) or ministerial statements to parliament, while strongly guided by the classified Strategic Basis Papers and drafted in accordance with them, actually constitute strategic policy. But for practical purposes actual strategic decisions, both policy and behavioural, are made by individuals who have seen or prepared the classified documents, especially those who sit in Cabinet, the Secretaries Committee and the two or three committees below it, along with a handful of advisory members from outside the bureaucracy (i.e. from think-tanks or universities). Several dozen key individuals, then, will have intimate knowledge of the most recent Strategic Basis Paper, making it a very influential document despite that it is, in a formal sense, only an advisory report and is not a statement of actual policy.

The Australian Strategic Discourse

Having established who makes Australian foreign policy generally, and having also explained which are the most important policy documents (and roughly where they come from in the complex arrangement of committees that is

\(^91\) Ibid., 258.
\(^92\) Gyngell and Wesley, Making, 142–44.
\(^93\) This collected the directors of intelligence institutions, the relevant deputy secretaries, and intelligence officers from each service – but its composition changed from time to time. Ball and Cheeseman, ‘Australian Defence,’ 260–65.
I conclude with some discussion of the categories of sources on which I have relied to examine strategic discourse in Australia. In a general sense, ‘strategic discourse’ could include anything in the public sphere concerned with Australia’s strategic decision-making. However, such an inclusive definition would make the number of possibly relevant documents so numerous as to make this statement largely unworkable. As a result, in order to be more specific, I rely on five broad categories of documents in, very roughly, descending order of importance:

1. **Formal Policy Documents**: I refer regularly to the Strategic Basis Papers which are produced every two to five years. The first was produced in 1946 and they are all classified for thirty years.\(^94\) White Papers (published every seven to ten years) and Strategic Reviews (published every two to three years) are also very important sources and I will refer to them regularly because they are the most important and common forms of public statements about strategic policy, although they obviously ‘sanitise’ the Strategic Basis Papers for public consumption. Given that these latter documents are not available after 1979, however, I must rely on White Papers and Strategic Reviews after this date although I also note that several Strategic Basis Papers (those produced in 1979 and 1983) were leaked and extracts were published in the 1980s which I will refer to briefly. Some Foreign Affairs White Papers are also generally instructive, but they are rare, have only begun to be produced recently and tend not to focus on strategic issues, so I do not examine these papers in depth.

2. **Academic Literature**: obviously there is a lot of strategic debate, broadly speaking, in the academic literature writ large. Nevertheless, in Australia’s case the circle of people significantly influencing strategic policy is fairly small, and this is certainly so historically if somewhat less so now.\(^95\) For example, of the seven contemporary

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\(^94\) It should be noted that the 1979 paper, though declassified, is not yet publicly available.

\(^95\) It could be argued that the ‘most influential’ at present are: Robert Ayson, Ross Babbage, Desmond Ball, Coral Bell, Graeme Cheeseman, Paul Dibb, Graeme Dobell, Alan Dupont, Stephan Fruelling, Ron Huisken, Meredith Thatcher, Brendan Nicholson Robert O’Neill, Mark Thompson and Hugh White.
nks only two existed before 2000.\(^96\) It is in the publications
issued by these formally independent\(^97\) foundations and institutes that much of the ‘nuts and bolts’ of strategic
debate takes place.\(^98\) There are also other academics whose main area of expertise is not in strategic policy, and who
only write on strategic matters occasionally, so I will explore some of their work, including when it falls outside of
the three major traditions and is judged to be an example of a latent strategic sub-culture. Also note that the two
most influential (and the oldest) academic journals, *Australian Journal of International Affairs* and *Australian
Journal of Politics and History*, are cited regularly in the following chapters — the latter, in particular, has an
excellent bi-annual overview of Australian foreign policy behaviour that is a good source of ‘raw data.’ And the
*Australian Journal of Political Science* has also published a number of relevant articles on Australian strategic
policy.

3. Senior Executive Papers: Because prime ministers tend to dominate foreign policy, any evidence ‘directly’ from
them is important. Thus, personal correspondence, press or academic articles and speeches, much of it sourced from
the Commonwealth Archives in Canberra, will be referred to regularly. These sources offer an excellent direct
insight into the cultural attitudes at the highest level of strategic decision-making. Note however that I am not
adopting a ‘strong-psychological’ approach and claiming that the mind-set of the prime minister, as Holsti implicitly
did (see Chapter 2) vis-à-vis John Foster Dulles, is ‘all important.’ Instead, I am suggesting that, as the single most
important person in Cabinet, a prime minister’s view will always be influential and often decisive in strategic
decision-making. Something similar can be said regarding the defence minister and the foreign minister, although
obviously their influence will typically not be as strong as the prime minister’s, and occasionally a senior bureaucrat
has a significant impact on strategic decision-making (examples include Sir John Burton in the late-1940s, Sir
Arthur Tange in the 1960s and into the 1970s, and Hugh White in more recent times).

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\(^{96}\) The Australian Institute for International Affairs opened in 1933, the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre in 1966, while the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, the Lowy Institute, the Kokoda Foundation, the Centre for International Security Studies and the Land Warfare Studies Centre have all opened since the year 2000.

\(^{97}\) ‘Formally’ because while many commentators claim these institutions ‘lean’ to certain sides in various debates, few would seriously argue that the scholars working at these institutes were ‘mere mouthpieces’ for political parties or other groups.

\(^{98}\) The ‘Canberra Papers’ series from the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University is the longest-running; the Lowy Institute and the Australian Strategic Policy Institute both publish several series.
4. Parliamentary Documents: the most important are the parliamentary debates (i.e. Hansard) particularly the various ministerial statements about defence matters and the following debates. While I generally rely for evidence of Australia’s strategic policy on the Strategic Basis Papers and White Papers, which are more concise, Hansard is nevertheless an important part, perhaps in a democracy like Australia’s the single most important part, of the public record so I will refer to it when necessary, usually to explore more explicit (and occasionally colourful and even quite offensive) cultural comparisons with other states which may be made during heated debates on the floor of the House. Moreover, prior to the 1960s, White Papers were rare and most strategic policy statements were typically delivered as addresses to parliament, making Hansard effectively the only source of official pronouncements for much of Australia’s history. Of lesser importance are reports produced by the Joint Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs and Defence, partly because the committee often had only limited access to classified information, and partly because it has an advisory role only.

5. The ‘Wider’ Discourse: I refer to the discourse that takes place in the media, especially articles about strategic matters that appear in the major newspapers like The Australian (the only formally national paper), The Sydney Morning Herald (the largest paper in the country), The Age (a close second, published in Melbourne), and The Bulletin which was published from 1880 until 2008, and was for more than a century Australia’s premier politics and current affairs weekly magazine. I also occasionally present evidence from the wider public discourse, like political cartoons or films.

I use all these documentary sources to explore how relevant each strategic subculture was, and how well each resonated (i.e. the micro-dimension of strategic culture) in particular historical contexts. I explore why certain sub-cultures were chosen or activated, becoming dominant or influential (or not), thereby providing evidence of the friend/foe calculus occurring. Specifically, and because it is the traditionally undertheorized aspect of strategic

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99 Other than drafts prepared for ministers by their departments which can be found (with difficulty) in the archives.
explicit and implicit examples from the documents described above that reveal what sort of cultural orientation informed the particular strategic decision in question, and so demonstrate which strategic schema was resonating with decision-makers, and so driving their deliberations from a cultural perspective. I analysed the friend/foe calculus implicit in Evans’ Tyranny of Dissonance in this manner above, noting his explicit and implicit modes of expressing a favoured cultural orientation, and this is generally illustrative of the approach that I will take in the following chapters.

Given that I have argued that a state’s dominant cultural identity gives meaning to its external strategic environment, I do also assess (but typically more briefly) the technical aspect of strategic decision-making or the extent to which the sub-culture was relevant given the external strategic circumstances. My intent is always to show why a strategic sub-culture was or was not chosen in the circumstances under consideration; so, why its favoured interpretation did or did not apply in the historical context under consideration. And in so doing I will also construct over the course of Chapters 6, 7 and 8 a grand-narrative or macro-explanation of the broad trends in Australian strategic decision-making since the late nineteenth century until the present, to be completed in Chapter 9 with some discussion about the present state of strategic decision-making and its likely future. Accordingly, discussion now moves in the next three chapters into a phase that is much more concerned with empirical analysis than it has been to date, beginning in Chapter 6 with the sub-culture which has been the most dominant generally in Australia’s history, forward defence.
Chapter 6

Forward Defence

The forward defence sub-culture has traditionally dominated Australia’s strategic culture. It was overwhelmingly dominant from the 1870s up until the late 1960s. Despite becoming subordinate since then it has remained very influential. Indeed, in chapter 7 I argue that by 2007 it may have even risen to dominance again, towards the end of the 11-year-long Howard era, if only fleetingly and incoherently. In this chapter I illustrate why it was so influential, with particular focus on the degree to which the cultural orientation at its heart traditionally resonated so well with Australia’s dominant cultural identity.

The Logic of Forward Defence

A general idea of the logic of forward defence can be provided by examining Australian politics at the turn of the last century, because it was only during the 1890s that Australians began to seriously debate the creation of a self-governing federation and consider strategic matters more generally. The cultural orientation at the core of forward defence was one in which very strong feelings of cultural similarity with other ‘Anglo’ states produced powerful feelings of affinity towards them and a virtually complete absence of threat perception from these states. On the other hand, Australians were typically at a minimum wary, and sometimes outright terrified, of the culturally different ‘Asian-Others’ to the north. So, Western powers, especially the Anglo ones, were seen as similar, trustworthy and friendly, while Asian societies were seen as different, less trustworthy and at least potential foes. And, as I show below, this cultural orientation resonated very closely with Australia’s dominant cultural identity around 1900.

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1 These included Britain and the white settler states/colonies, so New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and Rhodesia, as well as, generally speaking at the time, the US. Calling them all ‘Anglo’ only recognises their dominant political classes.

This cultural orientation caused Australians to interpret their external strategic environment in a particular way. Specifically, three basic material variables—geography, the global balance of power and comparative development/technology levels—were given their full meaning. Australia was a large but very thinly populated island in the Southwestern Pacific, but its society was stable and unified, developed, and fairly productive. Its natural allies were relatively powerful, and in Britain’s case very so but the locus of Britain’s power was far away and it had many other strategic interests. By contrast Australia’s cultural enemies, the Asians, were close; and they were big in relative demographic terms, making them potentially very strong, although at that time they were disorganised, not particularly productive, and lacked the capacity to invade Australia. The forward defence sub-culture held that Australia was not itself immediately in danger, but it was appreciated that its strategic fortunes were generally tied to the British Empire’s fate. Accordingly, Australia naturally decided that it should fight its battles alongside the cultural kin as far away and as quickly as possible or at minimum it would secure the Pacific before possibly sending forces further afield. And, more generally, it would fight to maintain the political, economic and strategic hegemony of the white races, in particular the Anglo-Saxons.

I have argued in previous chapters that to be chosen or activated a strategic schema must both be relevant and that it must also resonate. At the turn of the last century forward defence basically fitted Australia’s external strategic environment quite well, mainly because of the global power and prestige of Britain which, although declining relatively, was still a very impressive strategic entity. Australia contributed to the Boer War, and more generally, Australians had enjoyed prosperity during the heyday of the Pax Britannica. In view of its relative power, contributing to Imperial defence was really about all Australia could do (other than nothing) in a strategic sense. It certainly could not resist a sustained attack by a hostile great power entirely on its own, or defend its vital sea-lanes alone. Moreover, Australia, being similar to Britain socially, could raise well-trained and effective (if

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3For two concise summaries of the forward defence logic emphasising geography and relative power, see: Alan Renouf, The Frightened Country (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1979), ch. 1; and E.M. Andrews, ‘Patterns in Australian Foreign Policy,’ in David Pettit, ed., Selected Readings in Australian Foreign Policy (Melbourne: Sorrett, 1973), 105-15.
Britain’s order of battle. And in some cases Australians could make a value-added contribution to Imperial forces: in South Africa, for example, more-rural Australia could supply skilled horsemen of the type Britain could not. In short, this sort it out over there, and fast mentality was to a certain degree forced on Australia as a result of the brute material facts of the world in 1900 which imposed limits on the possible range of strategic interpretations available.

Forward defence also resonated well with Australia’s dominant cultural identity because Social Darwinist, or at least racist, attitudes were common then. Benjamin Kidd argued in the 1880s that individual Aboriginal children could learn just as quickly as Europeans, but he also claimed that certain cultures had collectively evolved particular virtues (greater, honour, integrity, industriousness etc) that gave them distinct advantages. He also dispassionately but disparagingly called Australian Aboriginal society the zero from which anthropologists have long reckoned our intellectual progress upwards. But more extreme varieties of Social Darwinism mixed science with appeals for, in effect, genocide. Sir Charles Dilke, for example, argued in 1870 that the elimination of unfit races was a moral duty, saying The gradual extinction of inferior races is not only a law of nature, but a blessing to mankind, and he specifically applauded the extinction (in 1876) of the hopelessly savage Tasmanian Aboriginals. Dilke believed the British were destined to rule the world as a master race which was a not an uncommon position in late-nineteenth century Imperial circles (Cecil B. Rhodes was the primary example).

Yet to be fair, most Europeans and Australians probably subscribed more to the paternalistic notions of a mission civilatrice or Kipling’s famous white man’s burden, reflecting an awareness through their knowledge of classical literature that their own ancestors had once been painted savages who had been improved by contact with Greco-Roman culture. Nevertheless, Social Darwinism was prominent in Western thought, broadly speaking, in the first half of the 20th century.

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7 Ibid., 58.
8 Social Darwinism drew an analogy between social competition between races and biological competition between species – only ‘the strong’ survive. Not all such thinking was as crudely deterministic as Arthur de Gobineau’s (see An Essay on The Inequality of Human Races, trans., Adrian Collins (New York: GP Putnam’s Son, 1915 [1855]), or later Nazi ideology.
10 But note that Dilke argued against actively hastening their decline: Greater Britain (Macmillan: London, 1868).
identity was marked by broadly racist assumptions, these resonated
strongly with the cultural orientation of the forward defence sub-culture. Consider the affinity-perception aspect of
the friend/foe calculus. The other ‘Anglo’ states were regarded as very-similar-Others and so as natural allies.\(^{13}\)
Other European powers were also to varying degrees regarded as similar and as potential strategic allies, especially
if their internal institutions were broadly liberal-democratic (i.e. France) rather than monarchical (i.e. Germany) or
openly despotic (i.e. Russia). The Dutch, too, were also generally regarded as ‘trusted custodians’ of the island
archipelago to Australia’s immediate north.\(^{14}\) But the relationship with Britain was obviously the key one. In 1885,
for example, a wave of public grief and apprehension swept Sydney following news of Charles ‘Chinese’ Gordon’s
death at the hands of the Mahdi’s forces in Sudan. Although he had received no request for assistance from the
Imperial government in London, the premier of New South Wales, William Daley, decided to raise and send a
volunteer regiment to Sudan, saying ‘we only know that British blood I that Australian blood I has been shed in
defence of England’s rights, and we respond accordingly.’\(^{15}\) In 1887, Henry Parkes, the most significant figure
behind Australia’s drive to federation, referred to Britain regularly as the ‘mother country’ and tried to calm fears of
separation by saying ‘I love Old England, because I see to my lights the grand future possible to the English people,’\(^6\)
by which he was automatically including Australians.\(^{16}\) And when the Boer War began in 1899, Edmund Barton, the
leader of the Australian Federation Movement, stated ‘when our empire is at war with any other power whatsoever,
it becomes our turn to declare the motto ‘The empire, right or wrong.’\(^{17}\)

In essence, Australia saw not just similarity with Britain but sameness. The *Bulletin*, historically the most
nationalistic newspaper,\(^{18}\) had constantly boasted that the British race is better represented in Australia than in
‘cosmopolitan and nigger-infested England.’\(^9\) Donald Horne has also claimed that in the early 1900s most
Australians did not want an independent republic: they preferred ‘the idea of the British, the pomp of empire and the

\(^{16}\) Henry Parkes, ‘Australia and the Imperial Connection’, *Nineteenth Century* (May 1884).
\(^{19}\) Quoted in W.K. Hancock, *Australia* (London: Benn, 1930), 56.
Humphrey McQueen has also argued that Australia was (and largely remains) a frontier of European, British capitalism. Other Anglo states were seen in a comparable light. Canadian military units were welcomed in Sydney during several Russian scares in the late-1870s. New Zealand was seriously considered for inclusion in Australia until it ultimately rejected that option in 1901. And America’s Great White Fleet was extremely well received in Australia in 1908 after the prime minister, Alfred Deakin, had invited it with the observation that No other Federation in the world possesses so many features of likeness to that of the United States as does the Commonwealth of Australia. All this demonstrates how Australia’s dominant cultural identity, from an affinity perspective, was powerfully pro-Imperial and pro-Anglo generally.

It is therefore clear who Australia’s strategic friends were around 1900. And its cultural enemies were plainly identified too. The dominant cultural identity was deeply hostile towards all Asians for overtly racist reasons, underpinning the White Australia Policy. But Asians were regarded not so much as a conventional strategic threat that would sweep south in a war, and instead, more anxiety was focussed on Asian immigration which, it was widely thought, would imperil Australia’s Britishness because servile Asians could not understand British rights and liberties. The immigration debates after 1901 provide an excellent example of overt cultural comparison and they are striking for what was at issue: every MP save one argued not about whether immigration policy should be racist or not, but rather what the form of racist-exclusion should take. Should it be openly racist by listing proscribed races? Or just racist in effect by using a dictation test in a Western-European language (from which white-Britons, including illiterate ones, were exempt)? This latter position won the day, and was interpreted to

20Donald Horne, The Lucky Country (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1965), 78–79.
27Bruce Smith argued that the notion of ‘hordes of Asiatics descending upon us … is a fable.’ See Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (henceforth CPD), House of Representatives (henceforth HR), 1901–1902 Session, vol. IV, 4657, 6 September 1901.
much of the debate was unashamedly racist. Sir William McMillan MP, for example, argued by way of a direct analogy between Australia having the right to say to a shipload of lepers... "Clear away from our coasts!" and the country's right to turn away boatloads of Asians.

It is hard to overstate the importance of the White Australia Policy to the new nation, and what this tells us about Australia's dominant cultural identity around 1900. Deakin claimed it flowed irresistibly from "the instinct of pure self-preservation," while the historian W.K. Hancock has argued that it was "the indispensable condition of every other Australian policy" in the early 20th century. But while it is offensive to modern sensibilities (and to contemporary Asians—especially the Japanese), it was clearly a commonsensical position among white populations generally, and not just in Australia, at the time. Consider that Edmund Barton, Australia's first prime minister, said:

I do not think that the doctrine of equality of man was really ever intended to include racial equality. There is no racial equality. These other races are, in comparison with white races, unequal and inferior.... There is a deep seated difference, and we see no prospect and no promise of its ever being effaced.

From a strictly strategic perspective, things were similar. The Jervois Report in 1877 was not particularly alarmist and when Britain and Germany divided the Pacific Islands into spheres of influence in 1886 tensions eased further. But after Japan decisively defeated China in 1895 the real concerns began to emerge, and in late 1895 the annual colonial military exercises took the form of repelling a fictitious attempt by Japanese war vessels to enter Sydney harbour. The signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 was met with very mixed reactions in...
But racially-tinged apprehension was present in the strategic discourse even before the events at Tsushima. In 1903, Sir Thomas Thomson Ewing, a Liberal-Protectionist member of Parliament and future defence minister, had argued forcefully (and somewhat ominously) in parliament that "Between the white and the yellow man there is racial hatred... They are destined to be enemies for all time ... the white race is superior ... and [the white man knows] what he must do to maintain his supremacy." Likewise, Deakin explained why he had invited the Great White Fleet in similar terms:

[Its] visit is universally popular here, not so much because of our blood affection for the American though that is sincere, but because of our distrust of the Yellow Race in the North Pacific and our recognition of the ântente cordialeâspreading among all white men who realise the Yellow Peril to Caucasian civilization, creeds and politics.

To summarise, just as newly-federated Australia began to make serious strategic decisions for the first time around 1900, the cultural orientation implicit in the forward defence sub-culture was resonating strongly in the threat- as well as the affinity- perception aspect. I now move to examine the ebbs and flows of its fortunes in deeper historical context for the remainder of this long chapter.

**Australian Grand Strategy Before the Great War**

Australiaâs strategic culture was not much affected by the sporadically violent and ultimately decisive strategic encounter with the Aboriginals that began with the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. The contest was so heavily lopsided that it actually had little formal *military* dimension. Instead almost all the actual fighting, which itself was rarely *intense* in the ordinary sense, took place between ad hoc bands of settlers and/or various locally-raised
One of the more significant conflicts involved the Wiradjuri people, the largest tribe in Australia. The Wiradjuri uprisings, or the Bathurst Wars, that occurred between 1823 and 1827 in New South Wales, and the Wiradjuri Wars along the Murrumbidgee river from 1838 to 1840, were guerrilla-style wars in which hundreds of settlers and British soldiers, and thousands of members of the Wiradjuri people, were killed. But by 1850 most of the continent was pacified.

The conventional explanation for this has focussed perhaps too much on the superiority of European technology, but the more essential reason was deeply cultural, and so strategic-cultural. Put simply, the majority of Aboriginal tribes were conceptually ill-equipped to understand they were facing an ‘invasion’ and should coordinate defensive efforts. Most tribes also followed what has been called a ‘spear-culture’ approach to social regulation and justice which was so ritualised and imbued with sacred meanings that, quite literally, whites and their strange beasts were often considered ‘outside reality’ they were left alone and avoided. Similar arguments explain the complete failure of any Aboriginal tribe, in over a century, to adopt gunpowder weapons or horse-riding tactics. And, of course, European diseases likely killed more Aboriginals than white settlers did.

The conflict inside Australia therefore affected its formal military or strategic development little. Occasionally military units would campaign against Aboriginals, but for eighty years or so after 1788 the Army’s primary duties in Australia were to oversee the convict public-works teams and to provide general policing services, meaning units were more likely to see action overseas as whole regiments were sent to trouble spots elsewhere.

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41. I.e. Colonial, Mounted, Border and Native Police. All included ‘detribalised’ Aboriginals: Grey, Military History, ch. 2.
42. At least 700 languages were spoken by around 400,000 people in 1788, meaning most Aboriginal peoples actually numbered well under 1000 persons; Grey, Military History, 30.
43. Ibid., 35–37.
44. Whites had both guns and horses, but muskets were not very effective when not used en masse, so it was only after breech-loading rifles were introduced in the 1860s that the settlers enjoyed an absolutely decisive advantage. See ibid., 30.
45. Violence was regulated by strong social taboos, and offences were typically punishable by a publically-administered wounding to various parts of the body, carried out usually in a ‘consensual’ manner. See Henry Reynolds, The Other Side of the Frontier: Aboriginal Resistance to the European Invasion of Australia (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2006).
48. About 500 troops were deployed to Tasmania in 1830 and again in 1839 for eradication campaigns against Tasmanian Aboriginals, while about 400 troops took part in the Battle of Pinjarra in Western Australia in 1834; Grey, Military History, 34.
49. Especially India (in 1829, 1837, 1857) and New Zealand (in 1845, 1847, 1854 and 1860); ibid., 18.
the Empire indeed, there was no real ‘forward defence strategy’ before the 1870s because none of these forces were actually ‘Australian’.50

After the 1870 Intercolonial Conference British units left and the colonies began to organise their own local defences. But Jeffrey Grey says ‘if the motivation in London ... had been to instil a more mature appreciation of colonial defence responsibilities ... the period until Federation in 1901 was to prove a disappointment’. The colonies struggled to maintain the few gunboats commissioned, coastal defences erected, and units raised before 1890 in the tough economic times of the decade that followed.51 After Federation things only improved slowly given that the passing of the Defence Act 1904 was so troubled.52 But from a strategic cultural perspective the Creswell-Foster debate, beginning in 1908, for the first time pitted two coherent positions on Australian strategic decision-making against one another. Captain William Creswell, the Director of Naval Forces, favoured a large, independent navy, and so roughly a continental defence position, on the basis that Australia may not be able to rely on the Royal Navy should the latter be pressed hard in Europe. Colonel Hubert Foster, a British officer and Director of Military Science at the University of Sydney, countered that Australia should continue to plan to send the Army overseas.53 On the surface, at least, these years saw the first effective influence of the continental defence sub-culture. It impressed the newly-elected (but short-lived) Labor government of Andrew Fisher, and by 1910 a Royal Australian Navy (RAN), institutionally separate from the Royal Navy, was established and in an even greater coup Britain would partly subsidise the force.54

Yet we should nevertheless not interpret the creation of the RAN as meaning that continental defence had become dominant. This was so for two reasons: first, the RAN was never specifically configured to operate

50 Indeed, about one third of all Redcoats were typically Irish and another third were drawn from outside Britain for most of the 19th century: Michael Glover, Wellington As Military Commander (London: Penguin Books, 2001 [1968]), ch. 1.
51 Grey, Military History, 43.
52 Ibid., 44–48.
53 This was supposed to organise the remnants of the old colonial forces into a single force, but it was widely regarded as an abject failure that required extensive amendment into the next decade: ibid., 69–70.
54 Parliament of Australia, The Defence of Australia by Colonel H. Foster (Director, Military Studies, Sydney University) together with remarks thereon by Captain W.R. Creswell, Naval Director (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1908).
55 And Australia would not contribute funds to the ‘Dreadnought race’ between Britain and Germany that had accelerated in the years prior to 1909; Andrew Fisher, speech, ‘ALP Defence Policy,’ Gympie, 30 March 1909.
after Field Marshal Lord Kitchener visited and reminded Australians in 1909 that ‘the best defence is generally by taking the offensive’ the newly-elected Liberal government of Alfred Deakin introduced universal rolling call-up of late-teen males (i.e. ‘boy conscription’ to enable an army up to 80,000 to be raised quickly, at least half of which (plus virtually all the small regular units not involved in training the conscripts) would be tasked for overseas operations. The Defence Minister, Joseph Cook, told parliament in the same year that Australia’s strategic role had now crystallized; having ‘grown to manhood now’ it would henceforth be a buttress to the Empire, instead of a burden on it and he then painted a sinister picture of Japan, saying it was a nation whose ideals are, in many respects, as unlike ours as it is possible to be and who may well yet play a troublesome role in the region. These arrangements were confirmed at the 1909 Imperial Defence Conference, indicating that there was no real desire for Australia to adopt an independent strategic role. So while the continental defence sub-culture may have forced a degree of compromise around 1910, the forward defence tradition was still dominant. And its cultural resonance is clearly apparent in a bloodcurdling speech that Billy Hughes, the Attorney General made in March, 1913. He drew a direct analogy between Australia’s and America’s settlement experience, and then he drew a parallel with the Aboriginals’ fate and white-Australia’s likely fate if it failed to support the Empire:

We were destined to have our own way from the beginning, [Australia] and America — two nations that have always had their way because they killed everybody else to get it. I declare to you that in no other way will we be able to come to our own except by preparing to hold that which we now have ... we have banished [the Aboriginal] race from the face of the earth. We must not be too proud, lest we should too in time disappear.

These sentiments, very roughly put though they are, largely encapsulate Australia’s dominant cultural identity prior to 1914. This example of the use of historical analogy in argument indicates that Australians were aware of the

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56The RAN had to rely heavily on Royal Navy bases and logistics; it was designed to ‘complement’ the small capital-ship-heavy British Fleet with cruisers and destroyers; the RAN never acquired a battleship; Grey, Military History, 76–79.  
57The National Service scheme was more properly ‘sustained cadet-training’ – i.e. men aged 15 to 25 would take part in regular training camps but would never ‘serve’ for long periods continuously. Consequently, many regular forces were tasked more with training than with actually preparing for war as part of coherent units. See ibid., 80–81.  
59Letter, Prime Minister Joseph Cook to Britain, February 1914, in Meaney, A Documentary History, 203–204.  
60Sydney Morning Herald, 13 March 1913.
through their dim awareness (and occasional open celebration) of the fact that they had in large part successfully committed genocide against another race. They widely accepted it as given that their strategic and often their wider (i.e. especially economic) fate was tied inextricably to the British Empire's fortunes. There was not just a degree of similarity perception but a feeling of *sameness* with Britain and the other white Dominions; the use of *kin* and *blood* metaphors to describe Australia's in-group was very common. Australia had also explicitly assumed a strategic role too as a *buttress* to (and not a burden on) the Empire. As to direct cultural comparisons, both similar-to and different-from, there are plenty and I have only selected a few of the many that I came across. Clearly perceptions of cultural difference, whether expressed directly, by way of historical analogy, metaphor or role-assignation, really matter significantly when Australians engaged in strategic decision-making prior to the First World War. Even the cartoonists were involved in this process: for example, a cartoon from 1911 depicts Australia as a small child *sleeping at his homework* as a menacing *Jap* soldier steals up from behind brandishing a cavalry sabre.\(^61\)

It is still very apparent, however, that considerations of relative material power were also important in determining overall strategic threat perceptions; appreciation of the relative power of states or governments explains why Australians were fearful of *Chinese immigrants*, rather than *China* \(\tilde{\text{t}}\) it was understood that the Imperial government was weak and ineffectual, notwithstanding China's massive size. And the steady rise of Japan's power did cause Australian strategic threat perceptions to rise steadily along with it, especially in the interwar years (examine below). Consistent with my general argument, and so also with Rousseau's findings (see Chapter 3), perceptions of cultural similarity/difference *and* understandings about relative power differentials *both* mattered when Australia assessed the source and severity of strategic threats in this early formative period.

**The Apogee of Forward Defence Logic: The First World War**

I characterise the period 1914 \(\tilde{\text{t}}\) 1919 as the one in which forward defence enjoyed its greatest dominance in a strategic cultural sense. Australia committed heavily to the First World War and sustained very heavy losses,

entire population was mobilised; and Australia had one of the highest casualty rates among the Allies,\textsuperscript{62} reflecting the status of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) as one of the premier Allied ‘shock’ formations.\textsuperscript{63} One reason for the high casualty-count was the way that the new nation committed to the war effort, namely, by adhering closely to a forward defence strategy in which the primary effort was directed towards deploying large infantry units for use in attritional warfare.

Australia’s war effort included the involvement of the 1st Division, Australian Imperial Force (1 AIF) in the Gallipoli Campaign for much of 1915, creating the enduring ANZAC legend which is often said to be the founding myth of the Australian nation.\textsuperscript{64} Later in the war many units remained in the Middle East to fight against Turkey. But Australia’s heaviest involvement was on the Western Front, with three and eventually four divisions deployed alongside New Zealand divisions, initially as components of British armies and then, from November 1917, together under an Australian commander (General John Monash) as ANZAC forces, meaning that over 100,000 combat troops were deployed at any one time (peaking at 117,000 in late-1917) for a period of about two years.\textsuperscript{65} Losses were very heavy: the newly arrived 5 AIF, for example, suffered 5,533 casualties in a total complement of approximately 17,000 at Fromelles in a 24-hour period in mid-July 1916.\textsuperscript{66} It is more important for me, however, to assess why the forward defence sub-culture, requiring as it did that large infantry formations be deployed in intense attritional fighting literally on the other side of the world, was deemed both relevant by, and why it resonated so well with, Australia’s strategic decision-makers during this crucial period.

I examine to the relevance of the schema in general terms before exploring its resonance in greater detail below. Other strategic responses were, of course, ‘rationally available’ for example, Australia could have remained neutral, as the United States did. Yet Australia did commit to the war and the forward defence logic, whereby it should ‘help the great patron remain Great’ with a ‘big battalions’ approach, was generally relevant in two ways.

\textsuperscript{62} Australia suffered most deaths per 1000 mobilised (145) and the highest percentage of total casualties as a proportion of forces mobilised – approximately 65 per cent were killed or wounded. See Grey, Military History, 118–20.
\textsuperscript{63} The ANZACs fought in the Battle of Amiens, the ‘black day of the German Army’ on 8 September 1918. See ibid., 108.
\textsuperscript{65} Grey, Military History, 112.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 103.
in continental Europe, the Royal Navy would have had to concentrate heavily in ‘home waters,’ leaving Australia undefended in Asia. Indeed, a Germany triumphant on the European continent may have even caused the total collapse of the Empire, imperilling Australia and undermining its economic prosperity. So, in this ‘global balance’ sense, a forward defence logic committing something to the war effort was generally relevant.\textsuperscript{57}

Second, the nature of the fighting itself, Australia’s industrial development in 1914, and its existing defence arrangements, all made forward defence seem relevant. The most intense fighting in the most important theatre of the war — the Western Front — required large infantry formations, and Britain initially urged Australia to send such and later to also adopt conscription\textsuperscript{68} (which Australia ultimately did not — see below). Coupled with this, Australia’s industrial base was not really geared to the production of heavy weapons (such as howitzers and tanks) or advanced systems (such as aircraft). And finally, the universal conscription scheme begun in 1909 had by 1914 already trained, albeit in a rudimentary fashion as ‘Cadets,’ over 300,000 young men, most of whom would later enlist in the AIF.\textsuperscript{69} And, again, proficient Australian horsemanship was very useful in the Middle East. So, in all these technical senses, the forward defence sub-culture was generally relevant during the Great War period.

Nevertheless, it is still difficult to explain exactly why Australia committed so heavily to the First World War without attention to strategic-cultural analysis. It was prepared to suffer the heaviest casualties proportionately speaking of all the Allied nations: it allowed itself to fall so deeply into debt to Britain, who it was helping to save\textsuperscript{67} and all this from the other side of the world, and whilst Australia itself was never in any sort of direct danger. A modern observer could be forgiven for speculating that perhaps Australia would have been better off committing a smaller (say, two- or even three-divisions-strong) army to the Middle East to free up British units for service in France. Australia could then also have invested heavily in naval escort ships (i.e. frigates and destroyers, which could be built at home) to help enforce the blockade of Germany and defeat the U-Boat offensive in the Atlantic. Australia could have even committed itself heavily to developing an aircraft industry. These strategic options were

\textsuperscript{57}For an influential account of why Australia was ‘generally’ compelled to support the Anglo powers in ‘global balance terms,’ see T.B. Millar, Australia’s Defence (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965), ch. 2.

\textsuperscript{68}Thomas Givens, President of the Senate (Labor), CPD, Senate, 1914–17 Session, Vol. LXXX, 8953–54.

\textsuperscript{69}Grey, Military History, 81.
have been better, especially a major ship-building effort, from a long-term-economic point of view (i.e. Australia is an island nation). But they weren’t even really considered.

So, to explain this strategic conundrum we must turn to the resonance aspect of why a strategic schema is chosen or activated, to explain why a culturally- and historically-located Australia would commit so heavily and traumatically to a war so far away. Australia immediately declared war upon Germany and the public mood at the time can be appreciated by attention to just two of the many incidents that occurred within several hours (and within about a mile) of one another in Melbourne on 6 August 1914. First, leading politicians, including representatives of the Irish-Catholic community, spontaneously affirmed their loyalty to Britain in the afternoon before a massive crowd that had gathered in front of the Town Hall, with the premier, Sir Alexander Peacock, declaring to his fellow Britons that he always knew that ‘When the day came that the British Empire would be endangered, its children would be prepared for any sacrifices for Empire... [which was] speaking in a common voice’.70 Various family and kin metaphors were used liberally then and, indeed, for the whole war.

Second, less edifyingly, and as described in a newspaper article under the headline ‘Larrikins run riot!’ a mob of over 2000 young men, drunk from celebrating the beginning of the war and many supposedly intending to sign up the following morning attacked Chinese people and businesses.71 And the reaction by Australia’s service-eligible population was immediate, with over 20,000 men being enlisted into 1 AIF and ready for deployment within three weeks, and within a further two months the total enlistments climbed well over 50,000.72 Australia’s war thus began, from a cultural affinity/threat perception perspective, with a rush of British-patriotic fervour spiced with a little mob-violence directed at the most available yet totally innocent and strategically-unthreatening cultural-Other.

On the other hand perceptions of cultural difference were also important in overall strategic threat perceptions. Consider Australia’s reaction to events in the Pacific at the outset of the war. Operations were immediately launched within weeks of 6 August and by the end of September 1914 most of the German possessions

70Reported verbatim in *The Age*, 7 August 1914.
important contribution Japan made to this decisive victory, however, Australia stridently complained to the British, and one senior British bureaucrat in Singapore reported to London that Japan is the one power they [the Australians] distrust and fear.\(^{73}\) The bad blood between Australia and Japan continued, and after widespread criticism of what were widely seen to be unreasonable and aggressive demands made by Japan upon China in 1915,\(^{75}\) the Japanese consul-general felt the need to publically and directly assert that Japan posed no threat to Australia.\(^{76}\) The antipathy extended beyond the end of the war. Led by the feisty and deeply racist prime minister, Billy Hughes, Australia successfully opposed the insertion of a racial equality clause into the League of Nations Covenant, much to Japan’s annoyance.\(^{77}\) Likewise, in the months leading to the negotiations about naval limits in Washington Naval Conference of 1921-1922, there was such concern about Japanese naval expansion that the Japanese consul-general had to once again assure Australians that Japan posed no threat, reminding them that Japan had actively protected the AIF while doing convoy duties during the war.\(^{78}\) So while there obviously was plenty of anti-German sentiment, and they were universally referred to as Huns,\(^{79}\) a powerful, if inaccurate,\(^{79}\) historical analogy and as a bowless military despotism that threatens to destroy everything that civilisation cherishes\(^{80}\) there was also plenty of invective directed towards the Japanese despite that they were, ostensibly, allies.

Forward defence might have been dominant in this period, but it tended to resonate less after 1916, due to the murderous rigors of modern, industrial war. Traditions other than the forward defence began to be articulated, and one which gathered momentum was an anti-conscription position which became quite influential, although never dominant (i.e. the government remained firmly committed to the war effort right to the end). I examine this sub-culture in greater depth in Chapter 8, and characterize it as a variety of isolationism, but for present purposes it is enough to say that despite Hughes’ best efforts he failed on two occasions to secure a Yes vote at conscription.

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\(^{73}\) Its fleet had sailed for home, only to be destroyed by the Royal Navy off Argentina: Grey, Military History, 88–90.

\(^{74}\) Minute, Sir John Anderson, Under-Secretary to the Colonial Office, to the Colonial Office, 7 December 1914, Harcourt Papers, Bodelian Library, Oxford, Box 468.

\(^{75}\) Jonathan D. Spence, The Search for Modern China (London: Hutchinson, 1990), 285–86.

\(^{76}\) Report in The Argus, 21 October 1916.

\(^{77}\) Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 56.

\(^{78}\) Sydney Morning Herald, 4 February 1921.

\(^{79}\) ‘The Huns were a nomadic horse-people from Central Asia who ravaged the Germanic tribes of Europe. The use of ‘Hun’ as a derogatory term for Germans followed a speech by Kaiser Wilhelm II which celebrated the ruthlessness of Attila the Hun.

\(^{80}\) Speech, Billy Hughes, reported verbatim, Sydney Morning Herald, 15 August 1916.
was elected again only months after the second referendum. Most interestingly, from a strategic cultural perspective, the most prominent and strident opposition was led by the Irish-Catholic archbishop of Melbourne, Daniel Manix. The most politically important social schism was, at the time, between the Irish-descended Catholics and other Anglo-Protestant Australians. So, a sub-group favoured a different cultural identity, leading it to support an alternative strategic schema which at minimum opposed conscription for overseas service and was less inclined to rush to the defence of the British Empire.

This strategic-cultural-fissure manifested itself most obviously along ethnic lines, although other social cleavages were also revealed. For example, some of the anti-conscription movement was also broadly socialist, including some factions of the Australian Labor Party (ALP). The ALP itself was split badly: Hughes had initially been an ALP prime minister but he and a number of other Labor MPs had left the party before the first referendum to form a Coalition with the conservative parties. Moreover, many Protestant congregations also lent support to the 'No' campaign. This alternative sub-culture was ultimately able to force a not-inconsiderable degree of compromise with the dominant forward defence tradition given that, just as Britain was clamouring for more troops, voluntary enlistment in the AIF dropped from over 150,000 in 1916 to just 45,000 in 1917. There also was some discussion of continental defence, motivated by perceptions of cultural difference with Asia. For example, ALP Senator John Mullen argued before the 1916 referendum that Australia was populated by 6,000,000 white people, and we live within cooee of a thousand millions of coloured people, who jostle one another for want of room. In this view, sending large forces to Europe was imprudent: Australia should keep plenty of militarily-eligible men at home in case Japan became more than just a potential threat.

In some ways, after the war ended, Australian policy at the Versailles Peace Conference could be seen as consistent with an internationalist strategic sub-culture, if only because it acquiesced in the creation of the League of

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81 The first took place on 28 October 1916 and the second on 20 December 1917.
82 Blaxland, Strategic Cousins, 31–33.
83 Grey, Military History, 115.
84 Ibid., 93.
85 'Being within cooee' means 'very close': CPD, HR, 1914–1917 Session, Vol. LXXX, 8807, 22 September 1916.
mainly aimed at securing Australia’s custodianship\(^7\) of the territories seized from Germany. Indeed, just before the conference he once again demanded of Britain, albeit secretly, that Australia should be granted control of all of the Pacific territories seized by the Allies, including those now in Japanese hands.\(^8\) He was rebuffed in brusque terms on this\(^9\) and other occasions, but Australia nevertheless did quite well at Versailles. And with respect to the League more generally Hughes was certainly not privately\(^9\) confident about it, and he failed to put a much more positive spin on the matter in public.\(^9\) In any event, the military staff also felt that Australia’s security would continue to depend upon close ties with Britain, so a forward defence strategy.\(^9\) It surely says something about how ambitious and irascible Hughes was when one considers what he was able to secure at Versailles but exactly how he secured these boons, especially by insulting and upsetting Japan, remains controversial. Nevertheless, his exploits were generally well-received by the Australian public despite criticism by figures like E.L. Piesse, a senior intelligence officer at the time.\(^9\)

### The Inter-War Years: Japan Rising

By the early 1920s Australia had emerged scarred but triumphant from the First World War. But Australians did not feel entirely safe during the inter-war period – indeed, Australia’s strategic discourse would become continually more agitated by fear of Japan as the latter’s power grew and was, especially in the 1930s, increasingly applied directly to secure ever more ambitious grand strategic designs in Asia. Indeed, this period illustrates well how a strategic cultural approach gives meaning to traditional IR theories, in this case Organski’s power transition theory.\(^9\)

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\(^{86}\)He protested that the Dominions had been ‘cut out’ of Armistice discussions, and while he did affect the negotiations, he also angered the great powers, especially American President Woodrow Wilson; Goldsworthy, *Facing North*, Vol. 1, 55–56.

\(^{87}\)He wanted ‘fully fledged Australian colonies,’ but was forced to settle for Class-C Mandate status; ibid.

\(^{88}\)Letter, W.M. Hughes to David Lloyd George, 4 November 1918, *House of Lords Library, Lloyd George Papers*, Box 38, Folder 5.

\(^{89}\)Letter, P.H. Kerr, British PM’s Private Secretary, to W.M. Hughes, 31 January 1919, *Add Milner papers*, Bodleian Library, C700/193-200.

\(^{90}\)Telegram, W.M. Hughes to W.A. Watt, Acting Prime Minister (Australia), 13 February 1919, *Hughes Papers*, NLA, Ms950/3/37.

\(^{91}\)CPD, HR, 1919 Session, Vol. LXXXIX, 12171–72, 10 September 1919.

\(^{92}\)For Cabinet’s views, see telegram, W.A. Watt; Acting Prime Minister (Australia), to W.M. Hughes, 19 February 1919, *Hughes Papers*, NLA, Ms950/3/37. Also see Admiral Jellicoe’s classified report; *The Naval Situation in Far Eastern Waters, Jellicoe Report on Naval Defence*, Vol. 4, 00.221–23, AA, CRS, A65/2.

\(^{93}\)Letter, Major E.L. Piesse, Director, Pacific Branch, Prime Minister’s Office, to Lt Commander J.G. Latham, Australian Delegation, the Paris Peace Conference, 7 May 1919, *Piesse Papers*, NLA.

In short, who was becoming more powerful was relevant; the fact that it was the Japanese, so culturally different and unpredictable, mattered greatly.

Unsurprisingly, Australian military spending fell precipitously after the First World War. But it was reaffirmed that forward defence logic through Imperial Defence would remain the basis of Australian strategic decision-making.\textsuperscript{95} Specifically, in 1924 Britain resolved to develop Singapore as the ‘lynchpin’ of its Far Eastern grand strategy. This was informed in part by the signing of the Washington Treaty,\textsuperscript{96} and the Four Power Pacific Treaty intended to stabilise the Pacific.\textsuperscript{97} Australia’s acquiescence to both treaties, as well as its general endorsement of the Locarno Pact in 1925,\textsuperscript{98} provides some evidence that the internationalist strategic sub-culture was exerting some influence, although this should not be overstated.\textsuperscript{99} Nevertheless, in 1924 the ALP argued (albeit with more than a hint of populism – it was trying to wedge the government on defence spending) that the League of Nations and the recently-signed treaties provided a strategically benign international environment.\textsuperscript{100} Similar sentiments were expressed by the Labor government of James Scullin when it actually did cut defence spending significantly in 1930\textsuperscript{101} (although everyone understood that the real reason for the defence cuts was the still-worsening Great Depression). So, despite dip-service\textsuperscript{102} being paid to internationalism, the Scullin government confirmed in 1929 that a full AIF Division would be raised (of volunteers only – so consistent with the ALP’s anti-conscription stance) and dispatched automatically along with about half the RAN to Singapore if a war broke out in Asia, with more divisions likely to follow.

At the Imperial Conferences of 1923 and 1926, control of all aspects of foreign policy was formally handed over to the Dominions by the Imperial government, formalised by the Statute of Westminster.\textsuperscript{103} Yet it is telling that

\textsuperscript{95}Letter, Lt-Gen H.G. Chauvel to Senator George Pearce, Minister of Defence, 6 February 1920, AA, MP 729/2, File 1855/1/42.
\textsuperscript{96}This treaty established capital-ship ratios among the five major naval powers, namely, Britain, the US, Japan, France and Italy, at the capital-ship tonnage ratio of 5:5:3:1.75:1.75, respectively.
\textsuperscript{97}The parties were Britain, the US, Japan, France and Italy; Goldsworthy, \textit{Facing North}, Vol. 1, 58.
\textsuperscript{98}Ibid., 67.
\textsuperscript{100}Frank Anstey, Deputy Opposition Leader, \textit{CPD, HR}, 1924 Session, Vol. CVII, 2115–17, 16 July 1924.
\textsuperscript{101}Speech, Frank Brennan, Attorney-General (Australia), to the League of Nations Assembly, \textit{League of Nations Journal}, (11\textsuperscript{th} Ordinary Session), Assembly, Ninth Plenary Meeting, 15 September 1930.
\textsuperscript{102}Grey, \textit{Military History}, 136.
\textsuperscript{103}Goldsworthy, \textit{Facing North}, Vol. 1, 68.
Australia, \textsuperscript{104} chose not to formally enact these provisions until 1942 and took only halting steps towards building direct diplomatic relations with about a dozen other nations. \textsuperscript{105} The reason is clear: Australia felt strategically insecure and remained anxious to ensure Britain retained a strong presence in Asia. In terms of relevance, then, Australia's continued attachment to forward defence during the inter-war years seemed generally sound given that Britain was still a pre-eminent global power. Australia also began to pleasingly note a slowly increasing US strategic presence in the Pacific with the defence minister, Sir George Foster Pearce, claiming in 1922: "What better guarantee can there be for the peace of the world for the friendly understanding, full and complete, between the two greatest English-speaking Empires?" \textsuperscript{106}

With regard to the more cultural aspects of affinity and threat perception, forward defence continued to resonate closely with Australia's dominant cultural identity in the interwar years. W.J. Hudson has called this time a "half-world between the colonial and the independent mentalities" because most Australians still regarded themselves as British first. \textsuperscript{107} But, interestingly, strategic threat perception towards Japan was originally bluntly racist until after about the mid-1920s, after which the tone changed: public pronouncements in the 1930s no longer denigrated either the Japanese in particular or Asians in general. \textsuperscript{108} This was so whether the ALP or the United Australia Party (UAP) was in power. Indeed, the standard line for public consumption for two decades before 1942 was that Australia was "Safe behind Singapore," and the exact source of the threat was not typically named. Still, although Prime Minister Joseph Lyons of the UAP again reaffirmed forward defence logic while electioneering in 1937, he also conceded that "Self-reliance, adequate defence ... must form the foundations of any [defence] policy." \textsuperscript{109} Others, like industrialist Sir Herbert Gepp, also began calling for greater defence self-reliance in 1938. \textsuperscript{110} Indeed, in 1938 senior Army officers predicted with remarkable prescience that Japan would attack when Britain was preoccupied in Europe, that Singapore would fall and that Australia would be open to invasion within six

\textsuperscript{104} Blaxland, Strategic Cousins, 65.
\textsuperscript{105} Including China and Japan, and many trade missions were sent to Asia; Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 69–73.
\textsuperscript{106} CPD, HR, 1922 Session, Vol. LXXXIX, 789, 26 July 1922.
\textsuperscript{109} Quoted in Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 89.
\textsuperscript{110} "Tell the public the facts," Sydney Morning Herald, 11 November 1938.
Preparations went ahead with a forward defence strategy in mind, namely, to raise and deploy a new AIF to the Middle East or Singapore.

In Asia, therefore, Japan was to be appeased. Scullin argued against sanctions following Japan’s invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and Lyons refused to support moral censure on Japan, or economic boycott despite Britain’s request after the 1937 invasion of China. But public opinion swung wildly between fear and/or anti-Japanese sentiment, and hysterical relief in the 1930s—racist letters to the editor every time a trade dispute simmered showed how on edge the public was. And the mood remained volatile: in 1936 Billy Hughes published a short but shrill appraisal of the Japanese threat, but only three years later, as Minister of External Affairs, he expected that Japan would be preoccupied with its war in China for years. Nevertheless, as war approached inexorably even Piesse, who had argued for decades that Australia’s fear of Japan was overblown (and partly self-fulfilling) was by 1938 still publically arguing for appeasement while privately urging leaders to buy time and rearm heavily. And the cartoonists were involved too, with one such drawing on the same historical analogy Hughes had a quarter-century earlier by showing an (implicitly extinct) Aboriginal rebuking two white men with dissolutionist placards, complaining (in deeply patronising terms) ‘You pinchum OUR policy!’

In government circles the mood was somewhat different. The classified version of the report issued by the 1937 Imperial Conference named Japan explicitly as the major threat to peace in the Pacific and went into great detail about how it could be defeated. In late 1937, Lyons referred in a secret communication to the ruthless nature of Japanese aggression even though only a few months earlier, in public, he had proposed a Pacific Pact.

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112 Hudson, *Australia*, ch. 3.
116 W.M. Hughes, *Australia and War To-day* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1935).
Interestingly, while criticism of Japan prior to the 1930s had focused on "bare" cultural difference, in the 1930s the discourse of government officials focused much more on "substantive" differences. In particular there was much attention paid to how Japan itself was moving away from what Australia considered to be "civilised forms of government" during the inter-war years, and towards an increasingly militarised society. In short, the "cultural-threat-perceptions" were becoming more sophisticated as Australian elites knew more about such differences.

The Second World War, and After: Forward Defence Falters (1939–1949)

Between 1939 and 1949 forward defence remained generally dominant, but its influence did retreat at times as significant concessions were made to continental defence logic during the war and, following the war, the Labor government flirted with internationalism 1 although I only touch on this last matter briefly below, and I discuss it in greater detail in Chapter 8. The outstanding feature of the decade from 1939 to 1949 was however, the quite rapid change not so much in the basic logic of forward defence so much as in its substance or detail, in that the US essentially replaced Britain as Australia's primary strategic ally. Nevertheless, and despite forward defence remaining dominant, the two primary Australian strategic cultural traditions really contested against one another seriously for the first time.

As it had done in 1914, Australia immediately followed Britain into war in 1939. Robert Menzies, who had become prime minister after Lyons' sudden death in April 1939, declared that "We are, as a great family of nations, involved in a struggle which we must win ... there was never any doubt where Britain stood ... and there stands the people of the entire British world, mixing kin-metaphors with implicit value-commitments, and later in his speech there would be plenty of role-assignation (e.g. "democratic defenders of faith and freedom" on the one hand against a monstrous threat to civilisation and the natural order on the other). He also rhetorically listed Hitler's repeated broken promises and declared them a "strange blasphemy" in an oratorically powerful extended metaphor. Support was bipartisan, though John Curtin warned that the ALP would not support conscription for overseas service (and

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123 See for example; Robert Menzies, Attorney General, CPD, HR, 1936 Session, Vol. CLI, 622, 29 September 1936.
125 Sydney Morning Herald, 3 September 1939.
memories were still too raw for too many and the mood was described as sombre. But determined patriotic fervour and professions of loyalty to Britain abounded alongside commitments to a whole slew of abstract entities like Anglo-Saxon traditions of responsible government which needed protecting from the Huns the old images of Germany as a slavering Attila or savage Viking from the Great War propaganda machine were reprinted or inspired the posters and cartoons of the era.

The war was initially fought far from Australia. Four divisions of the Australian Imperial Force (designated 2 AIF), again raised from volunteers, were sent to the Middle East where they were involved in all the major actions, most famously as the stubborn Desert Rats of Tobruk. Despite the Allies suffering many early setbacks, while the fighting remained confined to Europe and North Africa it arguably remained broadly relevant for Australia to send large infantry forces to the Middle East where the Empire was confronting Germany directly. In a general sense, of course, Australia still had the same wider interest it had in 1914 of supporting the continuation of the British Empire. However, Britain was much more hard-pressed this time around, especially after France fell so precipitously. From a relevance point of view, if Australia wanted the benign and favourable global status quo to continue it was pressured by the external strategic environment to expend considerable effort against Germany.

The government did not concentrate the vast majority of its resources on the Army as it had done during the First World War, and in particular a significant ship-building programme began. Nevertheless, the forward defence urge to concentrate the maximum effort on assisting Britain at the expense of direct efforts to defend Australia was evident in the refusal to send a division to Singapore the AIF, it was claimed, should not be used as garrison troops. But this meant only that it failed to familiarise itself with the region around what had for over fifteen years been called the lynchpin of Australia security. Australia also participated in the Empire Air Training Scheme for which it gained no direct benefit in fact it was a direct drain on resources, especially pilots and

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129 The old AIF’s unit-designations and traditional insignia were re-used, with a prominent ’2’ being added to each.
130 Grey, Military History, 163.
131 Hasluck, Government and the People, 17.
Australia’s efforts early in the war have been described by its most preeminent modern military historian, Jeffrey Grey, as an uninspiring example of [its] ability to meet the demands of modern war.\textsuperscript{132} Alan Dupont, in a tone of near bewilderment, has noted

Ironically, despite almost fifty years of often exaggerated and misplaced fears of a Japanese attack, when [Japan] posed a genuine threat to Australia’s trade routes and lines of communications in late 1941, Australia’s political and military leaders had taken few concrete steps to defend the approaches to the continent. Nor had they planned for a land campaign in Australia ... in 1937, a report assessed that any land attack on Darwin would be one by 1000 men from sampans, unaccompanied by artillery and armed solely with rifles and light automatics.\textsuperscript{134}

It is difficult to resist the temptations of letting hindsight skew one’s analysis of history, but even before Japan unleashed its furious attack it would seem to have been a more sensible path for Australia to look more to its own defences rather than contribute so heavily to the European and Middle Eastern theatres. Australia could have, for example, sent two of the four divisions eventually dispatched to Egypt to Malaya; or perhaps it could have scaled back its contributions to the RAF’s training scheme after the battle of Britain and expanded the RAAF thereafter. But, despite the anxiety about Japan during this period, no measures like these were ever even considered seriously,\textsuperscript{135} and the reason is obvious: forward defence resonated powerfully in an affinity-perception sense, with repeated reiterations of Australia’s support for Britain so earnestly professed that they became a mantra any politician had to address before moving on to more substantive points. As T.B. Millar says, before Japan attacked there was a profound national consensus ... [that] the fate of the nation was part of the fate of the Empire.\textsuperscript{136}

Yet all this occurred while apprehension of Japan rose steadily in these first two years of the war. This is clear in the popular strategic discourse (i.e. the papers)\textsuperscript{137} but it is also, somewhat surprisingly, given the inadequacies of Australian preparations in the Pacific before 1942, very evident in the official government deliberations. For example, the day after war was declared in 1939, Menzies informed London that Until the

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\textsuperscript{132}Grey, \textit{Military History}, 148. \\
\textsuperscript{133}\textit{Ibid.}, 151. \\
\textsuperscript{134}Dupont, \textit{Australia’s Threat Perceptions}, 32. \\
\textsuperscript{135}Grey, \textit{Military History}, ch. 7. \\
\textsuperscript{136}Millar, \textit{Australia in Peace and War}, 135. \\
\textsuperscript{137}Discussed in Manning Clark, \textit{A Short History of Australia} (Melbourne: Penguin Books, 1963), 209. \\
\end{tabular}
to even discuss sending an expeditionary force.\textsuperscript{138} Logic which was reiterated several times in the following weeks.\textsuperscript{139} Britain sent regular reassurances that Japan would stay neutral,\textsuperscript{140} and the cabinet decided to dispatch the AIF to Cairo on that basis. In other words, there was no formal, rigorous, and indigenous Australian review of Japanese intentions.\textsuperscript{141} Also, as early as January 1940 a cartoon in the \textit{Bulletin} depicted R.G. Casey, Australia’s minister in Washington, as trying to coax America towards war, expressing the already building hope that it would abandon its isolation.\textsuperscript{142} Any sign that America was taking an increasing interest in the Pacific was reported on and automatically interpreted as a positive sign for Australia.

Importantly, however, there were growing differences between the UAP government and the ALP opposition. The latter had consistently refused all offers to join a formal War Cabinet. Days after it was announced that 6 AIF division would be sent to Egypt in late 1939 Curtin called for greater attention to Australia’s own defences.\textsuperscript{143} But the government itself seemed reluctant to move away from forward defence. It reacted sharply to France’s defeat, for example, with Casey telling Menzies after he had sounded out the mood in Washington that “the United States would not fight if Japan were to become and active aggressor” and that, as a consequence, Australia’s current policy in the Pacific “cannot be backed up by force.” Casey went on to recommend a virtually complete capitulation to all of Japan’s demands in the Pacific but, crucially, he left undiscussed the option of stiffening Australia’s defences.\textsuperscript{144} Australia also did little to protect its position in Asia even after London formally advised that, with Italy’s entry into the war in June 1940, it would be hard pressed to send “substantial forces” to Singapore despite two decades of promising that it would do so.\textsuperscript{145}

The Australian response to the threat posed by Japan before Pearl Harbor is an example of strategic decision-making that, on the face of it, cannot easily be explained by rationalist/materialist IR theory. Instead, one needs cultural analysis in order to put the various relative power and geographical variables facing Australia’s

\textsuperscript{139}Ibid., 258–59.
\textsuperscript{140}Most notably (i.e. formally) on 12 September and 17 November 1939; see ibid., 262, 415–17.
\textsuperscript{141}Ibid., 405–406.
\textsuperscript{142}The cartoon shows Casey, dressed as David Livingston, finding an American clutching a briefcase inscribed with the word ‘Isolation’ in the deep jungle, surrounded by menacing African tribesmen. See Meaney, \textit{Documentary History}, 467–68.
\textsuperscript{143}\textit{CPD, HR}, 1937–1939 Session, Vol. CLII, 1699, 29 November 1939.
\textsuperscript{144}Neale, \textit{Documents}, 505–507.
\textsuperscript{145}Ibid., 17–18.
In terms of the strategic-cultural approach outlined in this thesis it means that in late 1941, after Japan had occupied French Indochina and was acrimoniously bargaining with the US regarding the latter’s oil embargo, forward defence should have been judged to have been declining rapidly in relevance. One would expect a fully-rational actor to conclude that it perhaps did not fit so well with the external strategic environment as it was at the time and, crucially, as the trend-lines indicated it was heading. Irrationality is especially evident given that it was expected that the US would not fight an expanding Japan and that it was known that Britain’s hands would likely be tied. The only way to properly explain this historic Australian strategic conundrum is to look closely at the resonance aspect of how a strategic schema is chosen or activated.

At the heart of the competition between the primary sub-cultures early in the war were alternative, although not mutually exclusive, cultural orientations causing different interpretations of the strategic threat environment to contend against one another—different versions of strategic reality, so to speak. In terms of forward defence Germany was obviously seen as the most worrying threat: it was very strong; it clearly had aggressive intentions; and, most importantly, Germany was seriously threatening the mother country, Britain. So, arguably it was cultural affinity perceptions which were especially important in causing forward defence to dominate in the dark days of late 1941. On the other hand, and in terms of the cultural orientation at the core of the alternative continental defence sub-culture, Japan was seen as the most dangerous threat: Germany was of course not to be ignored and no one ever seriously expected Australia would abandon Britain entirely; but Japan was also considered strong; and clearly it too had aggressive intentions, vindicating the strongly held common conviction that its profound cultural difference must mean it was dangerous. And, most importantly, Japan was physically close.

Continental defence logic was predicated on the assumption that America and Britain would and could (respectively) not come to Australia’s aid if Japan attacked no matter how close Australians might have felt to both countries and there was plenty of evidence that this was likely to be the case. Yet Australia still did very little to directly protect itself. Thus, it terms of my strategic cultural approach, there was a powerful threat-perception-effect (i.e. from Japan) pressuring strategic decision-makers, but it was not powerful enough to overcome the affinity-effect.

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146 Indeed, even after the Japanese attack, one division (9 AIF) remained in North Africa until the eventual German defeat in late-1942, before being bought back to the Pacific in January 1943.
in the forward defence logic of the era. By the same token, continental defence logic failed to force substantial changes in Australia’s strategic decision-making prior to 1942 when the threat from Japan suddenly became so spectacularly, shockingly and terrifyingly real and immediate. And this approach adopted by Menzies is, of course, largely why he fell from office not long before Pearl Harbor.\textsuperscript{147} Indeed, the official documentation for the first two years of the Second World War suggests that the UAP government froze in a sort of collective-fret about the dire possibilities that they hoped would not eventuate.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor radically transformed the strategic environment for Australians. The prime minister, John Curtin, had only been in office for two months by early December 1941. Curtin and the ALP had generally supported the war effort, but they also had certain reservations, especially concerning conscription for overseas service which, because of its understanding of the continuing strong public sentiment on this issue, the Menzies government had not ever seriously tried to introduce.\textsuperscript{148} Curtin had generally continued with similar policies to the previous government, especially regarding appeasing Japan,\textsuperscript{149} but his decisions after 7 December 1941, especially his famous, fateful and deliberate decision to look to America are of most interest to me. Wild swings in the external strategic environment explain the corresponding shifts in the relative relevance of the two primary strategic sub-cultures vis-à-vis each other in the first half of 1942, and this in turn had lasting effects upon the forward defence friend/foe calculus. So, in response to dramatic changes in the external strategic environment, the cultural orientation at the heart of the forward defence sub-culture changed.

Japan’s wave of simultaneous assaults on Pearl Harbor, Guam, Midway, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, and Malaya of 7/8 December was devastatingly effective. Within weeks, the British had lost the \textit{HMS Prince of Wales} and \textit{HMS Repulse}, their only capital ships in the East; Hong Kong had surrendered; most of Malaya had fallen; and the Americans were effectively beaten in the Philippines within a few weeks. The most telling blow came when Singapore surrendered on 15 February,\textsuperscript{150} and four days later the Japanese bombed Darwin, bringing war to Australia directly. The forward defence sub-culture, by which the bulk of the AIF and over half the RAN was

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\textsuperscript{148}Grey, ibid., 143.
\textsuperscript{149}Goldsworthy, \textit{Facing North, Vol. 1}, 98.
\end{flushright}
AF remained small, lost relevance precipitously or at least the specific, traditional variety that saw Britain as the great and powerful friend lost relevance. More importantly, in the circumstances of late December 1941, suddenly the only real option open to Curtin seemed to be for Australia to look to her own defences, with a strongly expressed hope that the US would also come to Australia’s aid thrown in. It is now known that then-Colonel Dwight D Eisenhower recommended in mid-December 1941 that the US act to retain Australia as a base in the Pacific, although Curtin did not know this and had only received general assurances that America would prosecute the war against Japan vigorously when he made his famous Christmas message on 27 December 1941, which deserves extended quotation. Curtin began by noting that Australia had a record of realism in foreign affairs. Now with equal realism, he continued,

we take the view that, while the determination of military policy is the Soviet’s business, we should be able to look forward with reason to aid from Russia against Japan. We look for a solid and impregnable barrier of the Democracies against the three Axis Powers, and we refuse to accept the dictum that the Pacific struggle must be treated as a subordinate segment of the general conflict. By that it is not meant that any one of the other theatres of war is of less importance than the Pacific, but that Australia asks for a concerted plan evoking the greatest strength at the Democracies’ disposal, determined upon hurling Japan back. The Australian government, therefore, regards the Pacific struggle as primarily one in which the United States and Australia must have the fullest say in the direction of the democracies’ fighting plan. Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom. We know the problem the United Kingdom faces. We know the constant threat of invasion. We know the dangers of dispersal of strength, but we know, too, that Australia can go and Britain can still hold on. We are, therefore, determined that Australia shall not go, and we shall exert all our energies towards the shaping of a plan, with the United States as its keystone.

This speech was a pivotal moment in Australian strategic history. From a strategic-cultural perspective we can see a clear appreciation (and an assumption that the public will understand) that there are dangers of dispersing the Empire’s strength too thinly, which is a sort of technical-strategic observation, as was the mention of realism accepting how dire the situation really was. But there is also plenty of cultural affinity-perception: the US is said to be a democracy, like Australia, and so implicitly on the side of freedom; and Britons are kin towards whom

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151 Grey, Military History, 171.
Australians feel ‘pangs’ in actual fact he was consoling those Australians (i.e. most of them) who felt that way. It is clear how deeply interwoven technical and cultural matters were when this crucial strategic turning point was reached.

After Pearl Harbor, Curtin quickly showed that he and his Cabinet were also devout, if sudden, converts to continental defence logic. Most RAN units were steaming for Australian waters by New Year’s Day: general defence preparations in and around Australian cities were stepped up immediately; another enormous recruitment drive began and enlistments consequently surged; the militia was expanded and a form of general conscription for units that would serve only in Australia (see below) was introduced (although incrementally, and with minimal fanfare); and a crash expansion of the RAAF was ordered. Most importantly, Curtin demanded the immediate withdrawal of three of the four AIF divisions from the Middle East. Churchill argued passionately for most of the AIF to remain. Curtin refused him bluntly and demanded that most of it had to come home. When the troops were aboard ships bound for Australia, Churchill ordered two of the divisions diverted to Burma before informing Curtin, who then forcefully overrode the orders. Nevertheless, under British pressure a few battalions were landed in Java in late February, only to be captured by the Japanese within weeks—obviously vestiges of a forward defence mentality influenced this decision, which was admittedly made under great pressure—it is otherwise difficult to explain given the controversy still swirling around the farcical/tragic decision to send 2000 troops to Singapore shortly before its surrender.

Continental defence logic nevertheless ruled in early 1942. And it continued to exert a very strong influence even when the main effort switched back to a new variety of forward defence (i.e. with-America) from mid-1942. Thereafter the ALP generally opposed conscription for service long way from home, and at first Curtin only continued with the old policy whereby Army conscripts could be sent to Papua New Guinea (PNG), an Australian Mandate territory. Indeed, several units of choros bore the brunt of the early fighting on the Kokoda Track in PNG. In early 1943 the area in which conscripts could serve was enlarged to a South West Pacific Area.

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153 Grey, Military History, 163–73.
155 Grey, Military History, 169.
156 This was first a disparaging term that regulars/volunteers would use to demean conscripts, implying that they were made of chocolate and would melt in the heat of battle. After the hard fighting around Kokoda, the term became one of respect.
So, by mid-1943 almost all of Australia’s war effort was concentrated in its northern archipelagic approaches, and this situation was destined to remain unchanged until the end of the war. Continental defence logic was also evident in the manner in which the other services were configured. By 1945 the RAAF had been made much more effective and capable of operating independently. An important step towards self-reliance had also been taken by the commissioning of several RAN aircraft carriers. Nevertheless, events in mid-1942 meant forward defence logic was to return as a significant, and I think dominant (but less than before) strategic schema for the rest of the war.

The immediate cause of the change was of course another major swing in the fortunes of war which made forward defence logic relevant again. Of most importance to Australia was the strategic defeat of Japan’s invasion fleet meant for Port Moresby in PNG; it was forced to turn back by the US Fleet (with the RAN in support) in the Coral Sea in early May 1942. It was not known at the time that Japan had never intended to actually invade Australia, and so there was an air of panic or desperation that also hung over the government, including the Prime Minister throughout much of May even after the Coral Sea engagement (i.e. both the US Fleet and the RAN struggled to reconstitute their badly damaged battle flotilla). But when news of the truly decisive US victory at Midway on 4-5 June 1942 reached Australia there was a great feeling of relief. When the US first took the initiative against Japan on the ground with an invasion of Guadalcanal in August 1942 the mood lifted again. And this trend continued thereafter despite the very mixed results of that campaign which saw several RAN vessels sunk in naval actions in and around what would become dubbed Iron Bottom Sound. The key meaning of these events, despite the carnage, was that the US was truly committed to defeating Japan, and it would also do so in Australia’s immediate region. The United States could, in short, be trusted.

So, for the remainder of the war Australia worked in close cooperation with America, most importantly as a supplier of US forces, but seven divisions operated operationally and tactically with US troops, most notably in PNG and the island archipelago that became Indonesia. Indeed, near the end of the war there was some angst among Australian strategic-decision-makers, especially the military brass, that America’s imperious General Douglas

159 Grey, Military History, 182.
MacArthur was 'cutting Australia out of the main war effort as it shifted to the Philippines in late 1944. Of course this attitude can be understood in a traditional rational-power politics sense in that Australia wanted to secure its ‘place at the table’ after the war, but it also says something about more properly cultural matters like national pride and honour, or in colloquial Australian terms, the urge to avoid being seen as a 'bludger,' a metaphor used liberally by politicians at the time. Nevertheless, the AIF had been expected to be heavily involved in the 1946 invasion of Japan when the war came to an abrupt, atomic end in early August 1945.

While the external strategic environment changed significantly in this period, I have noted earlier that changes in relevance can affect resonance too. So, in this historical context, a strategic sub-culture’s cultural orientation (or a variant of it ‘the forward-defence-with-Britain version) resonated less with Australia’s dominant cultural identity for the rest of the war. Put in a social context, Australia felt exposed, abandoned, and det down by Britain despite that any informed observer would understand that Britain had been unable, not unwilling, to come to Australia’s aid. Glen St Barclay puts it best when he says Curtin was not looking to the United States in any sense of looking away from the United Kingdom. He was looking to America to supply aid which the United Kingdom was clearly not going to be in an immediate position to supply. But events both during the war and immediately after (i.e. Britain’s economic doldrums) continued to reinforce this logic, and by the time of the Suez Crisis in 1956 it was clear that Britain was a second-rate power: in short, after 1942 the US became Australia’s primary great and powerful friend.

Nevertheless, it is important not to overstate the manner in which Australia switched allegiance. Curtin consistently went out of his way to reaffirm loyalty to Britain and keep London closely consulted on all aspects of Australia’s Pacific war. And the US did not expect, at least initially, an enduring strategic relationship with Australia after the war: they saw only a temporary base of operations and the US State Department even bluntly said in early 1942 that it had no sovereign interest in the integrity of Australia, which caused consternation and required

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160 Ibid., 164; Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 105.
161 Australian slang for a free rider: someone who avoids doing their fair share or who does not pull their weight; see, for example, the speech by Herbert D. Evatt, the minister for external affairs, reported in The Daily Telegraph, 18 August 1943.
162 Dupont, Australia’s Threat Perceptions, 31; Millar, Australia, 148; Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 88.
164 Hudson, Blind Loyalty.
MacArthur’s specific refutation in a face-to-face meeting with Curtin. Yet there was still considerable longstanding cultural-affinity perception towards the US given its status as a great Anglo-power, and Australian politicians made much of America’s liberal-democratic government, its enterprising spirit and its impressive technological sophistication both before (i.e. while imploring Americans to join the war) and obviously even more so following Pearl Harbor. Clearly America was, mainly by dint of its cultural similarity, regarded as a natural ally. And the feeling was returned in many respects — perhaps not so much by MacArthur in public (it was generally assumed that he saw Australia as a bit of a backwater), but he nevertheless worked closely and earnestly, and in the main very successfully, with Curtin. It is perhaps more telling, from a cultural point of view, that in early 1942 Admiral (US) Ernest J. King stated bluntly and publically that “Australia and New Zealand simply cannot be allowed to fall to the Japanese: they are white men’s countries.”

Ultimately, while the switch from a forward-defence-with-Britain sub-culture to a US-focused one was not absolutely immediate or definitively decisive, the very fact that so many other Australian scholars explicitly warn against assuming that it was is also a testament of sorts to its importance. So, put simply and in terms of my strategic cultural approach, the enormous shifts in the external strategic environment caused, first, the relevance of the forward-defence-with-Britain sub-culture to collapse precipitously in and around New Year’s day 1942, forcing an almost equally commensurate meteoric rise in the relevance of the continental defence sub-culture. But by year-end-1942 a forward-defence-with-America logic was largely dominant, although of course the close cooperation took place almost exclusively in Australia’s region showing that the shock of early-1942 had caused some considerable compromise with continental defence to persist. So, during 1942 these wild swings of relevance had a marked effect on the resonance of forward defence, or at least the with-Britain variant. Australia’s dominant cultural identity had changed, and would continue to do so (albeit haltingly and often reluctantly) in the

166 Goldsworthy, Losing the Blanket, 15.
168 Quoted in Grey, Military History, 172.
169 For a small sample, see: ibid., 194; Goldsworthy, Losing the Blanket, 1; Bell, Dependent Ally, ch. 2; Hudson, Blind Loyalty, 21–22; St Barclay, Friends in High Places, ch. 1; Millar, Australia in War and Peace, ch. 11.
170 This is the central theme of Hudson; Blind Loyalty.
tategic environment, namely, the continual post-war decline and eventual dissolution of the British Empire.

The process whereby Australia developed an ever closer and enduring strategic relationship with the US after 1950 will be discussed below. But here it is necessary to reflect on forward defence during the years 1945–49 when the Labor government of Ben Chifley (Curtin having died tragically in July 1945) flirted with internationalism. I argue that this was only the case regarding foreign policy more generally, and as I also show below, the ALP’s internationalist-inclined foreign policy was aspirational in tone; there was always a hard edge to the otherwise progressive and optimistic line. We can see this reflected in the Strategic Basis Paper of 1946, the first time that the Australian government had sought to articulate the strategic underpinnings of its foreign and defence policy with minimal input from British strategic planners. First, while the Paper acknowledged that the newly-minted UN should be invested with hope and supported, consistent with the ALP’s broad approach to foreign policy, it was also noted that it could easily become dysfunctional as the League of Nations had, and that Australia was unable to defend herself unaided against a major power.171 So, the general logic of the report was consistent with forward defence assumptions: Australia could only expect a real threat to emerge from the USSR, especially if it was able to achieve dominance of China; and it was stated repeatedly that Australia should integrate its strategic policy closely with the Empire;173 while the likely battle zones were said to be the Middle East, India and South East Asia in that rough order of importance.174 Interestingly, while it was noted that the US would likely continue to pursue substantially the same interests as, and often in concert with, Australia;175 there was no mention made of efforts to secure a lasting alliance with it.

In strategic policy forward defence logic still prevailed, however it is also interesting to note that this 1946 report only noted that the Soviet Union was as a potential enemy. Indeed, Evatt and Chifley regularly emphasised they did not consider communism per se to be the primary cause of instability in post-war Asia, a

171 Appreciation of the Strategical Position of Australia (1946), NAA, AWM89, CS: B1/40, paras. 9, 32.
172 Ibid., para. 94.
173 Ibid. 1, 3, 20, 35.
174 Ibid., paras. 45, 53.
175 Ibid., para. 37.
Labor leaders repeatedly emphasised that the emergence of nationalism was the key regional dynamic and that this should be managed through international institutions and/or clear commitments by the colonial powers to work towards independence for Asians. The most notable feature of this period in a diplomatic sense was Australia’s general support for the consolidation of the Indonesian Republic. In short, the ALP was not ever substantially pro-communist but its leaders also consistently refused to adopt the article of faith assumption that the Reds were inherently evil. Nevertheless, and as I will show below, this more nuanced approach to understanding regional and global affairs was to cost the ALP dearly at the ballot box for over two decades. Put in terms of the approach to strategic culture outlined in this thesis, the ALP preferred broadly internationalist-continental defence (with plenty of forward defence elements left essentially in place) strategic sub-culture failed to resonate strongly with Australia’s dominant cultural identity for many years.

The Cold War before Têt: 1950 – 1967

Between 1950 and the late 1960s forward defence logic ruled. Yet it is a complex period in which continental defence logic was to press for attention at times, while at others forward defence advocates fretted about whether Australia’s great and powerful friends really would deliver in an emergency. Australia generally stuck tight to its cultural allies, however it must be conceded that the relationship between Australia and the US was probably always a bit more business- than family-like, compared to the situation vis-à-vis Britain, with the tone and type of metaphors shifting accordingly. It was commonly observed, for example, that Australia’s involvement in American wars like Korea and Vietnam was akin to paying a blood-premium on a sort of strategic insurance policy.

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176 Ibid., ch. 4.
177 Discussions between the US and Australia were, for example, more like bargaining, as when the US lodged a reservation that the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) would only be activated against communist (as opposed to ‘all’) aggression, prompting Australia to argue bitterly against it before lodging its own such similar but marginally more restrictive reservation. See T.B. Millar, ed., Australian Foreign Minister: Diaries of R.G. Casey (London: Collins, 1972), 180–83.
Australia’s (conservative) governments, which held office between 1949 and 1972, saw the country as very much a part of, if not a central player in, the global Cold War struggle. The tenor of the affinity- and threat-perceptions therefore changed, with the focus moving away from race-based comparisons more towards ideological/political/economic similarity or difference, although this trend should not be overstated—it would not be until the late 1960s that the White Australia Policy was even loosened much, and it would not be fully abolished until 1974. So there was always a strong degree of a cultural-racial comparison with Chinese communism, for example, which was invariably described as mindlessly fanatical and erratic, heartlessly-famine prone, disrespectful of cultural traditions etc. By contrast, the (white) Soviets were dangerous, but this was so because they were technically advanced and well-organised. Nevertheless, capitalism and democracy were now considered more salient in-group signifiers, and while the same general trend affected threat-perceptions (i.e. the a centrally-planned- and a totalitarian-Other were the main points of difference) there was also felt to be a threat of internal-subversion which is evidence of a substantive as opposed to mere/bare difference-perception.

In what follows I mix discussion of the relevance and resonance of forward defence while moving in rough chronological order, which is sometimes made difficult given that some issues (i.e. the controversy over Dutch New Guinea) were drawn-out affairs. So, by 1949 strategic anxieties were rising again, and Labor’s External Affairs Minister, Doc Evatt, was out of favour in Washington—the US Ambassador called him a completely unscrupulous and untrustworthy egomaniac while London regarded him as virtually a fellow traveller(i.e. with communism). In St Barclay’s opinion this was a cruel turn for Evatt’s devoted support for Truman and his untiring pursuit of an American alliance, and it was inconsistent with actual ALP policy as spelled out in the 1946 Strategic Basis Paper. This episode shows how the rising tide of anxiety about the intentions of communism was beginning to sweep what would become called the free world with all the powerfully-negative connotations

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181 Evatt had first annoyed the Truman administration at the San Francisco Conference, and then had stridently criticised America’s more lenient treatment of Japan in the late 1940s. In general he was regarded as stubbornly unwilling to accept the rising communist threat. See David Lowe, Menzies and the ‘Great World Struggle’: Australia’s Cold War 1948–54 (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1999), 37–40; St Barclay, Friends in High Places, 23–31.

182 Quoted in Lowe, Menzies, 42.

183 St Barclay, Friends in High Places, 31.
Australia included, causing the forward defence tradition to cement its dominance of virtually all aspects of foreign policy, not least the more properly strategic aspects of such.

With regard to threat perceptions in the 1950s, the different-Other was seen to be a growing, determined and monolithic communism, directed from Moscow and bent on world domination. The capitalist world, including Australia, had been badly shaken by communism before. The Red troubles in Europe had their counterpart in Australia. For example, in 1921 a party of ... returned soldiers, carrying a Union Jack, tried to drive a wedge into a Red rally in Sydney, sparking a wild tumult. However, as Stalin's Russia turned inward in the 1930s concern about communism waned. During the Second World War, when Australia and the Soviet Union were technically allies, most Australians never felt particularly warm towards the Soviets. However, the courage and determination of the Soviet Union in the face of the much-worse Nazis were still regularly praised. Indeed, in the desperate days of early 1942 the once-maligned Soviets had even been seen by Curtin as a potential saviour in the Pacific.

The onset of the Cold War had an important impact on Australian domestic politics. While probably not the single biggest issue during the 1949 election, defence policy still loomed large. Arthur Fadden of the conservative Country Party, in a colourfully-macabre and very unsubtle metaphor, warned Australians not to accept the grim spectre of socialisation grinning from behind the iron curtain of Mr Chifley’s soothing words. He then he said (in words ominously akin to his contemporary, America's Senator Joseph McCarthy) that his government would eradicate these foul and traitorous individuals [i.e. communists] who know neither decency nor Christianity, an obvious example of pointed and menacing direct-cultural comparison with powerful religious overtones, playing off communism’s atheism. And this explicit mixing of international and domestic fears about communism also set the tenor of much of the political debate in this era for the next two decades the most powerful rhetorical weapon in the conservative armoury was always the accusation that Labor was soft on communism.

Powerful elements within the US establishment took similar views, ending Evatt's hopes of securing an alliance, and so on an important issue for him, just prior to the 1949 election. There was a view in

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184 The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, 2 May 1921.
185 CPD, HR, 1940–41 Session, 48–57, 25 February 1941.
186 Unpopular petrol rationing and Labor’s efforts to create a centralised banking system (i.e. which was, however, also an issue with clear ‘left-right’ political connotations) were the most important election issues in 1949.
187 The Argus, 18 November 1949.
government would be less inclined to be demagogic and would tend to be more reasonable and more sympathetic to [our] point of view. This and other perceptions of Yankee meddling became a staple of ALP myth and lore and would, as I discuss in later chapters, contribute to the development of a degree of anti-Americanism within the party. Put in strategic cultural terms, parts of ALP opinion (i.e. its Left Faction) developed preferences for different strategic sub-cultures with alternative cultural orientations at their core, namely, ones in which the US was distrusted or even seen as dangerous or imperialistic, and therefore a menace to Australia, or the region, or humanity’s interests more generally — the US was to such people not a model to be emulated. By contrast, when the new Liberal party under Robert Menzies was elected in the December 1949 elections it adopted forward defence unambiguously and aligned itself squarely with the West — which also happened to be mainly white, and was still centred on a core of Anglo-powers.

With regard to its relevance, a forward defence approach did seem to have new-found appeal in the 1950s, especially because the US was extremely powerful. Indeed, relatively speaking the modern world has not seen such an imbalance in at least an economic/technical sense, with the US accounting for almost half the world’s total GDP and possessing an unrivalled force projection capacity immediately after the Second World War. Crucially, too, the US enjoyed a uniquely secure geostrategic position, at least compared to Britain which always had been located close to the historically strategically-turbulent European continent. The US was, on the other hand, virtually a continent unto itself and was also a natural Pacific power given its long Western coast. And it was interested in Australia’s region — it even considered establishing a major base on Manus Island, just to the north of PNG, and it did keep Guam, captured from the Japanese, developing it into a major base. And in virtually every field of human technical endeavour, especially military technology, the US was the undisputed world leader in the 1950s. The US was clearly a good ally to have.

On the other hand, most Australians interpreted Soviet actions since the end of the Second World War, especially the Berlin blockade of 1948, as dangerously destabilising if not openly threatening. It was also widely

190 Friends in High Places, ch. 2.
advantage the Soviets had not demobilised and enjoyed a conventional advantage in Europe. And, of course, after developing nuclear weapons, jet fighters and intercontinental bombers by 1950 to complement their still-massive conventional army the Soviets were certainly a worthy potential opponent. From Australia’s perspective the loss of China to communism in 1949 was particularly worrying (and it threw Labor into a funk they dithered over whether to recognise Mao with an election approaching). Given that communist insurgencies were mounting in French Indochina and British Malaya, the region seemed to be destabilising rapidly, and when North Korea overran most of South Korea in June 1950, sparking the Korean War, the image of an inherently aggressive and expansionist global communist threat crystallised further indeed, just before the invasion began the Defence Committee had endorsed a report stating that the Soviets intended on destabilising the entire West to subjugate its nations one by one, and if they continued along this path it would inevitably spark a Third World War. Coral Bell has claimed that the Korean War substantially decided the issue of Australia adhesion to US purposes in Asia for twenty-two years.

In any event the public was not ready for a major change, and its dominant cultural identity remained firmly wedded to its cultural roots. For example, when Percy Spender, the minister for external affairs from 1949 to 1951, casually referred in 1950 to Australia as an Asian power he was rebuked by a newspaper, which editorialised that there is no need to dance to an Eastern piper’s tune ... [Australians are] a fundamentally European people who look to Europe for our origins and our culture. Our religious faith, our national philosophy, and our whole way of life, are alien to Asia. It was clear who Australia’s cultural in-group was, although the government did become concerned about the reliability of the US alliance despite Menzies feeling that a US actively involved in Asia (with appropriate assistance) was in Australia’s grand strategic interest. US actions in the 1950s, especially its reaction to the Suez Crisis and its consistent failure to support Australia’s position on the issue of what to do with

191 Lowe, Menzies, 38.
193 Bell, Dependent Ally, 45.
194 Sydney Morning Herald, 22 January 1950.
doubts were raised about America’s commitment to Australia.

So, in terms of the strategic cultural approach outlined here, the mixed signals from Washington called into some question the cultural orientation at the heart of the new with-America forward defence sub-culture. ANZUS did not, after all, require its signatories to do anything other than consult with each other in the event of a threat. However, there were reservations – some explicit, some implicit – about exactly what sort of regional threat the US would act against. Its determination to confront communism generally, especially any sort of overt invasion attempt, by China for example, was clear. But it was also made very clear that ANZUS may not apply against Indonesia, at least not in all circumstances. Although it too had become somewhat disillusioned with Sukarno after 1955 the US still did not want to antagonise Jakarta and drive it toward Moscow. But it was the outcome of the Suez crisis which began to cause real concerns in Canberra. The Australian government gave early, strong and loyal support to Britain, which included a long letter penned by Menzies directly to US President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The response from Washington, while politely framed, clearly rebuffed the Australian prime minister. The eventual outcome of the crisis was a terrible blow to Menzies, who had expended considerable political capital on the issue and, more personally, he was gravely affected by the realisation that the sun may truly be setting on a British Empire he remained sentimentally attached to. Menzies subsequently indulged in a petulant attack on the UN, obliquely taking swipes at the US abroad and Labor back home.

In the case of Dutch New Guinea, the US failed to consistently support what Menzies and much of his Cabinet considered to be vital Australian defence interests in the territory – namely, keeping it out of Indonesian

195 The western half of the island of New Guinea had been a Dutch colony, known as Nederlands-Nieuw-Guinea, from 1942 to 1962, when it was placed under United Nations administration. In 1963, sovereignty was transferred to Indonesia. It was called West Irian from 1962 until 1973, and Irian Jaya from 1973 to 2000, when it received its present name of Papua.
196 Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 212.
197 Menzies consistently reaffirmed his support from Britain as things went from bad to worse. For example, see Cablegram, Menzies to Sir Anthony Eden (PM, Britain), 1 November 1956, NAA, A6706, CS: 64; for the very warm British ‘thanks’ after the end of the crisis, see Personal Message, Eden to Menzies, ibid., 8 December 1956.
198 Cablegram, Menzies to Eisenhower, ibid., 17 November 1956.
199 Cablegram, Eisenhower to Menzies, NAA, A6706/1, CS: 64, 28 November 1956.
200 Hudson, Blind Loyalty, ch. 8.
201 Both of whom, along with the Canadians, had essentially supported the UN’s ceasefire efforts which in effect largely determined the matter for Nasser. See ibid., ch. 7; Menzies, reported in Sydney Morning Herald, 13 November 1956.
There is not one dissentient voice in Australia today ... which would deny that the security of Australia and the security of New Guinea are indivisible. In particular there was a fear that Indonesia would infiltrate the ill-defined border into PNG, still an Australian Mandate territory, and there was a concern that giving in to Indonesia on this issue would only embolden it in other areas. So, Australia talked tough for most of a decade: in 1955 Casey told the US bluntly that Australia would not accept Indonesian entry into the area under any circumstances, military or peaceful; likewise, Spender declared that friendly relations with Indonesia, or with the rest of Asia, are secondary to the defence value of Dutch New Guinea; and a visit by Indonesian foreign minister Subandrio in 1959 failed to produce anything other than a vague undertaking to reconcile differences.

Sir Garfield Barwick, minister for external affairs from 1961 to 1964, explained that it came as a tremendous psychological shock to many people in Australia when a land frontier with Indonesia developed after what would now become West Irian was formally transferred to Indonesia in May 1963. As a result some of Australia’s strategic decision-makers, especially the more professional ones (i.e. in the intelligence community, the services and Defence) were beginning to have doubts about forward defence in the late 1950s.

This almost resulted in continental defence dethroning forward defence in 1959. It had been noted three years earlier in the 1956 Strategic Basis Paper that Australia’s two most important treaties were the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) Pact, signed in 1955, and the Australia, New Zealand and Malaya (ANZAM) agreement, which had originally been signed in 1948 but had been revised several times as Australia attempted to keep Britain in Asia by committing additional support for the latter’s strategic position in Malaya. ANZUS, however, got limited attention at this time although the broad principles of forward defence were

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202 Bell, Dependent Ally, 65.
204 Gregory Pemberton, All the Way: Australia’s Road to Vietnam (Sydney Allen & Unwin, 1987), 74.
205 Quoted in Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 211.
206 Meaney, A Documentary History, 639–41.
209 By which Australia and New Zealand co-ordinated with Britain to defend Malaya; Bell, Dependent Ally, 63.
210 In 1955 for example; Menzies, Current Notes on International Affairs (CNIA), Vol. 26 (April 1955), 278–9.
that Australia might not receive aid in a conflict with Indonesia over Dutch New Guinea.\textsuperscript{212}

The draft 1959 Strategic Basis Paper, however, called for Australian forces to be restructured significantly to enable them to operate independent of allies, which would obviously have required major changes to Australia’s force structure by, in a general sense, favouring the RAN and the RAAF over the Army (i.e. to intercept invasions forces before they could land). But, in a crucial historical decision Cabinet rejected this version, sent it back down to the committees for redrafting, and later endorsed a version in which it was said that a more limited and less ambitious strategic posture that was self-supporting to some degree would be the basis for future strategic planning.\textsuperscript{213}

Kim Beazley, ALP minister for defence in the 1980s and the minister who presided over a reorganisation of Australian forces in a manner broadly similar to that advocated by the draft 1959 paper called it the most prescient advice ever to be ignored by a minister.\textsuperscript{14} The final report ultimately put more emphasis on points that had admittedly also been made in the first draft, namely, that while Indonesia was increasingly unstable its forces also remained badly equipped and ineffective.\textsuperscript{15} So, given the absence of a serious conventional threat from this direction the rejected advice, as it appeared in the draft, seems to have been predicated more on a heard-headed appreciation that the US might stay neutral in a conflict between Australia and Indonesia, especially in situations that the Americans regarded as less serious. In other words, it was still accepted that the US would not let Australia itself ever be conquered if the draft version noted to do so would be a blow to its global credibility\textsuperscript{16} but Australia should still not expect automatic American assistance in sorting out all its own issues with the neighbours, which it may have to do with force in some situations (e.g., in Dutch New Guinea).\textsuperscript{217}

The final report reaffirmed that because the British commitment to Asia was questionable ANZUS may potentially be the most effective treaty to which Australia is a partner, meaning Australia should prepare for

\textsuperscript{211}Strategic Basis (1959), paras. 25, 35, 40, 47, 54.
\textsuperscript{212}Ibid., para. 24.
\textsuperscript{213}Strategic Basis (1959), NAA, 5818\slash CS: Vol. 2\slash Addendum 59.
\textsuperscript{214}Speech, ‘Minister for Defence to the National Press Club’, Canberra, 12 June 1985, Australian Foreign Affairs Reports, vol. 56-6, 506.
\textsuperscript{215}Strategic Basis (1959), paras. 13, 14.
\textsuperscript{216}Ibid., para. 22.
\textsuperscript{217}Ibid., App. 1, para. 12

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the sentence seems incongruous with the rest of the (final) 1959
Strategic Basis Paper: paragraph 44 says that Australian forces should be designed primarily with the ability to act independently (emphasis added) but paragraph 48 asserts that forces raised for a limited war, so a war with the US against regional communism, would also provide options for fighting Indonesian alone. Ultimately the forces were not configured for, or optimised towards, a continental defence posture, but it is still interesting to see how close Australia’s strategic culture came to changing significantly at this early stage of the Cold War.

The eventual outcome, which reaffirmed forward defence logic as dominant, can be best explained with reference to the strategic-cultural notion of resonance. The continental defence logic outlined in the draft 1959 paper simply did not resonate with Menzies and his Cabinet. More specifically, the cultural orientation implicit within it, which cast doubts on the reliability and trustworthiness of the United States as an ally, was rejected by Cabinet in favour of the more traditional one in which Australia’s interests were seen as tied generally to the maintenance of a broadly liberal free-trading international system with the US, a great democracy (and a white one: these things still mattered) with similar values and traditions underpinning its political culture. The Australian government still clearly wanted to have the US as a great and powerful friend with a major strategic presence in Asia, and they would, in Vietnam, find a way of keeping it there. During this period (so, roughly the several years on either side of 1960), however, there was something akin to the wishful-thinking that had occurred in 1940 and 1941, although of course the strategic circumstances were nowhere near as dire as they had been then: Indonesia was always a pale shadow of what Japan had been in 1942 despite the fact that in the early 1960s it was becoming steadily stronger militarily with Soviet help and it was adopting an increasingly aggressive strategic stance generally. But once again Australia, as it had in 1941, failed to take significant steps towards providing for its own defence other than deciding in 1963 to acquire some weapons systems, such as the General Dynamics F-111, a interdiction/tactical strike fighter, that could be said to be dual use in order words, useful for either forward defence or continental defence.

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218 Ibid., paras. 23, 24 & 29.
219 Ibid., para. 7.
221 The F-111 was ordered in 1963, but did not enter RAAF service until 1973.
the schema again remained strong in the face of threats to both its validity in a technical sense (i.e. expeditionary forces would be less useful against Indonesia) but also threats to the degree to which it resonated (i.e. trust in the US was deteriorating) we have to understand the global logic of the Australian conservative governments during this period. In particular, these governments really did see the world through a predominantly Cold War paradigm. Spender had said in 1950 that Australia shared a common tradition, heritage and way of life with America and that as a consequence it was natural that the two countries would remain close allies, while he also condemned in a number of ways what he called Communist Imperialism and so popularised in Australia this henceforth commonly-used reverse-metaphor. Delivered just days after the outbreak of the Korean War, this important speech also drew an explicit historical analogy by demanding that the lessons learned from Manchuria to Munich itself be heeded, which meant that aggression had to be met with determination and not aggression. So, Communism had to be met by the United States and all the freedom-loving peoples of the world in Korea and wherever it plied its sinister designs. For his part, Menzies declared that here can be no compromise between Christ and Anti-Christ while on the election stump in 1955, a clear and powerful comparison between Christian Australia and its godless enemy. In 1963 a Gallup Poll found that 80 per cent of respondents supported a US base at the North West Cape, with the most common accompanying comment being America is our main hope they saved us once before. In short, it is crystal-clear in the discourse of this era who Australia’s in- and out-groups were.

This identification did not change significantly during the early 1960s, despite both the US and Britain declining to back Australia in its dispute over Dutch New Guinea, an issue that had became a real obsession for Menzies’ Cabinet. But in public the government brazened it out: even as Indonesia’s pressure as part of its policy of Konfrontasi (i.e., the confrontation campaign and undeclared war against Malaysia over Borneo) ratcheted up further, Barwick spoke to parliament about the world situation. Tellingly, instead of focussing on Indonesia’s.

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222 This is a central theme of Lowe: see Menzies, ch. 2; see also Bell, Dependent Ally, 62–65.
225 Sydney Morning Herald, 18 November 1955.
226 Meany, Documentary History, 657.
nist in Asia ... [who] seeks to promote instability and chaos ... fails to provide for his own people ... believes power grows out of a gun barrel and so forth. Barwick was therefore using Mao's own words against him: ordinary Australians would have been aware of this hard-headed statement by the Chinese leader, and could grasp instantly that behind all the high-minded Marxist rhetoric was a sinister and hypocritical power-hungry monster. Moreover, new ministers like Paul Hasluck, entering senior cabinet circles in the early 1960s, took just as stark a view as the veterans in office since Korea like Menzies and Casey. For example, during his brief tenure as minister for defence in 1963-1964, Hasluck noted in a Foreign Affairs article clearly addressed to an American audience that forward defence logic remained inescapable. While delivering a scathing attack on global communism generally, Hasluck interpreted the problems Australia faced with Indonesia through a Cold War lens, claiming he feared the rise inside Java of a strong Communist party and to combat its influence he said Australia would reach out to the newly free and freedom-loving, independent and proudly capitalist states in Asia.

Overt cultural-comparison, use of colourful metaphors and the drawing of historical analogies (Munich remained a favourite) emphasising cultural-similarity with the US and the West were therefore staple fare in the early 1960s, along with frequent examples of difference-with statements directed at communism. With respect to the affinity-perceptions, however, there would never be quite the same sense of sameness with Americans comparable to that Australians had felt towards Britain. And below this calm facade differences simmered regarding the gravity of the Indonesian threat. Menzies issued a tough-sounding statement implicitly warning of war between Indonesia and a US- and British-backed Australia over Dutch New Guinea in January 1962, but by March he was being forced to back down embarrassingly in the face of renewed evidence that the US would not back Australia's stance, forcing him to meekly concede that No country in the world more than ours needs our great and powerful friends, and thus Australia was rejecting any policy ... which would put at risk our friendship with

228 Paul Hasluck, 'Australia in Southeast Asia,' Foreign Affairs 43:3 (1964), 59.
229 Dupont, Australia's Threat Perceptions, 52; St Barclay, Friends in High Places, ch. 5.
Calwell then branded Menzies an appeaser (and he employed the Munich-metaphor once again). Calwell also tarred Indonesia, which had since its independence been a loud champion of anti-colonialism, with the imperialist brush, referring to its determination to take over an area populated by peoples (i.e. the Papuans in Dutch New Guinea) who were culturally and ethnically very different from the rest of Indonesia. Specifically, Calwell said Labor was certainly not concerned with the preservation of Dutch imperialism ... [but] the Indonesian threat to seize West New Guinea is a bid to impose naked imperialism and ruthless colonialism upon a native people whose wishes and interests the Indonesians ignore completely.²³²

Both sides of politics were therefore concerned about Indonesia in the early 1960s, and the cultural-difference-comparisons and their corresponding threat-assessments were clearly evident in public discourse. But serious concern about Indonesia was also evident in the more formal strategic discourse, namely, the Strategic Basis Papers. That produced in 1962 confirmed the significant rearmament effort that the Menzies government had first announced in parliament 1961, which included the procurement of new destroyers, submarines and F-111 strike aircraft. It was noted that Indonesia had built a formidable inventory of Soviet weapons but it was said to be unlikely to pose a major threat.²³³ Indeed, the report actually indicated that things may go either way ... Indonesia may become a direct threat ... or a useful barrier against Communist expansion.²³⁴ But Australia’s major efforts would still to be directed towards supporting a limited war in Asia against communism, alongside America, despite the latter’s seeming determination to stay out of the most likely serious-combat-scenario involving Australian forces, namely, a conflict over Dutch New Guinea.²³⁵ But when in early 1963 Sukarno announced his policy of Konfrontasi the US seemed to begin to take the Indonesian threat more seriously. Barwick replied when questioned in 1963 that ANZUS applied generally to Australia’s commitment of troops to resist Indonesia in Borneo. Sukarno reacted angrily and declared he would gobble Malaysia raw and take on the British, Australians and Americans all together if necessary.²³⁶ US efforts to placate him worried Australia enough to force the US to confirm publically

²³² Speech, reported verbatim in Sydney Morning Herald, 10 February 1962.
²³⁴ Ibid., paras. 8, 22.
²³⁵ A ‘limited war’ meant something like Vietnam became, as opposed to ‘global war’, which meant ‘WWII with nukes’.
²³⁶ Personal conversation, Sukarno to Barwick, NAA, A1838,586/7/17, 13 September 1963
ANZUS would indeed come into force if there were a direct attack on Malaysia and the Menzies government was greatly reassured by these words.\(^\text{237}\)

Unsurprisingly, Indonesia’s image in Australia deteriorated rapidly. The steady nationalisation of Indonesia’s economy was criticised, playing on an important difference in setting Cold War us/them boundaries.\(^\text{238}\)

Much was made of the fact that the Indonesian Communists (Partai Komunis Indonesia or PKI) seemed to be gaining in influence, suggesting that areas of tension and conflict, both Communist and nationalist, had moved closer to Australia.\(^\text{239}\) Once again the spectre of Munich was invoked: a cartoon in the *Advertiser* depicted Sukarno as a rat whose shadow resembled a saluting Hitler, gobbling on a piece of cheese labelled territorial ambitions all under the caption shades of Munich.\(^\text{240}\) When asked in 1965 whether they supported the deployment of troops to Borneo to confront Konfrontasi, 65 per cent of Australians did so (with only 23 per cent against)\(^\text{241}\) This is unsurprising when one considers how inflammatory Sukarno’s rhetoric was: his foreign policy was ostensibly based on a doctrine whereby New Emerging Forces would sweep away the Old Order in Asia, which implicitly included Australia’s influence.\(^\text{242}\) During this time Menzies spoke repeatedly about the need for great and powerful friends, and how Australia would continue to back America in its global fight against communism.\(^\text{243}\)

Finally, several studies published in the late-1960s concluded that Sukarno’s downfall in 1965 had saved the country from economic ruination similar to that which China was inflicting upon itself at the time.\(^\text{244}\)

Menzies would get his chance to deepen an American commitment to Australia’s region as the conflict in Vietnam escalated, just as relations with Indonesia were deteriorating. Indeed, these circumstances largely explain why forward defence was not abandoned despite sharp disappointment in Canberra over Washington’s attitude towards Dutch New Guinea (but which was usually expressed in private a testament to the Menzies’s Cabinet’s discipline), the government was very pleased with America’s commitments in Vietnam. It is often forgotten

\(^{238}\) Anthony Burke, ‘Order and Decolonisation in Southeast Asia,’ in Devetak et al, *Introduction to International Relations*, 216.
\(^{240}\) Meaney, *Documentary History*, 661.
\(^{241}\) Ibid., 666.
\(^{242}\) Quoted in Bell, *Dependent Ally*, 80.
nowadays that the government and most Australians had quite willingly become involved in that war. As David McLean put it,

Washington did not drag Australia into an unwanted Vietnam involvement. Rather ... Australia, aiming to commit the US to the defence of the mainland of South East Asia and Australia, energetically encouraged US intervention, displaying fewer doubts about the wisdom of an unlimited military involvement than did American officials.246

The government even produced a paper explaining that it was Australia’s aim to ensure that America did not waver in its commitment to South East Asia.247 Indeed, there was a minor imbroglio when it was realised that Australia had announced it would dispatch troops in the absence of a formal request from the South Vietnamese, which was hastily arranged through US connections.248 So, in 1962 advisors were dispatched: by mid-1963, more instructors and some RAAF transport elements had arrived; anticipating increasing pressure on Australian forces, limited ballot conscription began in 1963; an infantry battalion was deployed in June 1965; and by 1968 the contingent numbered 8,300.249

Continental defence logic would seem to have been both more relevant to defending against Indonesia, and in the context of this conflict the US-is-reliable aspect of forward defence (i.e. its cultural orientation) was not resonating strongly given America’s mixed signals over Dutch New Guinea. But strategic issues in the Cold War era were rarely strictly compartmentalised. First, the 1964 Strategic Basis Paper concluded that ANZUS remained Australia’s ultimate insurance and that the US nuclear umbrella remained solid.250 Second, in an Asian-Pacific context, Menzies famously stated in April 1965 that China was seeking to make a great strategic thrust between the Pacific and Indian Oceans (i.e. through Vietnam). In this speech, he also relied heavily on an analogy that both he

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245 A Gallup poll held in 1965 saw 52 per cent approve and 37 per cent disapprove, for example.
247 ‘Australia’s Military Commitment to Vietnam’, paper from Department of Foreign Affairs, tabled in parliament 13 May 1975.
250 The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy (1964), NAA, A1856/5, CS: C3640, paras. 55, 56.
and Hasluck repeatedly fingered China as the ‘puppet-master’ behind all that ailed South East Asia.\(^{252}\) So, from the perspective of the Menzies government, it made sense to commit to forward defence not just to pay the premium for America’s protection, but also to confront China in Vietnam, on the grounds that China posed a much greater threat than Indonesia since it was much larger, more capable, and much more implacable—because it was proper (and fanatically) communist.

Finally, the 1964 Strategic Basis Paper noted that Indonesia had hegemonial ambitions and that it was drawing closer to Communism—\(^{253}\) the fact that its armed forces were being penetrated by the PKI was seen as particularly disturbing.\(^{253}\) And the government went on at length about the dangers of the supposedly solidifying Jakarta-Peking axis.\(^{254}\) But the US also now had a robust presence in Asia which would restrain Sukarno’s deeds if not his words.\(^{255}\) So, the forward-defence-with-America sub-culture remained relevant—Australia still had a great ally in a dangerous region—and it also continued to broadly resonate well with the cultural orientation at the heart of forward defence before 1965.

Then regional strategic environment shifted radically in 1965 with fall of Sukarno, the rise of a military-and Western-oriented regime under General Suharto, and the killing of at least 500,000 PKI members and supporters. While the details were poorly known in Australia at the time,\(^{256}\) nevertheless the feeling in Australia by mid-1966, when it was clear that the PKI had been eviscerated and Konfrontasi had been officially abandoned, was one of palpable relief now that a Western-leaning regime was at the helm in Jakarta.\(^{257}\) And, more importantly, forward defence logic seemed to have been largely vindicated: a ‘big win’ for the West in Indonesia had transformed Australia’s external strategic environment for the better; the situation in Vietnam was not yet going badly; and the Americans were committing heavily to the region more generally. Forward defence therefore

\(^{251}\) Millar, *Australia*, 288; Spender had said in 1950 that ‘communism prevail and Vietnam come under the heel of communist China, Malaya is in danger or being outflanked and it, together with Thailand, Burma and Indonesia will become the next direct object of further communist activities.’ See CPD, HR, 1949–50 Session, Vol. CCIV, 621–31, 9 March 1950.


\(^{253}\) Strategic Basis (1964), paras., 19, 20, 21, 39

\(^{254}\) Bell, *Dependent Ally*, 80.

\(^{255}\) Strategic Basis (1964), para. 35.

\(^{256}\) For example, T.B. Millar wrote in 1967 that ‘One cannot but admire the skill with which General Suharto removed President Sukarno of the reins and robes of office without precipitating a civil war.’ *Australia’s Foreign Policy* (Melbourne: Angus & Robertson, 1967), 57. Burke, ‘Order and Decolonisation,’ 217, puts the number of those killed in the purge at more than two million; a more conservative assessment puts the figure at over a million: see Robert Cribb, ‘Unresolved Problems in the Indonesian Killings of 1965–66,’ *Asian Survey* 42:4 (2002), 550–63.

interests were no longer clashing (at least to the same degree) over West Irian.\footnote{258 Australia was still not pleased with Indonesian control over West Irian. The referendum held to join Indonesia in 1969 had been rigged and conducted with overt coercion. \cite{i}, 215–216.}

The impression that the strategic environment had improved was vital at the 1966 election, one of the few such in Australian history dominated by strategic issues, especially Vietnam. The conservative Coalition parties led by Menzies’ successor, Harold Holt, won a resounding victory and Labor was handed its worst defeat ever.\footnote{259 It won only 40 of the 124 seats, the only time it has controlled less than one third of the House of Representatives.} Labor claimed in the aftermath that the US, in the person of President Lyndon B. Johnson himself, had improperly interfered again in Australian politics by touring the country and holding numerous photo-ops with Holt only one month before the election: the ALP MP, Fred Daly, claimed that Johnson had ‘campaigned blatantly for the Holt government,’\footnote{260 Quoted in Paul D. Williams, ‘Holt, Johnson and the 1966 Federal Election: A Question of Causality,’ \textit{Australian Journal of Politics and History}, 47:3 (2001), 368.} fuelling the fires of anti-Americanism that would flare occasionally within ALP ranks (see Chapter 8). More importantly, the two sides staked out very different positions on strategic policy and Vietnam in particular, and it is widely accepted that the public delivered a resounding ‘yes’ to the principles of forward defence.\footnote{261 Henry S. Albinski, \textit{Australian External Policy Under Labor: Content, Process and the National Debate} (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1977), 32.}

The government definitely played its hand better by deliberately making defence the key issue in the campaign and then sticking to a fairly simple line about it.\footnote{262 Sydney Morning Herald, 9 May 1966.}\footnote{263 Sydney Morning Herald, 1 July 1966.} Holt had summed this up in his famous ‘All the way with LBJ’ comment in June 1966 (which he always claimed had been impromptu, but which has come to define the era)\footnote{264 Quoted in Bell, \textit{Dependent Ally}, 83–84.} and this simple slogan was readily understood by voters. Holt also said ‘Australia must have strong and reliable friends. That is why we played our part in ... SEATO and ANZUS... [They] carry with them responsibilities as well as benefits, thereby tapping into the strong sense of fairness inherent in Australian culture (i.e. and re-using the same “let’s not be bludgers” metaphor from the Second World War).’\footnote{265 Quoted in Bell, \textit{Dependent Ally}, 83–84.} When first launching the campaign Holt reportedly said
the government believed were right for Australia at this point in history [were designed to secure] our national integrity and self-respect, our obligations to friends and allies, our standing in the free world and the tempo and character of our own growth and development.265

Holt framed his arguments for re-election in a clear social context: Australia would be concerned first with 'integrity, then self-respect, then obligations to friends, and then its standing in the free world (i.e. its in-group). Only at the end did Holt mention that economic prosperity was important. But the government was certainly not above sensationalised fear-mongering either. A full-page election ad in a newspaper, for example, made obvious reference to the by-now familiar domino theory:

IF VIETNAM GOES WHO'S NEXT? Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore ... eventually Australia, unless communist aggression is stopped while it is still controllable far from our shores ... To disregard the threat to isolate Australia to be anti-American is suicidal. And that is Labor Party Policy suicide! KEEP AUSTRALIA SECURE AND PROSPEROUS PLAY IT SAFE VOTE 1 LIBERAL266

So, the ALP was being accused of anti-Americanism, a very clear statement about what the government thought Australia's dominant cultural identity should be (i.e. pro-American). At the 1963 election, although the commitment to defeating Konfrontasi (i.e. the issue then) was far less important than Vietnam was in 1966, Menzies had still successfully wedged the Opposition leader Arthur Calwell and made him appear weak and vacillating, even though Sukarno's policy of Maphilindo, the creation of a loose confederation of Indo-Malay states, had been explicitly nationalist and not communist in tone and intent.267 In 1966 the tactic worked again but with even greater effect. The ALP, despite having been essentially in agreement with the government position regarding the potential danger posed by China since 1963,268 was successfully portrayed as 'soft on communism' in part because Labor had formally adopted a policy to merely recognise the People's Republic of China as the legitimate government of China. But the ALP also brought much of the doom upon itself because Calwell tried to be too nuanced, arguing as Chifley and Evatt had also done unsuccessfully two decades earlier, that nationalism and not communism was the

266 Meaney, Documentary History, 698.
sort of surface manifestation of the former. He argued, for example, that whatever aid the Vietcong draws from North Vietnam or China, its basic strength derives from the support it receives from within South Vietnam itself, and he also stressed that the South Vietnamese regime was hardly a worthy ally in a fight that is supposedly about the values of freedom given that it was an unstable, inefficient, partially corrupt military regimes which lacks even the semblance ... of democracy.269 This was a direct attack upon the common-sense position that the government had been promoting since 1962 when Barwick claimed the South Vietnamese are not people who will knuckle under easily to the Communists.270

Calwell was, in short, trying to redefine Australia’s in-group in this case by excluding the South Vietnamese regime. Yet he also made overly technical distinctions, arguing that the ALP would keep regulars in Vietnam but would not send conscripts (i.e. consistent with its decades-old stance on this issue).271 It was also generally unclear whether the ALP would follow a broadly forward or an essentially continental defence posture. And there was a strong perception of dissent and disorganisation within the party itself, especially between Calwell and his deputy, Gough Whitlam a newspaper reported just days before the election, for instance, that Mr Calwell is known to regard Mr Whitlam’s attempt to water down his assessments of ALP policy on Vietnam as proof of his [i.e. Whitlam] disloyalty.272

Put in strategic cultural terms, Calwell’s favoured strategic sub-culture was seen by the electorate as both less relevant to the external strategic environment (i.e. with a less-dangerous Indonesia and a growing US presence in Vietnam); and it also resonated less well with Australia’s dominant cultural identity. The ALP seemed poorly versed in strategic matters: its policy seemed confused and idealistic; and its favoured, complex cultural orientation with a US that was still important but had also lost its way, with dodgy South Vietnamese allies and a Vietcong who were proud freedom-fighters, with a China which the ALP said was dangerous but wanted to recognise anyway was simply too much for voters. The ALP’s worldview, its interpretation of reality, was alien and counterintuitive, and voters turned in droves to the simpler, more familiar one of a Cold War with black and white enemies and clear,

269 Quoted in Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 294.
270 Report, following Barwick’s tour (as External Affairs Minister) of South East Asia, CNIA, Vol. 33 (August 1962), 54–55.
271 Grey, Military History, 237.
least, as I will argue in the next chapter the ALP line was too much for voters in late 1966, about 18 months before things began to turn sour in Vietnam.

The Tết Offensive in Vietnam in early 1968 marked the end of an era. Polls showed public support for involvement in Vietnam fluctuated between 59 per cent and 63 per cent from July 1965 to September 1967, but a year later (i.e. after Tết) it had fallen to 47 per cent and would steadily decline thereafter. Tết and its aftermath, as well as news of the My Lai massacre that broke later in 1968, is generally regarded as the moment in which the war ‘turned,’ despite that it was actually a heavy military defeat for the communists.273 But, ironically, Tết became a major grand-strategic or political disaster for America: General William Westmoreland, the commander of US forces in Vietnam, had said in late 1967 that the war was being won and so he seemed to have been contradicted; Walter Cronkite famously mused that perhaps the war was unwinnable in a meaningful sense anymore274; and President Johnson declined to run for president again in 1968, implicitly taking personal responsibility for US failures.

The generally poor strategic outlook was cited explicitly by Prime Minister Gorton in early 1968 as a reason for not increasing Australia’s contribution to Vietnam.275 The new American president, Richard M. Nixon, would not, in the end, depart Vietnam hastily but he would declare the Guam or Nixon doctrine by which America expected its allies to do more for their own defence; it also stated that America would be much more reticent in future to commit ground troops to wars on the Asian continent. This, and the departure from Asia of Britain in the early 1970s, would be pivotal causes of the rise to ascendancy of the continental defence sub-culture during the 1970s alongside some significant changes in Australia’s dominant cultural identity which were in part unrelated to these changes in its external strategic environment. Yet these last matters are best left for detailed discussion in Chapter 7.

Three Final Matters: Britain, White Australia and the DLP

273 Their efforts to take towns and cities were crushed within weeks, and the casualties they suffered limited their operational effectiveness for the rest of 1968: Marilyn B. Young, The Vietnam Wars, 1945–1990 (New York, HarperPerennial, 1991), 214
275 Speech, 31 March 1968, reported verbatim in The Canberra Times, 1 April 1968.
Three further matters require discussion to put the period 1950-1968 into broader perspective: Britain’s departure from Asia, the continuance of the White Australia Policy, and the phenomenon of the Democratic Labor Party (DLP), which acted as an electoral spoiler to the ALP and (not coincidentally) was the promoter or the most extreme version of forward defence, all deserve some specific treatment.

Regarding Britain, for a little over a decade after 1945 it was still assumed that Britain was, generally speaking, Australia’s premier ally, or at least co-equal with America. But following Suez and Britain’s disinterest in supporting Australia over Dutch New Guinea it was realised that Britain’s time as a major player in Asia was likely to end sooner rather than later. The British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan had declared in 1958 that “Our external policy ... should in principle be directed to reducing our colonial commitments” and after his famous “Winds of Change” speech in 1960 to the South African parliament foreshadowed the political future of Africa as one dominated by its indigenous peoples, Australia clearly apprehended the end of the British Empire within a decade or so. All this was considered troubling in Australia, not least because it came from a Conservative British prime minister. Menzies had as recently as 1954 hosted a Royal Tour and basked in the reflected glory of rapturous crowds and press – the prime minister had even recited love poetry (Shelley) in Her presence, which was considered perhaps only just a little beyond the pale at the time.

Through the 1960s Australia’s strategic ties to Britain withered. In 1961, upset by Britain’s failure to support him vis-à-vis Dutch New Guinea, Menzies despaired that Australia was worth “less than a row of beans” in Britain. The 1959 Strategic Basis Paper had been the first to note that “the United Kingdom’s resources may no longer permit her to make a major contribution in the Far East” and the 1962 paper acknowledged that this trend seemed likely to continue. By 1965 Menzies was pressuring the new British Labor Prime Minister Harold Wilson prior to the latter’s 1966 Defence Review to “stay in Asia,” and Wilson quoted to Menzies words from a draft.
A pivotal year with three major events occurring that spelled the end of Britain’s global role.

The first was Britain’s announcement that it would apply to join the European Economic Community again, and that it would accede to the latter’s demands and cut virtually all of the various trade-preference deals that tied it to the Commonwealth. There had been a decade-worth of warnings as early as 1957 Casey was told informally that Britain saw dangers in being left out of ... Europe and that Australia would be wise to seek protection for her interests through GATT. Menzies had warned in 1961, in a speech replete with pro-British sentiments that he had grave doubts about Australia’s future if Britain joined the EEC. But President Charles de Gaulle had vetoed that first attempt to enter in 1963 on the grounds that the concessions granted to Britain for continued Commonwealth trade were too great, a decision which pleased (but largely privately) a relieved Menzies. Nevertheless, and despite ten years of warnings, the final decision to move towards Europe and away from the Commonwealth taken in 1967 was still a major blow to Australia’s government.

Britain’s decision to apply for membership in the EEC had been in large part forced by the second key event in 1967: Britain’s reluctant devaluation of its currency. As Wilson explained to Menzies in a letter, after thanking all our friends in the Sterling area who have struggled along with us to maintain the value of the pound, that by this summer we were practically in balance and ready to move into surplus when the ground was cut from under us by events in the Middle East, by which he meant the Six-Day War and the consequent Arab oil embargo, which he explicitly claimed was exaggerated in its effects by a continuous wave of speculation against the pound. The pound was devalued by almost 15 per cent in a single adjustment which effectively sounded the death-knell for the Sterling bloc.

The third event in 1967 was a more properly strategic one, and it was also precipitated by the financial crisis. Britain reversed the position from its 1966 Defence Review and decided to withdraw strategically from

282 Cablegram, Menzies to Wilson, 25 February 1966, NAA, A7854/1, CS: 2.
284 Meaney, Documentary History, 635.

290 Goldsworthy, Losing the Blanket, 118.

291 Because a migrant would pay only £10 and the rest of the cost of the journey would be subsidised by the Australian government (and ‘Pom’ is a still-common, mildly derogatory term for English, so not Scottish, Welsh or Irish, persons).


293 Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 130.
it was announced in 1945 that the UN Charter would not endanger it, a Sydney newspaper’s headline trumpeted ‘White Australia Policy Safe!’

Conservative governments did not alter these policies significantly before 1966. Indeed, the retiring General William Slim (just before his appointment as Governor-General in 1954) noted that ‘the most vital need of all is to increase our white population. Otherwise with neighbours so numerous and so land-hungry it will be hard for ... [Australians] ... to hold their birthright.’ Menzies himself consistently claimed he hoped immigration policy would never change, and his quiet but firm support for South Africa elicited much criticism from the emerging Third World. Nehru himself singled Australia out in the UN for an ‘absolutely poisonous tirade’ at the UN General Assembly in 1960, for example. And in the 1960s Labor continued to favour a White Australia. Calwell remained influential after the calamity at the 1966 election even though more progressive figures like Jim Cairns and Gough Whitlam were taking over and it was not until 1971 that Whitlam forced an amendment (resisted strongly by the old guard like Daly and Calwell) to Labor’s policy platform to formally repudiate White Australia.

Nevertheless, the mood was changing slowly: Holt’s Liberal government relaxed racial restrictions a little to allow a small annual intake of Asians in 1966; and in 1974 racial discrimination was finally abandoned, with the last vestiges swept away by Labor activist immigration minister Al Grassby.

Still, in the 1960s in particular, and despite Menzies’ own sentiments, Australia did begin to (or perhaps mend) ties with the region, especially with the states emerging from British Malaya (i.e. Malaysia and later Singapore) and, crucially, Japan. Australia’s contribution to the Malayan Emergency, the ANZAM Treaty and its assistance in combating Konfrontasi had all been predicated on ‘shepherding’ the peoples of Malaya towards an independent but liberal-democratic, capitalist future — but unfortunately general attitudes remained racist, if only paternalistically so. For example, The British prime Minister, Macmillan, casually referred to the Tunku of Malaya.

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294 Sydney Morning Herald, 15 June 1945.
295 Slim Papers, folder 2/6/2, Governor-General’s speeches, 1954, CCAC.
296 Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 323.
297 Goldsworthy, Losing the Blanket, 89–90. Also see Menzies, CPD, HR, 1961 Session, vol. XX, 655, 11 April 1961.
298 Cablegram, Australian UN Mission to Acting Prime Minister McEwen, NAA, A6706/1, CS: 71, 9 October 1960.
300 Ibid., 124.
301 Macmillan was referring to Abdul Rahman, the ‘Father of Independence,’ commonly known as ‘the Tunku’ (a princely title).
MacMahon Ball, a prominent professor of international relations at the University of Melbourne, became a frequent critic of the government’s Asian policies in 1950s and 1960s, arguing repeatedly that celebrations of ‘White Australia’ were offensive, damaged Australia’s image, and jeopardised its economic opportunities in the region. Ball later became the frequent target of public rebuttals by Casey.

In an interesting publication from 1963 called Living with Asia, to which both Barwick (the External Affairs Minister) and the rising star of the ALP’s Left faction at the time, Jim Cairns, contributed, a Filipino scholar argued that ‘Asia believes that Australia is anti-Asian and that Australia’s immigration policy was self-defeating because it had a sensational effect, one which nations advocating colour discrimination, like South Africa, continually invoke; one which in restless Asia is grist for Communist provocation.... Australia, in practice I and there are many incidents that one can cite I has discriminated against the Asian.’ Barwick could only write that ‘I cannot deny that there are people in Australia who would like to follow a policy of isolation from Asia, while denying that he and his party were among them. He also made a few significant concessions, despite the vagueness of the language:

Our links with our British ... past remain strong, as is only to be expected, but we have had to increasingly stand on our own feet. It is no longer true to say that Australia is simply a European outpost.... It is a nation in its own right.... In this shrinking world we cannot contract out of our geographical position ... [which] puts us inescapably in [Asia].

Yet he ended his piece with a long attack on China, explaining why it posed a threat to the whole region. This was a favoured Menzies-era tactic, emphasising some points of similarity with the new Asian states in this case ‘shared economic and political interests’ while playing down others by not addressing them directly, like Australia’s...

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305 Alfredo Roces, ‘Australia’s Image in Asia,’ Living with Asia (Canberra: Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1963), 14.
306 Sir Garfield Barwick, ‘Ourselves and Our Neighbours I,’ ibid., 44.
response, Cairns delivered the standard Labor line, namely, that communism was not monolithic and that much of the problem in Asia (especially in Vietnam) was a result of nationalism. But he also claimed that the Australian government does not have a sound view of the world.... Its view is derived from Britain and the United States and receives some independent thought only when these two countries disagree.... [T]he government’s views seem to be over-simplified into the words of men who think ideologically or in clichés.\(^{307}\)

Here is a classic example of what Consuella Cruz and Jeffrey Lantis called an attempt to recast reality itself\(^{307}\)(see Chapter 2). Cairns presented a very different interpretation of reality, directly attacking the government’s worldview as out of touch.\(^{308}\)There is little detail in his chapter: there are few statistics on how much more trade could have grown or what his party would do \(\text{do it, and instead}\)
instead Cairns is more interested in explaining what Labor thinks Australia should be like (i.e. not like, or less like, Britain and the US) and what role it should play, namely, an independent and regionally-engaged one, and an honest broker\(^{308}\) between the West and \(\text{devolutionary-nationalist}\) movements.\(^{308}\) Cairns also claims that its own limited way the Australian government has relied upon nuclear weapons,\(^{309}\) and then launches into a stern moral condemnation of such,\(^{309}\) meaning that there is no concession to or discussion of the technical issues that Barwick touched on, such as extended-deterrence-logic or the need to carefully help manage the global balance of power. On the contrary: Cairns’ argument is squarely cultural, asking questions like what should we be like as a nation?\(^{307}\) and who is/should be in our in-group?\(^{307}\)

Although Menzies and his colleagues were conservative, they were also hard-headed realists, operating always with Australia’s best interests at heart. They were active in substantially expanding Australia’s foreign policy institutions and so its capability to interact with the world, especially in Asia. They took an important and historic step in 1957 by signing a major bilateral trade deal with Japan. There had been much resistance to the soft peace treaty with Japan signed in 1952 \(\text{the signing of ANZUS was generally seen as a sweetener to ensure Australian compliance with the former treaty}\)\(^{310}\) and until the 1950s Australia remained uncomfortable with Japan. But trade

\(^{307}\) Dr Jim Cairns, ‘Ourselves and Our Neighbours II,’ ibid., 61.
\(^{308}\) Ibid., 79.
\(^{309}\) Ibid., 63–66.
\(^{310}\) Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, 184–89.
grew very rapidly and became very one-sided (in Australia’s favour) and after a series of trade disputes and some retaliatory Japanese action Menzies negotiated an agreement that turned out to be one of the most important in Australia’s history.\textsuperscript{311} As an aside, and the final issue regarding Australia’s relationship with Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed in 1967. Australia was not invited to join, but this troubled Menzies little— all he and his Cabinet were really interested in was the overtly-anti-communist orientation of the new group. This nicely demonstrates that, despite real attempts to build ties and trade with Asia ultimately, as two contemporary Australian historians have put it, “The quest for security against Asian communism drove Australia’s engagement with Southeast Asia in the period 1963 to 1972.”\textsuperscript{312}

The final issue requiring discussion is the dual role of the Democratic Labor Party as one of the primary factors keeping the ALP out of office for over two decades (i.e. 1949–72) and as the advocate of a form of extreme forward defence logic. To explain the role of this party requires understanding that the Australian working class had always had a strong Irish-Catholic component that was, generally speaking, anti-communist. Also important is the fact that MPs are elected to the House of Representatives by a preferential voting system. Because voters have as many preferences as there are candidates in a constituency (or electorate in Australia), political parties try to direct second preferences in a strategic way in order to maximise their preferential count and minimise the count of opponents.\textsuperscript{313} Returning to the discussion of the DLP per se, in the Cold War mania of the early 1950s the ALP split badly, with its Catholic and strongly anti-communist wing departing in 1955, led by the colourful and controversial B.A. Santamaria.\textsuperscript{314} The newly-formed DLP sought to undermine Labor’s electoral fortunes by directing their supporters to assign second preferences to parties other than the ALP, even though most DLP supporters would have considered themselves “working class.” So, while the DLP won few seats in the lower house

\textsuperscript{311}It has been widened and deepened since in a number of ways and within a decade Japan was Australia’s biggest trading partner and is still a very close second to China. In many ways Japan “fortuitously replaced” Britain in the 1960s: see ibid., ch. 6.

\textsuperscript{312}David Lee and Moreen Dee, “Southeast Asian Conflicts,” in Goldsworthy, Facing North, 262.

\textsuperscript{313}In practical terms, political parties hand their supporters a ‘How to Vote’ card outside the polling booth on election day. This card suggests how the voter should list preferences for all the candidates in order to maximize the likelihood of a particular outcome in that constituency. The DLP would routinely advise ranking the ALP last. Because most Australian voters are used to following these suggestions, the DLP regularly delivered large numbers of votes to Liberal or Country Party candidates.

\textsuperscript{314}Albinski, Australian External Policy Under Labor, 38. The split had been caused by disquiet over supposed ‘communist infiltration’ of trade unions, but the DLP’s anti-communism soon became focused on strategic and foreign policy. See also Andrew Farran, ‘The Freeth Experiment,’ in Pettit, Selected Readings, 40.
(it did consistently win a few seats in the Senate, elected by a system of proportional representation\textsuperscript{315}), it was able to act as a spoiler by causing regular defeats of up to a dozen Labor candidates in seats where they otherwise, because of socio-demographic factors, would have been expected to win.

So, in strategic-cultural terms, a ‘sub-sub-culture’ (i.e. a variety of forward defence logic) was tied closely to and promoted by a sub-section of the political community which was cleverly able to exploit the vagaries of Australia’s political architecture.\textsuperscript{316} As to the variety of forward defence the DLP supported (and this was their major policy\textsuperscript{T} although they occasionally forced domestic-policy concessions from the conservative governments consistent with a working-class party) it was a relatively extreme version of forward defence logic in two senses.

First, the DLP railed endlessly against communism, meaning that it promoted a very simple, dichotomous, openly-theological cultural orientation by which communism was considered an existential evil\textsuperscript{317} – indeed, a critical voice said in 1973 it was on a fanatical crusade.\textsuperscript{318} Second, the DLP demanded major increases in defence spending, to as high as 10 per cent of GDP, well above the peacetime norm of 2 per cent in the 1970s. But this is precisely the point: the DLP believed Australia should be operating as if it were wartime\textsuperscript{T} so, again we see advocacy for a (sub)-sub-culture by way of seeking to redefine reality.

It is also telling, from a strategic cultural perspective, that the DLP reacted very sharply to US wavering\textsuperscript{T} in Vietnam in 1968, and it actually abandoned (in a confused and knee-jerk manner) its traditional forward defence-with-America position. Instead, in late 1968 the party adopted a go-it-alone forward defence policy which would have required Australia’s forces to triple in size to enable them to combat communism in Asia independently.\textsuperscript{319} In explaining this reversal Santamaria eschewed any technical-strategic arguments and instead expressed disillusionment with the cultural changes occurring in late-1960s-America: he real disease\textsuperscript{T} was also spreading to Australia because many millions ... no longer retain any basic internal conviction that authority has any claims [to] legitimacy. America was becoming decadent, depraved and deplorable and the drugs, free negroes and dissent\textsuperscript{T}.

\textsuperscript{315}Each of the six states has 12 Senators – these are chosen on a state-wide basis by proportional representation.
\textsuperscript{316}It is clear that the DLP would have been far less effective in a first-past-the-post electoral system.
\textsuperscript{317}The best single source for DLP thinking is B.A. Santamaria, Determined to Survive (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1966).
\textsuperscript{318}Joseph Camilleri, An Introduction to Australian Foreign Policy (Brisbane: Jacaranda Press, 1973),23.
\textsuperscript{319}Four to five divisions (around 100,000 men) would be permanently based in Asia. See Millar, Australia’s Foreign Policy, 241.
ally in his view. The DLP’s cultural orientation in a threat-perception sense (i.e. deep hostility towards communism) was so strong that as Australia’s main ally began to pursue Detente with communism, the DLP’s affinity perceptions towards America plunged.

The party therefore advocated a strategic schema which, due to its unrealistic defence spending demands, was neither relevant to Australia’s external strategic environment, and nor did it resonate with Australia’s dominant cultural identity. Most Australians were simply not that hysterically anti-communist, or prepared to accept that America had necessarily changed for the worse. Indeed, as Australia’s dominant cultural identity changed (discussed in Chapter 7) through the early 1970s, the DLP rapidly lost electoral support to the point where, by 1973, MacMahon Ball could express in hopeful terms that it was a thing of the past in Australian politics. He was proven correct: the party formally disbanded in 1978 after failing to return any MPs at the 1974 or 1975 elections.

Conclusion

The century of Australian strategic decision-making surveyed in this chapter demonstrates the degree to which forward defence was dominant, save for a brief period in early 1942. The reason is clear: the cultural orientation at the heart of the sub-culture was strongly pro-Anglo/Western and generally hostile towards culturally-different Asian societies and/or states, and, later, any ideologically different communist societies. This resonated strongly with Australia’s dominant cultural identity before the 1970s. And, as a consequence of the social meaning given to the external strategic environment the forward defence sub-culture also remained, broadly put, relevant during this period. Tellingly, the only time when it failed potentially quite disastrously in 1942 it was another culturally-similar ‘great and powerful friend’ was, to some degree fortuitously, ready to step into the breach and largely restore the relevance of the forward defence sub-culture. This is not to say that the continental defence sub-culture was latent,

322 Note that a ‘new’ DLP (reconstituted by members of the ‘old’ DLP in the early 1980s) has contested all federal election since 1984, and it returned a Senator, John Madigan, for the first time in the 2010 election.
323 Had the US never acquired the Philippines in 1900, it may have been much less interested in Asia in 1942; the ‘colonial episode’ represented by the Spanish-American war was a relatively ‘unusual’ moment in US history.
forward defence generally dominated Australia’s strategic culture and therefore its strategic decision-making for most of the twentieth century.

Generally speaking, the fortunes of forward defence over the long period examined here were due to changes in the external strategic environment that affected its relevance. This is not to say that changes in resonance so changes in Australia’s dominant cultural identity did not matter at all. They did, especially with respect to the falling away of the ‘with-Britain’ variant and its replacement by the ‘with-America’ version. Still, it can be argued that it was, at least in this case, more a change in relevance (i.e. Britain’s slow decline) that affected the resonance aspect more than the other way around.

In the next chapter, I examine what occurred after the Têt offensive to explain how and why forward defence was replaced by continental defence. I also argue that in this historical period we see for the first time that a change in Australia’s dominant cultural identity, at least in part unrelated to changes in the external strategic environment, affected the fortunes of the contending primary sub-cultures. So, while I show that the strategic environment did change several times after 1970, and that these changes did affect the relevance of these competing strategic sub-cultures, there were also some quite significant social changes in Australia, some of which were related to the Vietnam war, but others (i.e. the ‘hippie’ turn, the Aboriginal Land Rights movement, the anti-apartheid movement all part of what Santamaria denounced in 1971) were less strictly strategic in nature. Profound social changes swept over and affected Australian society, just as they did in many other Western societies. These changes should not be over-stated in Australia’s case Australian society did not change radically and forward defence continued to exercise significant influence over strategic-decision-making. Nevertheless, it was never as dominant as it had been, at least not consistently and decisively.
Chapter 7

Continental Defence

The continental defence sub-culture became dominant after the late 1960s and has remained so ever since. I make two main arguments in this chapter: first, changes in both the external strategic environment and Australia’s dominant cultural identity caused forward defence to decline, both in terms of its relevance and its resonance. Second, continental defence has failed to ever become strongly dominant because, in strategic cultural terms, the cultural orientation at the heart of continental defence does not resonate strongly with Australians, while forward defence still does to some degree and occasionally quite strongly explaining the many instances of strategic behavioural aberrations in the modern era. The cultural orientation at the core of continental defence does not resonate well because it does not have a truly substantive cultural orientation at its heart. Specifically, it does not identify cultural enemies clearly, and it also tends to be vague about who Australia’s strategic cultural friends are (although the US is usually implicitly assumed to be one). Australians, however, have continued to feel threatened by various culturally-different others, meaning that the two subordinate strategic sub-cultures, forward defence and internationalism, provide strategic cultural detail. There is, then, some truth to the claims of Michael Evans and David J. Kilcullen (see Chapter 5) that Australia, despite its formal commitment to continental defence logic since the 1970s, continues to be drawn towards forward defence-like responses to strategic crises. Before we can examine these in detail, however, we must first consider what a pure version of continental defence looks like.

Continental Defence Logic

A general sense of the continental defence sub-culture can be appreciated by consideration of the logic that underpins the 1986 Dibb Report. Its author, Paul Dibb, then a senior bureaucrat with prior experience in senior

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report was a capabilities review ... [which] did not make recommendations on strategic policy, and it did not canvass how the ADF should be used overseas (emphasis in original).² In other words, Dibb deliberately excised political and cultural assumptions from consideration,⁴ paring down his strategic analysis to consideration of material forces like geography and relative-forces-in-being (i.e. the balance of existing military capabilities, especially their naval-logistical aspects). This approach is generally consistent with Indyck's contemporaneous observations about the traditionally strong influence of realism in Australian IR circles,⁵ sentiments endorsed again recently by several Australian IR scholars.⁶ Dibb's central claim was that:

Australia faces no specific military threat.... Our strategic position underpins this judgement. We have no land borders with other states.... We are distant from areas of great power rivalry, and there are no major issues of territorial sovereignty.... [T]he political intent of governments can change relatively rapidly. Even so, there is a large gap between political hostility and its translation into military intent, capabilities or conflict.⁷

So, for geographical reasons first priority should be given to Indonesia, although Dibb also observed that Indonesia did not have the capability to threaten Australia with substantial military assault. China, India, Japan and Vietnam could potentially do so, but they also lacked the present capability, while the USSR had only limited amphibious-assault capabilities, especially in Australia's region. So in Dibb's own words (written in 2007), Australia developed [in 1986] pioneering ideas of how to develop a Defence force without a threat. This pure variety of continental defence was built around three assumptions about the external strategic environment. First, there was no clearly

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² Appointed as the Ministerial Consultant to the Minister for Defence from 1984 to 1986 to prepare this report, Dibb had also served as Head of the National Assessments Staff, National Intelligence committee from 1974 to 1978.
³ Dibb, Review, 19.
⁷ Dibb, 'The Conceptual Basis,' 98.
⁸ Dibb, Review, 52.
geographical effects that should be interpreted in two ways: first, the Pacific region remained at least potentially turbulent, especially the arc of instability (i.e. the various island chains to the north). But nevertheless Australia’s more immediate geographical circumstances were very favourable because the sea gap to our north and to our east constitutes a formidable barrier because that the closest foreign ports and airfields ... are not well suited for supporting major operations against Australia. Flowing from these two major assumptions were three subsidiary concepts: first, if a serious threat developed, there would be sufficient warning time (of about a decade) to expand the Australian Defence Force (ADF); second and accordingly, the ADF should be partly configured as an expandable core force; third, forces in being should be structured to deal with credible threats so mainly low level conflict, but the ADF should also be able to practice conventional sea denial, meaning (limited) RAN and RAAF strike forces should be retained or acquired.

It is important to note that while Dibb noted a threat from Indonesia, he was careful to explain that it emerged for geographical reasons, not its strategic character (which he ignored). A potentially hostile power [could] gain access to bases in the South Pacific but no-one was identified explicitly and any such effort would provide plenty of warning time. Perhaps most tellingly Dibb played down the need to establish an ADF force-structure that would enable it to readily deploy for operations out of area with allies, saying that while Australia could still make a modest contribution in support of our more distant diplomatic interests such would be essentially a gesture of support. Indeed, in an example of direct and unambiguous schema-advocacy he stated

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13 Dibb, ‘The Conceptual Basis’, 1; Alan Dupont, ‘Australia’s Threat Perceptions: A Search for Identity,’ Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, no. 82 (1991), Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 88. ADF now referred to all three services and had been adopted in the late 1970s after the Tange Reforms.
14 Ibid., ch. 3; Huisken and Thatcher, History as Policy, 15–17.
15 I.e. raids on Australia’s north, illegal fishing, organised crime etc; Dibb, ‘The Conceptual Basis,’ Canberra Papers, 110, ch. 2.
16 Dibb, Review, 50–3.
18 Ibid., 100.
19 Dibb, Review, 43.
abilities inherited from the areas of "forward defence" that are no longer relevant\(^{20}\) by which he especially meant big, hardened infantry units equipped to fight conventionally.

From a strategic cultural perspective this pure form of continental defence logic was "all about relevance" and largely neglected resonance issues. Dibb was determined to not make any strategy-culture-like assumptions about intentions apart from vague assumptions about the continuing strength of America being "generally good." Equally, however, he could not simply assume the US could always be trusted to help Australia \(\ddagger\) the Americans had said as much in the late 1960s, and so he worked from this premise. To apply the concepts of Self/Other and cultural comparison to his analysis is thus difficult \(\ddagger\) it is so sparse in the ordinary strategic-cultural sense. But is still possible: Dibb was "promoting" the strategic role of an independent Australia. His favoured cultural orientation was a rational, unsentimental one in which a self-reliant Australia would be free to pursue its interests dispassionately, whatever those may be, and he emphasised this point repeatedly.\(^{21}\) In this formulation virtually all foreign states were "quite-different-others" whose intentions could not be known meaning that their military capabilities were all that mattered. Indeed, Coral Bell notes that assertions like these, especially the explicit statement about offering allies only token assistance, caused "suspicion [to] surface in some US naval comment on ... the Dibb Report ... [regarding] Australian commitment to strategic co-operation with its allies."\(^{22}\)

For the purposes of this thesis, a continental defence strategic posture is, in a relevance sense, "fitted for a less dangerous external strategic environment but one in which Australia\(\ddagger\) allies could or would not be able to offer much assistance. With regard to resonance, Dibb\(\ddagger\) pure version is largely silent, or such matters are implicitly assumed and so therefore not properly conceptualised. But, importantly, this variety of continental defence never fully represented Australian strategic policy. It was "barely dominant" because its very sparseness on cultural matters was too unsentimental, too divorced from the real world of shared assumptions about culturally-similar "friendlies" and "different-hostiles" meaning that Australian governments, as I show below, typically supplemented the "pure" logic Dibb offered with a "cultural detail.\(\ddagger\) I now begin a more chronologically-ordered analysis of continental defence, to explain its halting and never-decisive rise to dominance and its fortunes thereafter.

\(^{20}\)Ibid., 50.
\(^{21}\)Dibb, Review, 4, 48, 52, 53.
\(^{22}\)Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988), 207.
Continental Defence as a Subordinate Sub-Culture: Before the 1970s

The continental defence tradition has always existed in Australian strategic discourse, if only in the form of a "yearning for independence." In 1887, for example, the Bulletin claimed that "these colonies [are] becoming alive to the fatal truth that their interests are utterly subordinated to those of a power [i.e. Britain] separated ... by oceans," although defence matters were subordinated to immigration concerns in this fiery article: independence would ensure that "no nigger, no lascar, no kanaka, no purveyor of cheap labour, is ever an Australian." Following the 1878 Jervois Report some efforts were made to strengthen port defences but most of the colonies' defence expenditures went on supplying the Royal Navy's Australia Station and commissioning a few ships to serve with the Royal Navy in the South Pacific. It was not until Billy Hughes began arguing that Britain's policy as encapsulated in the 1902 Anglo-Japanese alliance was "misguided" that a continental defence position began to take shape.

Hughes' position was informed by a deep racism towards Japan, but he also oscillated between staunch support of Britain (e.g., during the First World War) to renewed bouts of scepticism about the British commitment to Australia (e.g., in the mid-1930s). But it is clear which sub-culture he preferred — Imperial or forward defence, and he only "resorted" to continental defence logic when suspicious about Britain's commitment. But advocates of continental defence achieved two important concessions. First, Creswell successfully resisted Major-General Edward Hutton's efforts to establish the Australian Army as the institutionally premier service despite that Hutton's 1902 Minute upon the Defence of Australia confirmed Imperial defence arrangements, thereby establishing forward defence logic as supreme. Creswell also prevented the Army taking the lion's share of the defence vote, leading to the creation of the Royal Australian Navy in 1911 (see Chapter 6 for discussion of these matters).

So despite forward defence dominating in this era, continental defence did achieve some influence over strategic decision-making. Nevertheless, it was doubts about Britain that really drove the "resort" to continental

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23 A 'lascar' was an Indian sailor, while a 'kanaka' is a Melanesian (i.e. from Fiji or The Solomon Islands); 2 July 1887.
27 Memorandum for PM, Capt. W.R. Creswell, 6 March 1907, NAA, CP: 103/12, Bundle 6.
Prime Minister Stanley Bruce had, for example, complained to London in 1924 that Australia felt somewhat alone in the Pacific and may have look to its own defence more, but he also stressed Australia’s desire to strengthen Imperial defence, and he noted former Premier Minister Joseph Cook had said something very similar in early 1914. In short, most Australians did not want to be more independent indeed, between 1945 and 1947 polls showed that the number who preferred to think of themselves as primarily British increased from 60 per cent to 65 per cent, and only decreased slowly thereafter. Continental defence simply did not resonate well with Australia’s overwhelmingly pro-British dominant cultural identity, and it was generally considered to be a sort of unpalatable strategic option that should perhaps be planned for, but not aspired to.

One lonely figure consistently argued for something analogous to continental defence. E.L. Piesse, a former intelligence officer, was in 1919 appointed as the director of the newly-created Pacific Branch of the Prime Minister’s Department. Importantly, Piesse not only warned that the possibility of British abandonment should be taken seriously (a relevance argument), but also that Australians should essentially ‘drop the racism’ (i.e. a resonance appeal). He had also been, not coincidentally, a prominent critic of Hughes’ racist behaviour at Versailles.

He reported in 1920 after returning from an Asian tour that not a single politician held views anything like his own, but soon he obtained permission to use his position to ‘assist in the instruction of public opinion’ about Asians generally, after which he argued at length in bureaucratic circles and academic forums against popular stereotypes, especially regarding the Japanese. He didn’t change popular attitudes much because his anti-racist position was so unconventional. It contained a degree of affinity-perception towards Asians, so it amounted to more than just a call for mutual respect, although Piesse certainly never argued that Australians should become just like Asians. Instead, he warned that strong statements about Australia being a European outpost and much of its foreign policy (especially the White Australia Policy) unnecessarily antagonised Asians. He was not motivated by

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28 CPD, HR, 1924 Session, Vol. CVII, 1702, 27 June 1924.  
for relatively minor alterations or adjustments to Australia’s dominant cultural identity, so for a ‘toning down’ of its racist aspects.  

To be sure, Piesse did not speak directly to strategic matters much before the mid-1930s, but even before then a vague sort of continental defence logic was always discernible in his writings. Yet his thoughts on these matters were very distinguishable from the sort of continental defence proposals emerging from ALP circles occasionally in the late 1930s. For example John Curtin, Opposition Leader in 1937, based his call for a much larger RAAF on the fact that Japan ‘loomed large’ as a potential threat. These competing sub-subs or varieties of continental defence logic, Piesse’s and the ALP’s, were therefore distinguishable on cultural-affinity/threat grounds despite being similar in a technical sense (i.e. in the type of military forces and strategic posture they urged Australia to develop).

I have said plenty about the meteoric rise (and then, to an extent, the fall) of continental defence during 1942 in Chapter 6, so I just note here that this episode serves as an example of ‘aberrant’ strategic behaviour. Continental defence logic also influenced Ben Chifley’s government (1945–1949) and his minister for external affairs, H.V. Evatt, who succeeded him as ALP leader following Chifley’s death in 1951, who both valued greater independence for Australia in its approach to foreign policy. But Australia’s strategic policy, like the 1946 Strategic Basis Paper, remained predicated on forward defence logic. So, for the remainder of this section of the chapter I discuss the Labor Opposition’s various positions on strategic matters during the conservative ascendancy of the Menzies years.

Evatt as Opposition Leader from 1951 until 1960, and Arthur Calwell from 1960 until 1967, were committed to greater Australian independence, employing metaphors about Australia ‘maturing’ and ‘coming of age’. Evatt’s efforts at the San Francisco conference were offered as an example of what role Australia should play internationally: a supporter of international law; a champion of smaller-states with the ear of the great powers; an honest and forthright critic, even of its own allies etc. Evatt, for example, when cautiously welcoming the signing of ANZUS in 1951 warned that Australia should have its own foreign policy, which should not be merely an echo

34Ibid., 57.
ach required the public articulation of a strategic schema with a complex, somewhat contradictory and confusing cultural orientation at its core. Unfortunately, as the discussion in Chapter 6 showed, Labor’s favoured interpretation of strategic reality was out of touch with Australia’s dominant cultural identity which remained predicated on a simple, binary Cold War worldview.

For example, when summing up the Suez crisis in late-1956, Evatt called the General Assembly of the UN the ‘public opinion of all the world,’ conferring legitimacy on it, and then he chastised Britain and France for their ‘pre-arranged invasion.’ But he also criticised Nasser, the Israelis, the USSR, and was sparing in his praise of America. In short, it was not clear who the villain of the piece was. Moreover, Evatt intimated that everyone had acted poorly in one way or another (except for the new and unfamiliar UN). Likewise, Calwell, when addressing Britain’s first decision to apply to join the European Economic Community in 1961, worried about the implications for Australia but also claimed, in a contradictory manner, that Britain had a perfect right to do so, and that Australia would be forced to take more responsibility for itself, which would ultimately be a good thing. He was not necessarily wrong, but he did fail to resonate with popular concerns. And of course it was incongruous in that era, if technically correct, for him to accuse the Indonesians of playing the ‘colonial-Imperialist’ role (see Chapter 6) in Dutch New Guinea. Surely he confused many ordinary Australians at the time.

More importantly, when discussing the Vietnam, Calwell failed to impress the public with his nuanced explanation about its causes and what to do about it. The general calm (or at least absence of chaos) in late-1960s-era Asia after Britain’s withdrawal and the Guam Doctrine’s declaration, the failure of the other dominoes to fall after South Vietnam collapsed in 1975, and the intra-communist wars (i.e. Vietnam versus Cambodia and then China) in the late-1970s, may all indicate with hindsight that Calwell’s position was largely correct. Nevertheless, its complexity was confusing and at times could seem contradictory: when criticising the dispatch of troops to Vietnam in 1965, for example, he said

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37CPD, HR, 1952 Session, Vol. CCXVI, 599, February 1952, 28; and see also, 233, 21 February 1952.
We do not think it will help the fight against Communism ... [it is not] a wise response to the dire challenge of China.... There has long been, and still is, aggression from North Vietnam ... but the great majority of Vietcong are South Vietnamese ... [and] any pretence of creating a democratic anti-Communist South Vietnam has failed.... Pre-occupied with the fear of a military Munich we have suffered a score of moral Dunkirks.... Pre-occupied with the idea of a monolithic communism ... [we have] supported military regimes which were loudest in their protestations of anti-Communism, no matter how reactionary, unpopular and corrupt they may have been.... [W]e have supported nationalism only when it supported the West, and we have thereby pushed nationalism towards Communism ... contrary to all our own interests.41

This important speech encapsulated Labor’s policy towards Vietnam, and it demonstrates how complex the cultural orientation at the heart of Calwell’s favoured continental defence-like (i.e. more independent) strategic schema was. The Chinese communists were really bad, the North Vietnamese communists were pretty bad but not the main problem, and the Vietcong were basically nationalist ‘freedom-fighters.’ The Soviets do not even rate a mention, despite their support of the North. By contrast, the South Vietnamese state, supposedly an ally, was strongly ‘Othered.’

Calwell then summoned two historical analogies, first denying Munich’s validity because it has created a trigger-happy Western (read: American) mind-set, and then arguing that the moral dilemmas facing the West in Vietnam were Dunkirks’ so retreats or reverses (even though this was a poor analogy for his critical purposes because the Dunkirk evacuation always carried with it the intimation of the miraculous or courageous). He then explained these Western reverses in Vietnam by referring to the overly-simplistic binary-Cold War mindset that drove what would otherwise be nationalist allies, or at least potential friendlies, into the communist camp.

As Labor was to find at the 1966 election, the average Australian, raised on simple Manichean ‘good vs. evil’ explanations of the Second World War and the Cold War, seemed confused by or at minimum sceptical of Calwell’s complex worldview. Recognising this danger, in the same speech he repeatedly criticised the government’s unequivocal forward defence position as a simplified approach, a simple theory and a gross and misleading oversimplification, yet he still failed to get his message across. Ironically, but too late for Calwell, we will see below that events soon negatively affected the continued relevance and resonance of forward defence. Indeed, the shifts in

42Ibid., 1106.
1967 seemed to unambiguously reveal a much more complex, nuanced international order of a type not entirely dissimilar to that Calwell had championed for so long in vain.


The rise of continental defence was caused, put simply, by the decline of both the forward defence tradition’s relevance and its resonance. With regard to the former, the global and regional situation calmed somewhat: after 1970 there seemed to be a less pressing need to send Australian troops overseas, and this reduced the relevance of forward defence. Regarding the latter, which is discussed in detail in this section, there was a perception that Australia’s allies abandoned it, meaning that matters of trust between Australia and its allies were important. This second factor, however, straddles the boundary between relevance and resonance: it was a change to Australia’s external strategic environment caused in some ways by material factors (i.e. the decline of Britain, America’s defeat in Vietnam) but these changes also had cultural elements, namely, the decision by Britain to pursue its destiny in Europe, and also by how US society was changed by Vietnam. These last matters constitute changes of resonance in Britain and America (i.e. changes in their strategic cultures) as they both became less willing to commit to overseas adventures, and which in turn caused changes in the relevance (from Australia’s perspective) of forward defence logic. The more properly cultural third factor causing the downfall of forward defence was therefore the change in Australia’s dominant cultural identity which manifested itself most strongly in the strategic realm in protests against the Vietnam War, but it also had other less-properly strategic aspects which are explored in the following section. Nevertheless, the discussion now of how Australia’s strategic relationships with its allies changed, pushing it towards continental defence, shows how inextricably intertwined the various material and ideational causes of strategic decision-making are.

I start with the effects of Britain’s withdrawal East of Suez, which came as quite a shock in Australia. Bell claims that its more important grand-strategic effects were actually more indirect in the sense that the Middle East was

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Nevertheless, Prime Minister Harold Holt was said to have been ‘in a considerable stew’ by British officials after the full extent of the withdrawal was revealed in 1967. David Goldsworthy sums up the drift in the British-Australian relationship in the 1960s nicely from a cultural perspective, observing that despite all the talk by both of kinship and ‘shared history’ each side remained largely unmoved by the other’s appeals to sentimental considerations ... from Australia’s point of view it becomes tempting to introduce metaphor: if the Common Market dispute left race patriotism seriously wounded, the East of Suez dispute administered the coup de grace... By way of final illustration [that the crucial break occurred in 1967] we might note a pair of decisions taken by the Holt government... One was the decision to remove the words ‘British Subject’ from Australian passports ... The other ... was the decision to limit appeals from the High Court to the Privy Council ... [which] was taken very much with Suez in mind.

In strategic cultural terms, Britain had for some time not been seen as the centre of an indivisible strategic self (i.e. the Empire), but after 1967 it became abundantly clear that Britain was no longer in strategic (or economic, legal, or political) terms a ‘very-similar-Other’ any more, although of course general-cultural and immigration/familial bonds remained strong.

The health of the relationship with America, however, was less clear cut. Menzies had been very concerned in the 1960s about America’s seeming lack of interest in backing Australia against Indonesia vis-à-vis the Dutch New Guinea dispute. In 1966 an ‘Interim Strategic Basis Paper retained an alarmist tone, but by 1967 Konfrontasi was officially over and a pro-western and capitalist regime was in power to the immediate north, the US was pouring forces into Vietnam, and China was convulsed by its Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The 1967 Strategic Basis Paper thus concluded that ‘a direct military threat to the mainland of Australia is highly unlikely

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44Bell, Dependent Ally, 87–92, 111.
45Cablegram, Johnston to London, 1 June 1967, NAA, PREM13/726, PRO.
During the next ten years, although the continuing poor situation in Vietnam meant that the region was also likely to remain an unstable area and that Australia should continue to support the US there.  

By 1968 the third Strategic Basis Paper in as many years reaffirmed that forward defence remained supreme, but it was also noted that Indonesia and the region were both much more stable given that domestic Communism in most states had been decisively defeated (except, of course, in Vietnam). Yet Britain’s withdrawal and the unrest wracking the US after Tet raised fundamental questions about the tenability of our present policies. There was even a concession to continental defence – the paper says concurrently with maintaining a forward defence strategy, we have recognised that we must be prepared to deal independently with any situation that directly threatens Australia’s territorial interests, and concern was expressed about future Indonesian instability threatening Papuan New Guinea (PNG). Nevertheless, it was still clear in 1968 that forward defence dominated, if only because the bulk of Australia’s military effort would continue to be made in Vietnam.

This last Strategic Basis Paper was released in late 1968, and within a year Australia was struggling to determine how to react to Nixon’s Guam Doctrine, announced on 25 July 1969. Plenty has been written about the effect of this doctrine, with many scholars treating it as a sort of death knell for forward defence. The doctrine itself was straightforward, and the key sentence is generally considered to be the following one: as far as the problems of internal security are concerned, as far as the problems of military defense, except for the threat of a major power involving nuclear weapons, the United States is going to encourage and has a right to expect that this problem will be increasingly handled by, and the responsibility for it taken by, the Asian nations themselves.

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48 The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy (1967), NAA, AW121, CS: 11/A/3, para. 5  
49 Ibid., para. 10.  
50 The Strategic Basis of Australian Defence Policy (1968), NAA, M3787/1, CS: 44, paras. 208, 209, 213.  
51 Ibid., paras. 78, 170.  
52 Ibid., para. 20.  
53 Ibid., para. 6.  
54 Ibid., para. 218.  
55 By 1968 over 8,300 troops were deployed in Phuoc Tuy province along with an RAN carrier-group offshore.  
56 Bell argues Guam’s direct effect was greater than Britain’s withdrawal: see Dependent Ally, ch. 5. Dibb usually starts his explanation for why continental defence became dominant with Guam; Coral Bell, ed., Nation, Region, Context: Studies in Peace and War in Honour of Professor T.B. Millar (Canberra: ANU Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1995), 32; see also Graeme Cheeseman, The Search for Self-Reliance: Australian Defence Since Vietnam (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1993), xv.  
Guam Doctrine was not specifically aimed at Australia, yet Australia was by implication included as an "Asian nation," at least geographically.

The Australian government, led now by Prime Minister John Gorton (replacing Holt who had died while swimming at the beach in December 1967), was thrown into a funk. First it sought qualification. Washington confirmed that the ANZUS obligations remained unchanged and promised that the US withdrawal from Vietnam would be slow, as Nixon sought "peace with honour." But Gorton had been rattled, and he soon approved what has become known as the "Freeth Experiment" by which an inexperienced Gordon Freeth was appointed as minister for external affairs, partly as a result of internal Liberal Party machinations. Freeth responded confusingly and controversially to the Guam Doctrine two weeks after its pronouncement, and while the majority of his speech was about "taking stock" of changes in a broadly "realistic" sense of assessing Australia's national interests dispassionately and pursuing them rationally, it seemed in one section that the minister responded positively towards a Soviet call for an Asia-Pacific collective security zone that was basically aimed at excluding the US from Asia.

Freeth, at minimum, had made a "rookie mistake" and less flattering analysis saw the comments as petulant swipes at America, while the DLP accused him of signalling a radical strategic realignment. Freeth tried to counter the wilder accusations and as his private secretary, Andrew Farran, later explained, Freeth tried to present "foreign policy frankly and objectively to the Australian public." Yet he failed because (in Farran's words) doing so presupposed a level of political maturity, within the media and the electorate, that would allow these issues to be debated seriously and realistically because it failed subsequent governments have been fearful of moving away from certain of the myths and images which have sustained policy in previous decades. By myths and images, of

59 The party was still disrupted by Menzies' retirement in 1966 and Holt's untimely death in 1967. Although Paul Hasluck, who had served as minister for external affairs since 1964, had been instrumental in Gorton's selection as prime minister in 1968, Gorton recommended him for appointment as Governor-General in early 1969: rumour had it that Gorton 'elevated' Hasluck in order to 'push' him out of active politics. This left External Affairs open for the foreign policy-novice Freeth.
61 Bell, Dependent Ally, 107; Andrew Farran, 'The Freeth Experiment', David Pettit, ed., Selected Readings From Australian Foreign Policy (Malvin: Sorrett, 1973), p. 35.
and activist forward defence posture and the ‘Red menace’ respectively.\(^{63}\)

This is a very clear opinion from an insider to the effect that far from ‘rationality ruling’ in crucial strategic debates it is common for cultural-similarity or difference assumptions to become the key points of difference. No one engaged in any ‘technical’ argument about whether the Soviet Navy could actually provide the same sort of security as the US Navy was accustomed to do in Asia. Instead, the DLP claimed Freeth had heralded a ‘major shift to the left’, called him a ‘pinko’ and then launched a speaking tour that hysterically dissected the detail of his speech and interpreted it to mean that Australia may begin planning to go to war with the Soviets against China, given the US had betrayed us and was pulling stumps in Asia.\(^{64}\) There had been, in short, a change in the external strategic environment that had precipitated a change in strategic culture (or at least a debate about such) just as Lantis described had happened in Germany with regard to the Kosovo crisis in 1999 (see Chapter 2), but the response was mediated through existing strategic schema, which contain deep assumptions about culturally similar and different others.

Second, we can clearly see the instrumental or political use of strategic cultural traditions in political discourse in the simple (but also sensational and lurid) appeals to the public’s ‘normative commitments’, or in my terms Australia’s dominant cultural identity, similar to what Cruz described in her Latin American examples (see Chapter 2). The DLP, with an election approaching, used ‘role-reversal’ metaphors suggesting that Australian soldiers fighting alongside the ‘Soviet monster’ would be ‘tainted’ by association. But they also appealed to the public’s ‘practical competence’, implying that Freeth had learnt nothing from Stalin’s perfidious behaviour after the Second World War. The expectation was, of course, that most Australians would recoil with horror, both emotionally and intellectually, from such suggestions. The Freeth Experiment even split the ALP in several ways, with the Left generally less receptive given that conscription would continue, while a few pro-China Left faction members decried

\(^{63}\) Farran, ‘Freeth Experiment,’ 31.

\(^{64}\) Ibid.; ‘pulling stumps’ is slang for how a game of cricket is ended.
to the carefully balanced discussion of the USSR’s role in Asia.65

Ultimately Freeth, disillusioned after having lost his own seat in the 1969 election, mused that

Perhaps too much was expected of public rationality, that the force of logic of the statement would overcome backwoods resistance. It was not expected that those resisting change would engage in so sustained a campaign of invective and misrepresentations. And it was never expected that ‘strong men’[i.e. in cabinet, and especially Gorton] would quail before the onslaught.66

Gorton did indeed make a hasty strategic policy U-turn and profess loyalty to America,67 and he patched up relations with the DLP sufficiently to win a narrow election victory. It was soon clear that the US was not departing Vietnam hastily after all, but, as Bell reminds us, ‘the election reduced Gorton’s majority to a handful and doomed his prime ministership.... [I]t was a no-confidence vote on his performance ... especially the foreign policy aspects.’68 Indeed, Australian public opinion about Vietnam was already changing, in particular after Têt. A poll taken in mid-1969 showed that 55% now favoured withdrawal.69

Gorton himself began to muse privately about possible ‘Fortress Australia’ strategies, and claimed in parliament that forward and continental defence were not incompatible.70 But he only confused matters, fuelling rumours that a major change was imminent. Some have wondered whether Gorton’s own traumatic war-time experiences caused him to harbour ‘more than the average sensitivity to the fact that ‘forward defence’ could mean young Australians left hopelessly exposed to the horrors of war.’71 The Australian ambassador to Washington was also reporting that a ‘rapid and determined reorientation of US policy away from Asia and towards the Middle East’ was occurring, after all.72 Yet, Gorton did not alter strategic policy before being ousted in a party-room spill in March 1971. Australia therefore responded to the Guam Doctrine with confusion: first, an overly-hasty Ministerial statement was issued; then a fierce debate characterised by hysterical denunciations drawing upon simplified tropes

65Ibid.
66Farran, ‘Freeth Experiment,’ 47.
68Dependent Ally, 108.
71Gorton had required extensive facial plastic surgery after being badly scarred in a plane crash during his career as a fighter-pilot during the Second World War; Bell, Dependent Ally, 94–5; see also Edwards and Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 2, 306;
72Quoted in Inside Canberra, 26 February 1970.

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government reversed its policy for electoral reasons; and then after the election the prime minister started dropping hints about policy shifts; but substantial changes never eventuated.

The 1971 Strategic Basis Paper shows how confused things were at the time. The minister for defence, Malcolm Fraser, gave out some mixed signals in parliament,73 but the drafting process saw a near-repeat of 1959: the first draft claimed that the global situation was evolving into a "more complicated four-way relationship between the USA, USSR, China and Japan," and conceded that the Guam Doctrine and Britain's withdrawal were forcing Australia to become more self-reliant. But, crucially, it was noted that the Guam Doctrine "makes it quite clear that there must be a maximum degree of effort or self help,74 and while the US would intervene against "massive, overt aggression"75 was also observed, tellingly, that "in the current state of US domestic politics [ANZUS] could, if invoked [i.e. by Australia] be interpreted rather strictly, meaning in effect that the US may renege and could not therefore be trusted."75 Crucially, this assessment had little to do with capabilities — instead, US domestic social and cultural upheavals mattered far more. These were affecting, in my terms, America's dominant cultural identity, meaning its strategic-cultural predilections for overseas intervention were declining.

So, when grand strategic interests were detailed in the draft, the first such was said to be protecting Australia's territory, then its sea lanes, and only then is the "security of regional neighbours," mentioned, and then the global balance (and finally "maintaining a homogeneous population"76 the White Australia Policy had not yet been revoked).77 The crucial statement is the following one:

[Australia cannot] ... independently defend other countries in the region against internal or external threats.... [D]efence of countries of the region will devolve on their own resources É depending upon great power assistance [only] in the event of a massive threat.É Australia's ... credibility will depend upon its evident capacity to sustain, in a region overwhelmingly Asian in character, its identity as an independent and essentially European society.77

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73 Saying forward and continental defence 'could be equally weighted': CPD, HR, 1970 Session, Vol. LXVI, 234, 10 March 1970.
74 The Strategic Basis of Australian defence Policy ('Draft – 10 Nov 70'), NAA, AWM 122, CS: 70/2026, PART 1, para. 17.
75 Ibid., para. 21.
76 Ibid., para. 62.
77 Ibid., para. 68.
Here we see a clear appreciation that the US may not be around in Asia to maintain order forever. And the direct recognition that Australia was becoming culturally isolated means that perception of abandonment by culturally-similar others is at the heart of why continental defence logic was beginning to win the day, at least in the minds of the drafters of the 1971 Strategic Basis Paper. Yet the higher strategic decision-makers in Cabinet did not fully agree. Specifically, the reference to America being fickle or untrustworthy was replaced in the final version by the following passage:

Australia’s influence with the United States in particular will be central to its long term security. The long-established Bi-Partisan trend in US policy and US Congressional attitudes to ANZUS and SEATO... is that Australia’s influence, and the extent of United States assistance in time of need, will depend to an important extent on the degree to which Australia helps itself.78

Still, the draft version was not altered as much in 1971 as it had been in 1959. Dupont has argued that the 1971 Strategic Basis Paper was one of the most important [ever produced]. Unlike all its post-1945 predecessors, the paper articulated a uniquely Australian strategic perspective, eschewing traditional notions of dependence on allies and Australia’s global security role.79 Yet his opinion benefits from two decades of hindsight, and scholars in the mid-1970s,80 and Dibb in the mid-1980s, certainly felt that the break with forward defence was anything but clean. Dibb would surely demure from Dupont’s assertion that the paper provided a coherent conceptual framework for strategic decision-making.

What is clear is that the all the way with LBJ’s strategic cultural attitude towards America, which had resonated so well with the Australian electorate just five years before at the 1966 election, was gone. What replaced it was a sort of friends help those who help themselves logic more akin to the business-like relationship that characterised Australian-America ties in the late-1950s after Suez and before Vietnam drew the countries closer together. To illustrate, consider that while the 1971 paper noted Domestic constraints on the exercise of United States power have clearly emerged, are likely to increase, and could have effects inimical to Australian interests it is

79Dupont, ‘Australia’s Threat Perceptions,’ 68.
time reassure America’s allies. This shows a sophisticated understanding that Nixon was playing a complex two-level game and that the US was only scaling back, not abdicating, its global strategic role. Ultimately, the final version varied from the draft in the important section where Australia’s strategic interests were discussed:

Australia’s basic strategic concern is the security of our metropolitan territory ... [its] strategic interests ... flow from Australia’s geographic situation as an island continent, its Western origins and associations, and its location distant from its greatest friends and close to Asia, its small population, its reliance on long ... lines of communication, and its need for regional stability, technological progress, and international trade.

There is an implicit rejection of the more isolationist tone of the draft. Defence of Australia still comes first, and defending sea lanes comes second again but sea lanes to defence allies are given additional importance because they facilitate mutual assistance. And while the interests of securing the region and maintaining the global balance are still third and fourth, below them are many more (i.e. eight and not three as in the draft) specific global interests, like limiting nuclear proliferation, which will be achieved by securing support for [these] Australian policies ... from the United States. So, while the basic cultural orientation implicit in the draft remained Australia had to be more circumspect about the prospect of US strategic support for all of its strategic interests there was still plenty of detail in the final 1971 paper about how America would not just respond to massive, overt aggression in the region (i.e. the pessimistic view of the draft) but that it would use its considerable remaining air, naval and logistical support to help allies like Australia in lesser conflicts too. It also concluded in words not found in the draft that the ultimate United States commitment ... under ANZUS is not in doubt and ... [its] interest in Australia is enhanced by our growing importance for ... defence and space purposes.

The fact that the 1971 Strategic Basis Paper was ultimately still a compromise should not overshadow the fact that it is probably the best place to mark the ascendancy of continental defence to dominance of Australia’s...
strategic culture. I come to this conclusion with some hesitation because it certainly was not strongly dominant yet.

But Dibb later pointed to the 1972 Strategic Review (i.e. a White Paper based on the 1971 Strategic Basis Paper) as the point at which continental defence registered in the public mind,5 and both Whitlam’s Labor and Fraser’s Liberal governments would continue the trend by which continental defence slowly but steadily became dominant.

The brief and turbulent ascendency of Labor under Gough Whitlam from 1972 to 1975 is also discussed in Chapter 8, given it was characterised by strong internationalism in foreign policy, but Whitlam’s strategic decision-making was not particularly radical. To be sure, Australia antagonised the US severely at times over strategic issues (i.e. there was some ministerial-level criticism to the effect that the US government’s bombing in Vietnam meant it was run by murderers and maniacs,6 while China and then North Vietnam were both recognised, suggesting a radical shift in Australia’s dominant cultural identity may have been occurring. Nevertheless, a lot of this was, as Dupont approving notes Bell puts it, declaratory policy which was far less radical in its detail than critics claimed.7

Whitlam reaffirmed his commitment to ANZUS in 1973. But he also pointed to differences with the US regarding Vietnam,8 and after some sharp words from Washington Whitlam later began downplaying strategic differences generally.9 Importantly, the 1973 Strategic Basis Paper was not dissimilar to the 1971 version except that in three ways it moved a little closer to a continental defence position: first, the notion of raising expeditionary forces was downplayed and instead an expansion-base to defend Australia was to guide thinking; second, it discussed at length low-level contingencies like terrorist threats; and finally, it recommended a comprehensive study of continental defence doctrine be undertaken to bring the ADF’s force structure into line with its doctrine.10 But this latter study was not carried out until Dibb’s report thirteen years later because the call for it to be completed was lost in the clamour that erupted concerning the extension of the no foreseeable threat forecast from 10 to 15 years. This was like a less vociferous version of the furore that erupted after the Freeth Experiment. Dupont does

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5Bell, Nation, Region, Context, 31–33.
7Dupont, ‘Australia’s Threat Perceptions,’ 71; Bell, Dependent Ally, 122.
wryly observe that the government’s position was ‘distorted and caricatured ... [placing Whitlam] in the curious position of having to defend a strategic judgement which was no different in substance to that advanced by the [previous government].’ 91 But this time around the debate did not focus on perceptions of cultural similarity and difference as it had in 1969. While such matters were not ignored there was generally more debate about technical detail, so exactly what constituted ‘warning’ prompting re-armament. Nevertheless at times even these technical issues were obscured by turgid rhetoric, semantic acrobatics and imputations of outright dishonesty in the poisonous political climate of the time.92

The 1975 Strategic Basis Paper was not finalised until late October 1975, so in the midst of the constitutional crisis that culminated with the Whitlam government’s dismissal by the Governor-General on 11 November 1975. The fact that the Labor government had been so distracted (i.e. it had also won a ‘snap’ election in mid-1974 only 20 months after its historic late-1972 triumph) perhaps in part explains why the 1975 paper was not enormously different from the 1971 or 1973 papers on the details of Australia strategic relationship with America. It noted that because the USSR had substantially closed the strategic power gap the US had previously enjoyed the credibility of the United States’ alliance commitments has been questioned.93 But it also said ‘the basic posture and thrust of the United States for strategic stability ... and world peace and security are likely to be sustained’94 and that Australia’s affinities, shared interests and interdependence with North America [and] Western Europe É support cooperation in matters of strategic concern with those nations rather than with other powers. Australia’s major natural ally is ... [the US, who] could not afford to fail to support us in the event of a major assault without seriously undermining its [global] credibility.95

So, there were hints of a ‘pure’ variety of continental defence logic analogous to that found in the Dibb Report from the mid-1980s (i.e. ‘credible’ low-level threats, warning times, the expandable core-force, etc.) emerging in the

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92 Albinski, Australian External Policy, 83.
94 Ibid., para. 15.
95 Ibid., para 157.
government full of dangerous radicals if one believed the conservative Opposition there was still a very traditional expression of who Australia's natural allies from a cultural-affinity perspective were. Having said this, there was extended discussion of Indonesian aggression towards East Timor (which was invaded in December 1975 two months after the paper was produced). Jakarta's aggression clearly reinforced continental defence logic: indeed, the 1975 paper stated openly that we must place ourselves in a position to deter any hostile action against PNG, which had just achieved independence from Australia but not against East Timor. Nevertheless, these papers (1971, 1973 and 1975) demonstrate that forward defence logic was never totally excised from Australia's strategic culture even after continental defence ostensibly became dominant.

The 1976 Defence White Paper, issued by the new conservative Coalition government of Malcolm Fraser, illustrates this last point. It is another favourite milestone in Dibb and others' explanations for the rise to dominance of continental defence, but in most such accounts there is also discussion of its short-comings as a clear statement of continental defence logic. Jeffrey Grey, for example, claims that defence policy was still bedevilled by the absence of a clear and immediate threat, while Desmond Ball argued in 1977 that it lacks ... sufficient clarity and cohesion to enable the ADF's force structure to be easily determined. But from a strategic-cultural point of view, Dupont also notes that Fraser at times quite strident public comments about a renewed Soviet threat caused a major credibility problem in reconciling [the government's] hard-line views ... with the much more sanguine assessments of its own strategic and intelligence advisors. Alan Renouf also reported that the wording of Fraser's draft maiden foreign policy speech to parliament had to be watered down significantly because of the original text had been pronounced it is highly likely that there would have been a violent reaction from the Soviet Union, possibly even a breach of diplomatic relations. And, again, re-writes of several of the original drafts of reports

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96 Ibid., paras. 239, 240. Note that in the declassified version released in 2005, numerous paragraphs were redacted.
97 Ibid., para 236.
98 Ibid., para. 241.
100 A Military History, 252.
102 Dupont, ‘Australia’s Threat Perceptions,’ 77.
103 Alan Renouf, Malcolm Fraser and Australian Foreign Policy (Sydney: Australian Professional Publications, 1986), 84.
and the 1975 paper had not addressed the Soviet menace adequately.\textsuperscript{104}

Nevertheless, on the face of it, the 1976 Defence White Paper remains a significant milestone in that it was a \textit{public} document that openly made the case for the prioritization of continental defence over forward defence logic, despite being a bit murky in the details. It was certainly a more comprehensive document than the \textit{1972 Defence Review},\textsuperscript{105} and the fact that a less ambiguous continental defence position was still adopted despite the proclivity of Fraser\textsuperscript{106} and his ministers\textsuperscript{107} to engage in alarmist rhetoric must also be in part due to the renewed concern over Indonesia after its unexpected and alarming invasion of East Timor.\textsuperscript{108} The Fraser government liked to emphasise, at least rhetorically, how \textit{realist} its foreign policy was compared to Whitlam's.\textsuperscript{109} This may have just been political point-scoring \textI{;} most observers of international politics who self-identify as realists advise us to ignore sentiment and to consider interests dispassionately \textI{;} but in Renouf's opinion, Fraser had a \textit{deep-seated}, emotional and ideological distrust and fear of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{110} Still, Fraser's view that Soviets were the major threat was realist in the sense that they had recently reached approximate global strategic parity with the US.

More importantly, Fraser claimed that his favoured interpretation of the international system, which undeniably contained certain \textit{unprovable assumptions} about the world (i.e. mainly Soviet perfidy, but also progressive ideas about racial equality \textI{;} discussed below), was actually \textit{the} strategic reality.\textsuperscript{111} So again we see an attempt by a decision-maker to recast reality in appeals to the public, but in this case to convince the public to change its worldview \textit{back} to what it had been before the \textit{dangerously idealistic} Labor government had turned things upside down from 1972 to 1975.\textsuperscript{111} Yet all this occurred during a period in which \textit{actual} strategic policy changed little between the two governments as it steadily drifted towards a posture in which continental defence was a priority, albeit not a \textit{strongly dominant} one.

\textsuperscript{104} Dupont, 'Australia's Threat Perceptions,' 77–9.
\textsuperscript{107} Defence Minister Jim Killen said in June 1976 that the Soviets were a 'direct threat to Australia' and was forced to later retract the comments on points of detail (i.e. their inability to actually invade); Dupont, 'Australia's Threat Perceptions,' 78.
\textsuperscript{108} Australian Defence, 6–8.
\textsuperscript{109} CPD, HR, 1976 Session, Vol. XCIX, 2737; speech, Fraser, Roy Milne Lecture, 15 October 1976 Canberra.
\textsuperscript{110} Renouf, Malcolm Fraser, 41.
\textsuperscript{111} For an assessment consistent with this in the field of foreign policy see Bell, \textit{Dependent Ally}, 138–142. For a broader analysis implying that that Whitlam's government was 'overactive' see Manning Clark, \textit{A Short History of Australia} (Melbourne: Penguin Books, 1963), 240–6.
The (Western) Cultural Revolution and its Effect on Australia

It is difficult to approach a topic as vast as the ‘normative shift’ that took place in the West after the mid-1960s and into the 1970s before petering out (i.e. stabilising but not substantially reversing) during the 1980s. It took different forms in different places and affected some cultures more than others. In America it was characterised by the civil rights movement and anti-Vietnam protests: in Canada the Québécois fought for recognition in their Quiet Revolution; in Northern Ireland it flared into the Troubles; while in Paris and Mexico left-wing students rioted in 1968 – this was a turbulent period. It was even arguably the root cause of Portugal’s 1974 coup by leftist army officers that radically changed that society’s strategic culture, with implications for Australia (i.e. in the confusion following the coup Indonesia annexed East Timor). I explore only two broad assessments of the period from two eminent historians before discussing its effect on Australia’s dominant cultural identity, and therefore its strategic culture.

In a chapter entitled ‘The Cultural Revolution’ Eric Hobsbawm claims that one should approach this cultural revolution … through family and household, i.e. through the structure of relations between the sexes and the generations and he goes on to explain that basic and long-lasting arrangements began to change with express speed. Divorce rates rose and unconventional families emerged: youth as a self-conscious group emerged, youth Culture arose and went global; attitudes towards sex and drug use changed amid a drama of collapsed traditions, especially noticeable in declining rates of attendance in churches; and a whole variety of what are now called sub-altern groups, like gays and blacks in America, and a bewildering variety of indigenous groups there and elsewhere demanded recognition or at least significant social change. And, of course, the volatility of some groups and the determination of reactionary elements to resist change produced much civic violence and, in South America in particular, savage reprisals and the creation of regimes of terror designed to halt and reverse social change.

Paul Kennedy, another British historian, also highlighted the effect of the Vietnam War upon America as the major cause of the decision to pull back somewhat from its global strategic commitments, noting

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113 Ibid., 339–43.
it would be difficult to exaggerate the impacts ... upon the national psyche of the American people themselves, most of whose perceptions of their country’s role in the world still remain [note: he was writing in the late-1980s] strongly influenced by that conflict.... The fact that it was a war fought by an open society ... that this was the first war which the United states had unequivocally lost; that it ... destroyed a whole array of [political, military and academic] reputations; that it coincided with, and in no small measure helped cause, the fissuring of a consensus in America’s society about the nation’s goals and priorities; that it was attended by inflationary economic crisis, unprecedented student demonstrations and inner-city disturbances, and was followed in turn by the Watergate crisis; ... that it had made the United State unpopular across most of the globe; and finally the ... shamefaced treatment of the GIs who came back.... [All this] meant that the Vietnam War ... impacted upon the American people somewhat as had the First World War upon Europeans ... it was interpreted as a crisis in American civilization.\textsuperscript{114}

There were of course other causes of these great cultural changes in the US substantially unrelated to Vietnam: much of the popular culture was inspired by British rock stars, surf culture and the 1950s-era beat generation; the women’s movement had also been active before Vietnam; and the civil rights movement also began well before. But this last point also demonstrates how complex this vast normative shift was: the assertion by African-Americans of their rights and the global process of decolonisation (including the especially bloody episode in Vietnam) were mutually-reinforcing, as Neta Crawford has explained.\textsuperscript{115} Others have explored links between the civil rights movement and the fight against apartheid in South Africa and other liberation movements in Africa.\textsuperscript{116} Decolonisation also affected Australia profoundly and was, until this cultural shift, generally interpreted as bad or at minimum unsettling and uncertain, as relations with Indonesia had shown directly and as Vietnam amply demonstrated.

It is worth considering just a few elements of less-properly-strategic aspects of the cultural shift in Australia to demonstrate how comprehensive these changes were. In a more-purely-cultural sense Manning Clark lauds the era beginning in the mid-1960s and into the 1970s as one in which there had at long last been some great achievements of the human spirit in Australia,citing a number of now-famous painters, writers and intellectuals

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\item \textsuperscript{114}Kennedy, \textit{Rise and Fall} 523.
\item \textsuperscript{115}Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonization and Humanitarian Intervention (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
\item \textsuperscript{116}Audie Klotz, \textit{Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).
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Importantly, the White Australia Policy was loosened and then ended, the immediate result of which was an influx of Vietnamese refugees alongside a slow but steady growth of *ordinary* Asian immigration, with enduring effects on Australian society.\textsuperscript{118} This, however, was just one part of the significant change in racial attitudes, although at least initially this was confined mainly to the elites, both business and political, of the 1970s. The most obvious domestic manifestations had to do with, first, the rise of an Aboriginal land rights movement which, in another example of the complexity of the social change in this period, was also inspired by and (tenuously) linked to the US civil rights movement. Second, prominent politicians like Al Grassby, Whitlam's minister for immigration, talked at length about transforming Australia into a *multicultural* society more generally.\textsuperscript{119}

From a strategic cultural perspective, however, the Vietnam War was the outstanding cause of the disruption of Australia's traditional strategic-cultural momentum. This occurred in two ways. First, and in a relevance sense from Australia's perspective, a profound change in *American* strategic culture caused by defeat in Vietnam led to the US limiting its commitments in Asia, *forcing* Australia to move to greater self-reliance. More generally, as Kennedy also explains, the growing US realization that it was somewhat overstretched strategically (and economically) in the early 1970s also led to the efforts of Henry Kissinger, Nixon's national security adviser, to secure détente with the Soviets whilst simultaneously playing Beijing off against Moscow, resulting (along with the emergence of ASEAN) in a reduction of regional tension, *allowing* Australia to adopt the cheaper continental defence approach.\textsuperscript{120} Consider that in 1966, at the height of Australia's anxiety about Indonesia and just as the operational contribution to Vietnam was reaching its peak, the defence vote constituted just under 4 per cent of GDP; however, it fell steadily thereafter; to 2.3 per cent in 1976; and to a mere 1.8 per cent in 1996.\textsuperscript{121}

Second, and with respect to matters of resonance, the Vietnam War also affected Australia directly in the sense that the protests led and organised by the Moratorium movement were to become the most outstanding, or at least public, sustained and vocal feature of Hobsbawm's so-called *Cultural Revolution*.\textsuperscript{122} These protests were by far

\textsuperscript{117} Clark, *A Short History*, 230–1.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 307.
\textsuperscript{120} Kennedy, *Rise and Fall*, 523–8.
\textsuperscript{121} Huisken and Thatcher, *History as Policy*, 134–5.
became very rowdy at times as various radical elements (discussed in Chapter 8) became influential. Indeed, it has been argued that the Moratorium movement overshadowed for a brief time the parliamentary form of politics although of course the two also overlapped. Labor Left faction, especially in the popular figure of Dr Jim Cairns, participated openly and vocally in public demonstrations alongside Old Left unions, New Left intellectuals, a reinvigorated Communist Party, the anti-conscription group Save Our Sons and many church groups.122

Vietnam’s effect on the two primary strategic sub-cultures, from a resonance perspective, created a spurt of anti-Americanism and thereby affected the affinity-perception aspect of Australia’s dominant cultural identity. This was especially so in the Labor party and it manifested itself in some quite vitriolic language from ministers such as Jim Cairns, Tom Uren and Clyde Cameron in response to US bombing in Indochina and there was even a dock-workers strike directed by ALP-affiliated leftist unions which sparked retaliatory strikes in the US.123 These sorts of incidents resulted in the development of frosty relations between Whitlam and the US during this period, although we should not overstate this – he tried to defuse perceptions of a major rift. Nevertheless, after Whitlam’s dramatic dismissal in 1975 conspiratorial elements of the Labor Party felt that the US had had a covert hand in it, although most sober commentators dismiss such claims outright.125 Nevertheless, the wounded ALP would nurse its grudges and the Left faction would not really be silenced until the mid-1980s. Still, having said this about Vietnam spurring anti-Americanism it must also be observed that this tended to not seep down from the leftist-elite level much to the general populace – polls show that support for strong/fairly strong links with the US remained quite steady from 49/39 per cent in 1967 to 44/45 per cent in 1969 and 41/48 per cent in 1979. Importantly, in all three polls only 9 per cent favoured weaker links.126

123 Albinski, Australian External Policy, 124–126
125 US bases allegedly intercepted Labor government messages and passed sensitive ones on to Liberal strategists. The even more conspiratorial versions also saw British hands involved. For a discussion – and refutation – see Bell, Dependent Ally, 138–42; Gary Brown says: “Even a cursory glance at [Whitlam’s] last year of office ... suggests the difficulties were, in too many cases, self-inflicted. It seems superfluous ... to seek external explanations when there is more than a sufficiency of domestic factors ... In any event there is little by way of real evidence [to support the allegation]”; ’Breaking the American Alliance,’ Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, no. 54, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (Canberra: ANU Press, 1989), 41
however, Australia’s dominant cultural identity nevertheless began to shift after about 1968. By 1969 Whitlam, then the Opposition Leader, was confident enough to drop completely the confused ALP line that would have brought conscripts home but kept regulars fighting, and he went into the 1969 election with an unequivocal promise to bring the troops home, a promise that almost delivered him victory then and laid the ground for Labor’s triumph in 1972. Consequently, the notion of Australia as an independent nation, willing and able to pursue an independent strategic role also began to strengthen and exert a greater pull on Australians’ worldviews. So, accompanying this general (but halting and inconsistent) weakening of affinity-perceptions towards the US there was also a more general boost to the notion that Australia was now, in the 1970s, a deal nation which translated into greater elite-sympathy for a more independent strategic role. Radical calls for complete independence always remained latent sub-cultures, but one example of a moderate position advocating a mature strategic role was written by the influential journalist and life-long sceptic of the value of ANZUS, Gary Brown. In *The Crisis of Loyalty*, published in 1972, he concluded that

> Australia must find another foreign policy. Our present policy has become trapped in the experience of being a loyal ally... The difficult and dangerous situation has been reached where the alliance with the US has been debauched by Australian politics ... [he refers at length to the DLP here] and the US commitment is questionable in any event.... In general Australia should try to develop a viable capability based on the principle of continental defence.\(^{127}\)

IR scholars too, like John Burton (a former senior civil servant under Evatt in the late 1940s) had been consistently arguing from his professorial chair in the 1960s for more independence in Australian foreign policy generally. One of his protégés, Joseph Camilleri, called for greater independence in 1973, in one of the first influential studies of Australian foreign policy from a broadly critical perspective.\(^{128}\) Scholars from other fields began to add their voices too.\(^{129}\) And of course Whitlam was convinced upon taking office that he had a clear mandate to inject a new nationalism into Australia foreign policy.\(^{130}\)

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127 Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1972, 96.
difference perspective, during the Western Cultural Revolution

Australia also accelerated its drift away from white-ruled South Africa, which Menzies and his contemporaries had generally resisted, and into open and sustained criticism of apartheid. The otherwise socially conservative Fraser became a fierce critic and actively led Commonwealth efforts to isolate South Africa. By this time, explicitly race-based arguments about threat-perceptions towards other racially-different states fell completely into disuse, although of course affinity-perception statements towards America and the West did continue (unsurprisingly they are inherently less offensive). And by this time, pure race was seen as less important than another state's economic/political character as a similarity/difference signifier. This meant that in the 1970s Australia also began to unashamedly develop much closer ties with Asian states: it opened the property market to Japanese investors; it opened the universities to Asian students; it involved itself in the growing regional institutional architecture; and tourism boomed in both directions. This is not to say that racist attitudes disappeared overnight the Pauline Hanson incident in the mid-1990s (examined below) showed that the change had not occurred uniformly across society but nor do I want to understate the importance and significance of the changes in the cultural attitudes towards other races and especially Asians.

The following can be said about the cultural orientation at the heart of the strategic sub-culture that favoured greater independence during this era: the US was less-trusted-than-before and Britain was largely out of the picture; communism was no longer seen as a monolithic entity, although Australians felt little affinity towards it; white-South Africans were now generally in the out-group and black liberation movements were favoured in that conflict-binary (i.e. but were too Red or Marxist to warrant full inclusion in the in-group); and Asians were emerging as partners to be engaged rather than problems to be fended off. There was a sense that Australia was adopting a new strategic role. Technical-strategic discussion from the late-1970s reveals this several authors of one work examine various self-reliance models (i.e. mainly the Swiss and the Swedish) to assess their suitability to Australia meaning they were operating within the continental defence paradigm and not questioning its basic

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132 Bell, *Dependent Ally*, 154.
... was used in this era were dominated by notions of Australia growing up, a common theme in virtually every field of Australian public life and not just in the strategic realm of policy. Thus continental defence logic began to resonate better with Australians, contributing alongside the major changes in Australia’s external strategic environment to its slow but steady rise.

**Continental Defence Establishes its Dominance: 1977–1991**

While these social changes were significant, they were still not particularly radical in Australia, at least not when compared to what occurred in Canada, for example. Affinity-perception towards America had been dented but not entirely discredited by Vietnam and the Guam Doctrine. For these reasons between 1977 and 1991 continental defence became dominant but it also made major concessions to forward defence and internationalist logic. Consider that while Gary Brown advocated greater Australian independence, he did not promote radical change or a radically different cultural orientation:

> Australians have been arguing ... whether they are or nothing to do with Asia. The answer has emerged... [and] Asia does not exist, but Australia has increasingly important relations with [Asian] nations. Australia does not need, however, to apologise for its European heritage and its Western connections. They give us strength to accommodate a world with which we are only beginning to become acquainted.

This is an excellent example of the more-independent-Australia position which became the new normal of the 1970s. While Brown probably wanted to take things further than the governments of the times were prepared to do (i.e. by 1989 he concluded ANZUS should be scrapped), there was still an important element of affinity-perception in his work towards culturally similar-others, meaning he accepted that Australia’s in-group was still basically Anglo and Western. And events in the late-1970s ensured that some of the old binary-Cold-War mentality endured into the 1980s: even though Fraser’s rhetoric towards the Soviets even before 1979 was a little incongruous

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135 Clark, *A Short History*, ch. 13.
136 Bell, *Dependent Ally*, 157.
137 Brown, *Crisis of Loyalty*, 103
138 Brown, ‘Breaking the American Alliance.’
activity did increase in areas usually not considered to be in Australia’s immediate region but still close enough for a little discomfort. Within a few years of South Vietnam’s collapse Soviet submarines were docking at the old US facilities at Cam Rahn Bay, Soviet influence was rising in the Horn of Africa and intense fighting was going on between South Africa and the liberation fighters of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in Angola and the South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO) in what is now Namibia, who were both backed by Soviet munitions and Cuban troops. Fraser represented a generation that rejected overt racism on both moral and scientific grounds—a position only reinforced by America’s defeat in Vietnam. But his opposition to apartheid also arose from a pragmatic or realistic appreciation that the sort of attitudes that tolerated racism, even in the relatively inconsequential (from a strategic perspective) realm of international sport, had very poor effects upon Australia’s relations with the rapidly growing states in Asia and the emerging ones in Africa. Fraser described his own approach as an ‘active and enlightened realism’ while his minister for foreign affairs, Andrew Peacock, believed, not entirely unlike President Jimmy Carter in the US, that humanitarianism and self-interest could be reconciled. So, according to this logic, if the South African situation could be ‘cleared up’ there would be less need, or fewer excuses, for the Soviets to insinuate themselves into Africa and Australia could get on and do business with those new states.

Put this way, Fraser and his colleagues had largely abandoned the sort of knee-jerk-implicit-racism of their predecessors from only a decade earlier (i.e. embodied in figures like Barwick, Casey and especially Menzies) who saw Asian and African national liberation movements as prone to go Red and who instinctively yearned for, and worked to support, the maintenance of something resembling the pre-Second World War status quo. Instead, the conservative side of politics was by the late 1970s adopting a more nuanced cultural orientation not that different to the one that Calwell had tried unsuccessfully to impress upon the Australian electorate a decade earlier. Having said this, it still differed in one crucial sense, being that Fraser’s government worked from more extreme anti-Soviet

139 The Soviets persuaded both Ethiopia and Somalia to ‘switch’ Cold War allegiance in 1977 and in the next year secured access to the old British port of Aden in South Yemen; Bell, Dependent Ally, 148.
141 Bell, Dependent Ally, 158
Cold War — binary premises than Evatt or Calwell ever had. A statement to parliament by Peacock in 1977 is an excellent example of this sort of reasoning laid out clearly. Nevertheless it is interesting to note that Bell, when assessing Fraser’s foreign policy other than his attitudes towards the Soviets, has mused that “his true ancestor as a maker of foreign policy might be seen as Evatt rather than Menzies, given his support for human rights and his willingness to work through international institutions, especially the Commonwealth.

This was the situation before 1979, which was a year of troubling events. Vietnam, which had launched an invasion of Cambodia in December 1978, had established control of the country by March. In mid-January, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi of Iran fled Teheran after a revolution, and the new regime transformed Iran into a staunch enemy of all things Western. Finally, in December, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, sparking what came to be known as the ‘Second Cold War. The reaction in Australia, however, was mixed. Fraser took off in a sense of grand urgency for a whirlwind tour of the US and Europe, while Peacock was sent to Asian capitals, to discuss the implications of what the prime minister called upon his return the ‘most dangerous international crisis since World War II.

Yet the 1979 Strategic Basis Paper only noted that ‘circumstances remain favourable for the foreseeable future despite the ‘increasing level of Soviet activism.

Even after the invasion of Afghanistan and Fraser’s alarmist reaction, excerpts from the Book of Leaks (which gives us access to documents that would otherwise still be classified) reveal that the government’s public rhetoric was still somewhat at odds with the experts’ assessments. In an interim Strategic Basis Paper prepared in early 1980 it was acknowledged that it could no longer be said, as the 1979 paper had, that the Soviets were acting ‘with discrimination and caution. However the main conclusion was that the region more generally remained quite stable and that Afghanistan was in any event ‘far removed from Australia’s area of primary strategic interest.

Then in 1981 the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (JCFAD) delivered a report which assessed the Soviet threat in light of the fact that it had not spilt out of Afghanistan, concluding that geopolitical changes in Asia

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144 Coral Bell, Dependent Ally, 158.
148 Ibid., 225, 228.
and the absence of any major Soviet presence meant that forward defence remained inappropriate as the primary basis of defence policy. That Australia should focus on improving [its] own self-reliance within the region, and that the ADF should focus on low-level contingencies. And under pressure the government’s alarmist tone vis-à-vis the Soviets began to come apart. When the minister for defence, James Killeen, was asked by the JCFAD to justify the government’s increase in military spending of about 5 per cent, he conceded that serious strategic threats were a remote and improbable possibility.

Nevertheless, the public’s reaction was also mixed. On the one hand, a number of athletes ignored the government’s boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics and public opinion largely supported them. But on the other hand polls showed that the number of Australians believing the nation faced a serious security threat increased from 43 per cent in 1976 to 63 per cent in 1980, with most respondents citing the Soviets as the source of their concern (40 per cent, up from 12 per cent in 1975). Relations with the US improved after the Carter administration adopted a similar approach towards South Africa. And although the administration of Ronald Reagan took a different approach to South Africa, increased US defence spending generally, and the expansion of the American base on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean specifically, largely obscured the differences Fraser had with Reagan over apartheid.

Yet Australia did not revert to forward defence and the reasons seem clear: although America’s image had recovered quite a bit since Vietnam there was still no actual need to prepare to fight with the US in Asia. In other words, while one may have expected the forward-defence-with-America sub-culture to begin to resonate better again, it remained less relevant than continental defence to Australia’s external strategic circumstances.

This was the situation when Labor returned to power under Bob Hawke in 1983. Elements of the party’s Left faction were still actively anti-American and, in 1982, the Victorian Labor Premier John Cain had warned off US nuclear-armed ships from docking in Melbourne. But after a sharp rebuke from the Americans the Federal Labor Opposition Leader, Bill Hayden, was forced to rescind his earlier guarded support for Cain by a sustained rhetorical

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150 Ibid., 38.
152 Bell, Dependent Ally, 152–60.
assault from Fraser that dredged up all the old 'soft on communism' accusations from the 1960s, demonstrating again how the essential points of difference in strategic debates are often more 'social' concerning who can be trusted and who can't both externally (i.e. the communists) and domestically (the 'pinkos' in the ALP) than technical. Indeed, this incident directly contributed to the loss of support which cost [Hayden] his leadership shortly before the 1983 election in favour of the openly pro-American Hawke. Crucially, however, they overcame their differences and aligned their own factions, the Right (Hawke) and the Centre-Left (Hayden) to isolate the Left, an arrangement that has largely persisted into the early twenty-first century.

Hawke was aligned with Labor's Old Left, having been a former Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) Chairman. He had also disparaged the radical-left as 'champagne socialists' and 'dangerous idealists' and at university (i.e. in the Vietnam-era-1960s) he had even founded a 'breakaway' Labor Party Club after the Labor Club was taken over by Marxists. In short, it has been said that Hawke developed a long and embittering acquaintance with the Far Left's manoeuvrings and had become conscious that his own party's Socialist Left were no more his friends than the communists were. This cultural orientation developed in a domestic political context would, in the main, inform his international worldview too. But this orientation was also informed by a pragmatic determination to not repeat the perceived mistakes of the Whitlam government which had gained a reputation for its iconoclastic and quirkish pursuit of foreign policy causes, which were widely interpreted as anti-American and capitalised on, to considerable effect, by the [conservative] Opposition of the early-1970s. Thus Hawke used strategic culture strategically while his own convictions were clearly anti-radical and so generally pro-American, these were also reinforced by a hard-headed appreciation of what it took to get elected.

So, Hawke's government cultivated an image as 'reasonable' and conventional. Hayden, the minister for foreign affairs, claimed that ANZUS remained fundamental to Australia's national security and foreign and defence policies. But we can also discern some disconnection between the government's strategic-electoral or stated position, predicated on avoiding three decades of successful Liberal Party tactics of wedging the ALP as 'soft on

153 Brown, 'Breaking the American Alliance,' 47.
154 Bell, Dependent Ally, 168.
155 Dupont, 'Australia's Threat Perceptions,' 83.
The 1983 Strategic Basis Paper, for example, did not return Australia to a forward defence position but instead continued the drift towards continental defence. Indonesia’s geographical position vis-à-vis Australia made it the most obvious source of threats, and it was said that the ADF should be configured partly to counter Indonesia’s steadily increasing military capabilities. But it was still ultimately concluded that no foreseeable threat could develop for at least 10 years. Still, events soon showed that Hawke, when forced to take a firm position by a strategic crisis, would unequivocally line up behind the US and against the preferences of much of his party’s own membership, especially those in the Left faction.

The crisis was occasioned by the decision of New Zealand’s newly elected Labour government to ban nuclear-capable ships from its ports in mid-1984. Because the US, as a matter of policy, refuses to identify which of its naval vessels are nuclear-armed or nuclear powered, this decision effectively barred much of the US Navy from New Zealand ports, contrary to the spirit of ANZUS. Despite calls within Labor to support New Zealand, Hawke immediately stated that Australia disagrees completely with New Zealand policy, and he remained unwavering even when the US formally suspended ANZUS obligations towards New Zealand (although Australia did not follow suit). This is a revealing episode and it is entirely consistent with Hawke’s response to a journalist on his first trip abroad to the United States after taking office in 1983: Australia is not and cannot be a non-aligned nation. We are neutral neither in thought nor in action, a very clear, overt statement of what its leader perceived Australia’s in-group to be. Later events, especially the Gulf War in 1990-91, were to elicit similar strategic-behavioural instincts. And, crucially, the Left faction was gravely wounded by the retirement of its figurehead, Dr Jim Cairns, after a sex scandal. Thereafter Hawke would ruthlessly enforce discipline by, for example, suspending the Left’s Stewart West from Cabinet for criticising uranium-mining policies.

Having said all this it should be noted that Hawke’s formal strategic policy was also partly informed by a cultural orientation that valued Australia’s independence and his government was therefore prepared to take steps toward establishing a self-reliant strategic posture in a region that was not particularly threatening. But this

160 Ibid., 173.
161 Ibid., 171.
compromise heavily with a still-strong forward defence cultural orientation, characterised mainly by continued strong affinity-perceptions towards the US. As an aside, it is also interesting that Dupont has noted that while the 1983 Strategic Basis Paper was little different in substance to the papers produced in the 1970s:

The one area in which [it] was noticeably different... was in the tone of its presentation. Written in blunt ‘power politics’ terms [it] would arguably have been more appropriately the handmaiden of Malcolm Fraser’s strategic worldview rather than a traditional ... Labor government. Considerable attention was given to the broader international environment dynamics of the central balance.162

The report therefore clearly reflects the prominence of neorealist analysis in International Relations circles during this period I recall that the drafters of Strategic Basis Papers were at that time typically a mix of defence officials (many of whom had political science degrees), senior ADF officers (most of whom had considerable contact with officers from US armed forces), and IR specialists (especially, during this period, those at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University in Canberra). But even though the Dibb Report, as explained above, adopted an even starker variety of rationalist/materialist analysis to produce a ‘sparse’ or ‘pure’ continental defence logic in 1986, it too would be substantially modified by senior strategic decision-makers whose dominant cultural identity meant that much of the cultural orientation at the core of the forward defence tradition remained influential I and this was the case with respect to strategic policy and not just behaviour.163

Much of the ‘technical’ or ‘conceptual’ basis for continental defence that appeared in the 1986 Dibb Report was largely accepted in the 1987 White paper: the core-force approach to keep the ADF relatively small but readily expandable was refined further; Australia would develop greater self-sufficiency in arms production and move even more defence infrastructure north;164 and ‘warning time methodology’ was also refined, with Defence Minister Kim Beazley later explaining that analysts in ONA would continually calculate the possibilities for a major attack on

162 Australia’s Threat Perceptions, 85.
contradictions of the various formal strategic statements produced since 1971. But in a strategic cultural sense the White Paper provided much more detail than Dibb had done about friends and enemies, noting that Australia’s security is pursued within the framework of alliances and agreements it has built over the decades, and it went into some detail about ANZUS and its benefits in particular. The most succinct statement notes:

the priority need for the Defence Force is to fulfil the national task of defending the nation. It has also [to deal] with the need for Australia’s defence to take account of developments in our region of primary strategic interest [i.e. the arc of instability] and to be capable of reacting positively to calls for military support elsewhere, should we judge that our interests require it. The Government considers that Australia can deal with both, but to do so it must be alert to priorities.\textsuperscript{166}

There is a clear recognition that while self-reliance comes first it is not an overwhelming priority; Australia has friendly allies, some existent and other potential enemies, as well as various obligations to international law. And, crucially, the 1987 White Paper puts far more emphasis than the Dibb Report on the importance for Australia of a favourable global balance of power which implies at least some capability to affect it by assisting America if required. For example, it was important for the US to retain an effective balance with the USSR ... [because] a redistribution of power in favour of the Soviet Union in the central balance, or an extension of power in favour of the Soviet Union in our region at the expense of the United States, would be a matter of fundamental concern.\textsuperscript{167}

The very blunt, sparse power-political analysis of the Dibb Report had caused a few ripples in Washington and sparked Opposition accusations that Australia was retreating right back into [its] shell.\textsuperscript{168} Hawke was, however, sensitive to these social signals, and he played his own two-level game (although a less contradictory one than Nixon\textsuperscript{169}). And some major procurement decisions, involving expenditures in the billions of dollars, reflected a desire to retain strong US links: Beazley decided, against Dibb’s specific advice, to upgrade the F-111s; and the new

\textsuperscript{166}Defence of Australia 1987, 110.  
\textsuperscript{167}Ibid, 3.  
\textsuperscript{168}Edwards and Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 2, 55.  
\textsuperscript{169}Ibid., 54.
pite their astronomical price. These decisions, along with many other similar yet less expensive ones, ensured that the ADF remained interoperable with US forces.

Beazley also distanced the government from aspects of the Dibb Report, claiming that Australia would pursue a wider concept of self-reliance that rejected the narrow concept of continental defence. Australia was said to have finally found the right balance between the primary sub-cultures. In effect Australia’s strategic region was now an extensive zone of direct military interest [comprising] more than one-quarter of the Earth’s surface rather than the far smaller region, the arc of instability alone, which Dibb had identified. By this logic Australia would continue to permanently deploy an RAAF squadron in Malaysia, would continue to invest in high-technology weapons to retain a clear edge over regional neighbours, and would maintain strong procurement, training and strategic-consultation ties with the US. Indeed, Beazley explained later in parliament that Australia would no longer need to make a choice between self-reliance ... and our network of alliances... [because] we have the capacity and indeed the requirement to do both. An ADF primarily configured towards continental defence could also be utilised for forward defence-like deployments according to this logic of compromise.

The cultural orientation implicit in the official version of continental defence, when it crystallized in the late 1980s, was therefore one which did take seriously the need for Australia to defend itself, especially against low-level threats which might have been be economically painful and diplomatically tense but would not be serious enough to require a major mobilisation or request for substantial allied assistance. The government would also accelerate the movement of defence infrastructure to the north. And Australia would retain and further develop the key (i.e. most expensive) RAN and RAAF assets for sea-denial strike roles capable of interdicting and seriously damaging an invasion flotilla. But, crucially, these big-ticket items would also be deliberately configured for operations with the US, while procurement from and training with America would also continue, along with the presence of US signals and communications bases in Australia and continued access to ports for US nuclear-powered vessels. Indeed, in Kangaroo 89 the two countries held their largest ever peacetime manoeuvres together.

170 See discussion in Bell, Dependent Ally, 188. Dibb also referred for the need to do so in detail; Review, 6–9.

How did Australian strategic policy adjust to the end of the Cold War? The short answer is that it did not change enormously, although governments felt that the regional environment had stabilised sufficiently that a modest ‘peace dividend’ could be enjoyed. But the 1991 Gulf War that followed Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 was nevertheless an important event and Australia’s reaction to it shows how a compromise had been achieved between the continental and forward defence traditions (with a healthy dash of internationalism – Desert Shield and Desert Sword operated under UN auspices).

Forward defence logic was behind Hawke’s decision to commit the ADF before the UN called for contributions, thereby supporting American efforts to secure Security Council approval. But the forces sent reflected the effect of two decades of continental defence logic on the ADF’s force structure: several RAN vessels were dispatched to work with the US Navy; but the only ground forces sent were small units filling ‘niche’ roles like medical and engineering teams; so, no combat-capable battalion-sized units were sent. This last point should not be overstated, however: the ADF retained the capability to send one or more battalions; and the decision not to expose the Army to what was expected to be intense fighting against an enemy armed with chemical weapons was surely made in part for domestic political reasons particular to that conflict too. But the response nevertheless exemplifies the effect of the compromise position between the two primary strategic sub-cultures that had ‘settled in’ by the end of the Cold War.

In the early 1990s another strategic sub-culture, internationalism, also began to exert some influence over Australia’s strategic decision-making, producing a more complex ‘three-way’ compromise in Australia’s strategic culture. I defer detailed discussion of it until Chapter 8, but the ALP government’s minister of foreign affairs from 1988 to 1996, Gareth Evans, was the driving force behind it. In explaining the Gulf War he said, for example, that ‘Australia had a very strong interest in demonstrating both that acts of aggression of this kind were not tolerable, and

174 Hawke, The Hawke Years, 182.
and the will to respond to them. While Hauke (in the last year of his prime ministership) focussed mainly on how Australia was helping the US erect a New World Order.\footnote{Quoted in Blaxland, ibid., 166.}

Still, in terms of the strategic cultural model outlined in this thesis, Australia’s strategic culture continued to remain dominated by continental defence and more-strongly influenced by forward defence logic than by internationalism. While the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) under Evans pushed for the ADF acquire the capabilities to implement his favoured concept of ‘cooperative security’ he was met by significant resistance from Defence.\footnote{Kim Richard Nossal, ‘Seeing Things? The Adornment of “Security” in Australia and Canada,’ Australian Journal of International Affairs, 49:1 (May 1995), 33-47.} Indeed, the ADF was affected more by the desire to secure an old-fashioned peace dividend. Cuts following the 1991 Force Structure Review\footnote{Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service, 1991.} took into account the improved global strategic situation, at least in the conventional military sense, despite some concern being expressed about what Mary Kaldor later called the ‘new wars’ (i.e. in Yugoslavia).\footnote{New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).} While the defence vote fell to 1.8 per cent of GDP by the mid-1990s, the cuts were mainly secured by slashing staff at Defence, although in the ADF proper the Army’s regular forces shrank from eight to six battalions.\footnote{Blaxland, Strategic Cousins, 173.} But the capital acquisition programmes remained unaffected: all six submarines would be completed; the F-111s would be upgraded; and other projects (like replacing the RAN’s helicopter fleet\footnote{‘Australia’s Ill-Starred SH-2G Seasprite Project,’ Defence Industry Daily, 23 March 2008, at http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/australia-to-continue-with-illstarred-sh2g-seasprite-project-03338/} ) went ahead. Australia was ‘paring down’ the ADF rather than reconfiguring it substantially.

In 1993 a Strategic Review began to explore some new possibilities. Strategic Reviews are ‘interim White Papers and this one was intended, in the words of the minister for defence, Robert Ray, to begin ‘the process of adapting Australia’s strategic and defence policies to the new challenges of the still-emerging post-Cold War world.\footnote{Strategic Review 1993 (Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service, 1993), iii.} It noted that ‘with the end of the Cold War there is a process of fundamental change under way in the global strategic balance which was generally good (i.e. the US was now the world’s only superpower).\footnote{Ibid., 1.} But the was ‘force modernisation underway in many of the countries in the region commensurate with their steadily growing economic capacities could, it was noted, pose problems in the future. The Executive Summary noted that

\footnotetext{176}{Quoted in Blaxland, ibid., 166.}
\footnotetext{178}{Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service, 1991.}
\footnotetext{179}{New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).}
\footnotetext{180}{Blaxland, Strategic Cousins, 173.}
\footnotetext{182}{Strategic Review 1993 (Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service, 1993), iii.}
\footnotetext{183}{Ibid., 1.}
Australia’s future lies in the Asia-Pacific region. In the economic sphere Japan has long been our largest trading partner ... [and] Australia now exports more to ASEAN nations than to ... [the US and Europe]. Immigration, and our growing cultural and educational ties with Asian nations, are also changing the [public] attitudes. Australia’s policies in the 1990s are increasingly shaped by the need for engagement with Asia across the whole sphere of national activity, while continuing to sustain our strategic relationship with the United States and ties to Europe.  

This is revealing in several respects. First, it employs a wider understanding of ‘security’ than a traditional ‘strategic’ focus would; it was a strategic review, yet it discusses economic issues prominently, which is consistent with Evans’ more holistic approach to foreign policy. Evans had said in his 1989 ministerial statement, Australia’s Regional Security, crafted by DFAT officials, that regional stability could be pursued and secured in new ‘cooperative’ and ‘multidimensional’ ways. However, neither Evans nor DFAT succeeded in effecting much real change in the way in which the ADF was organized. Money continued to flow towards strike assets useful for continental or forward defence, not the larger, ‘lighter,’ more readily deployable infantry units needed for these new (and ill-defined) strategic roles.

Nevertheless, the 1993 Strategic Review noted that Australia would ‘play a more active role in peace keeping and peace enforcement roles in the future, and that Australia’s dominant cultural identity had changed and would continue to do so, although this was clearly as much an aspirational as an observational statement: the ALP was trying to redefine Australia’s dominant cultural identity to make it more ‘Asia-friendly’ (see discussion below). Tellingly, when strategic policy was discussed ANZUS was the only strategic relationship mentioned. There was some discussion of possibly finding allies in Asia but an entire chapter was devoted to ANZUS which apart from providing a valuable deterrent to potential aggressors was also said to provide important support to the military capabilities needed for self-reliance. Finally, the section entitled ‘The Renewal of the United Nations’ expressed

184 Ibid., 2.  
185 Australia’s Regional Security (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1989).  
186 Strategic Review 1993, 11.  
187 Ibid., 37
force for peace and stability, although this discussion was explicitly aspirational in tone, suggesting the government didn’t want to get too far ahead of itself.  

What does all this say about Australia’s strategic culture in the early 1990s? The interpretation favoured by Paul Keating, who had replaced Hawke as prime minister in December 1991, was that the external strategic environment was relatively benign, and while Australia would not abandon its links to the US it would also begin to develop a more complex, nuanced and especially regional strategic approach based on self-reliance and engagement with regional institutions. With the USSR’s collapse Labor was also no longer vulnerable to the conspiratorial innuendo or Red bashing that had dogged it in decades past. So, affinity-perceptions with the US remained but were less urgently expressed than ever before: there was no clear bogeyman, even a potential one, in a threat-perception sense (but there were new, less dangerous but more diverse threats); and greater engagement with Asia was said to both be made possible by changing cultural perceptions and was driven by new economic opportunities.

The 1994 White Paper provided more detail, but it was not markedly different than the 1993 Strategic Review. It did warn that the good times might not last, cautiously claiming that “With the end of the Cold War, important new uncertainties have emerged about the future of the strategic situation in Asia. Economic growth will increase the power of nations in our region, and political change may make their policies less predictable.” In the very structure of the Executive Summary we can discern the three-way compromise which characterized Australia’s immediate post-Cold War strategic culture. The two short paragraphs outlining why a credible self-reliant posture was necessary were followed by a paragraph which, in the first three sentences, noted that Australia would continue to maintain “the international ... relationships which help ensure [its] security ... and its interests,” while the paragraph ended with a single sentence about the possibility of the ADF being dispatched to assist with humanitarian crises. And there was, for the first time since the 1970s, an extended discussion that implicitly questioned America’s willingness, because it clearly was even more capable than ever before (i.e. after the USSR’s collapse), to intervene in the region. Specifically, the White Paper stated that the US “will remain strategically

188Ibid., 6–7.
190Ibid., 4–5.
but ... [its] engagement with the region is changing ... [and] it will neither seek nor accept responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the region.\textsuperscript{91}

Consistent with this last observation, Australia began flirting with the prospect of building strategic bilateral links with regional Asian states. An entire chapter in the 1994 White Paper is devoted to \textit{Regional Engagement}.\textsuperscript{92} It is framed mainly in terms of developing \textit{dialogue about low-level contingencies} but growing bilateral ties with Indonesia were said to be \textit{our most important [relationship] in the region}.\textsuperscript{93} Most importantly, and for the first time since the 1946 Strategic Basis Paper, there was no talk of Indonesia posing a threat or potential threat for cultural or ideological or even for mere geographical reasons.\textsuperscript{94} Not incidentally, for the first time an Australian Defence White Paper was the subject of sustained and largely favourable comment in Indonesia, with a senior officer, General Mantiri, commenting that it was \textit{further evidence of Australia\’s changed position ... [the White Paper] has completed the foundation upon which the developing defence relationship can now rest.}\textsuperscript{95}

Accordingly, in 1995 Australia signed its first bilateral\textsuperscript{96} security treaty with an Asian state (and it was Indonesia\’s first with \textit{any} state) when it concluded the Agreement on Maintaining Security. This was far from an \textit{alliance} it called only for \textit{regular consultations and mutually beneficial cooperation} but it was still a very important moment from a strategic cultural perspective. It would not survive the decade (the East Timor crisis destroyed it \textsuperscript{97}-- see Chapter 8) but it nevertheless demonstrates very clearly that in the mid-1990s Labor was working hard to significantly reshape Australia\’s strategic relationships with its Asian neighbours, especially the biggest and closest one. And this occurred despite the fact that Indonesia had not really changed much from the military dictatorship which had invaded East Timor in 1975 and had ruthlessly suppressed the Timorese people ever since, most publicly and recently in the provincial capital, Dili, in November 1991. So, put simply, the ALP government was willing to overlook what remained major cultural/political differences with Indonesia in pursuit of wider and more tangible economic and diplomatic interests. Indeed, an Australian historian has said recently that Mantiri became \textit{the centre of a diplomatic storm} soon after making \textit{... [the comment quoted above] when protests in...}

\textsuperscript{91}Ibid., 8.
\textsuperscript{92}Ibid., 86–8.
\textsuperscript{94}An existing multilateral treaty, the Five Power Defence Agreement of 1971 with Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Singapore and Malaysia as members, was still in force.
The prevention of his appointment as Ambassador, but his view of the Australian government’s support for the Suharto regime was accurate.

This episode says a lot about the cultural orientation at the heart of Australia’s mid-1990s continental defence posture. Regional states, especially Indonesia, were no longer automatically seen as threatening (despite regional dynamics becoming more uncertain) and they were now even allies, albeit of a weak sort, while America, perhaps a little like Britain after 1967, seemed to be an ally but was still regarded as an ultimate guarantor of Australia’s, the region’s, and the world’s stability. But, crucially, both continental and forward defence logic, in that order, remained significantly more influential than internationalism when it came to strategic policy, and perhaps pragmatism ultimately ruled in foreign policy too. Some of the declaratory and aspirational internationalist rhetoric from this era appears a little hollow with hindsight, especially given the government’s demonstrated eagerness (i.e. Evans had been pressing since 1990) to sign a security treaty with one of the more repressive regimes in the region. This is clear evidence of how influential internationalism really was, despite the fine words, when more conventional strategic and economic interests were considered.

John Howard’s conservative Coalition won office in 1996. In many respects he was a more traditional conservative than Fraser had been. The latter had adopted a more activist approach to promoting liberal rights and true equality abroad. Fraser’s domestic policies were also not particularly conservative. But while Fraser and Howard disagreed on the deep meaning of conservatism, they were otherwise very similar political animals. Their political strengths lay in their leadership: in Fraser’s case this was evident in the steely, ruthless way he forced Whitlam out of office in disgrace in 1975, while it has been said that a combination of acute judgement, ruthless determination, [and] the capacity to inspire loyalty are the keys to understanding John Howard. He openly declared himself to be a Burkean conservative while Fraser was probably more like Disraeli, to stay with the British analogy, because he recognised that society had changed during the 1960s and 1970s and he merely sought to

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196 Ibid.
197 Ibid., 82.
198 For example, he did not reintroduce university fees, roll back Land Rights legislation, or open the still-heavily-protected (and struggling) economy much, even as Reaganomics and Thatcherism swept through conservative circles in the 1980s.
Stabilize it while Howard pursued slow but steady conservative reform by rolling back of many of the surviving Whitlam-era reforms.\(^{200}\) Crucially, Howard was inspired by Menzies’ political career, and he harboured an Anglophile mindset.\(^{201}\) At least early in his career, however, he also allowed just a little of the casual racism of the Menzies-era to seep into his public statements, which almost destroyed his political career in the late 1980s (he stepped down as party leader for five years) after he denounced multiculturalism and floated the idea of reducing Asian immigration into Australia. When he argued that it was a sovereign right to determine who should enter the country\(^{202}\) he was caricatured by the then-Treasurer, Paul Keating, as an out-of-touch dinosaur.\(^{203}\) But in true pragmatic-conservative style Howard picked himself up, reflected hard, and adopted a much more circumspect attitude towards such matters, repeatedly repudiating his own earlier comments.\(^{204}\)

Regarding foreign policy, Howard and his minister for foreign affairs, Alexander Downer, immediately confirmed that they supported the Australia-Indonesia treaty, although they also deliberately distanced the new government from Labor’s very activist foreign policy stance by de-emphasising the extent to which Australia would participate in regional multilateral forms, and instead said they would rebalance Australian foreign policy towards practical bilateralism in the region.\(^{205}\) This did not mean that they would shun multilateralism but more that they would not seek to deepen it further on principle. Significantly, and with respect to strategic policy, Howard did signal that he wanted to strengthen the bilateral relationship with America.\(^{206}\) Michael Wesley argues that Howard’s conservatism was deeply affected by his Methodist upbringing and that he believed very strongly that politicians must preserve the moral community.\(^{207}\) For Australia this was defined by the Judeo-Christian ethics which were shared by other Western states, and he noted in 1997 that it is common values that in the end bind us together more

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\(^{200}\) Regarding the three matters footnoted above: he greatly increased university fees from the ‘nominal’ amounts Hawke had reintroduced, generally resisted the Aboriginal Land Rights movement, and significantly reformed and opened the economy.\(^{201}\) The Bulletin’s front cover said ‘Mr 18%[approval rating]: Why does he bother?’ in 1989: Wesley, The Howard Paradox, 61.


\(^{204}\) Speech, Downer to Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies, ‘Regional cooperation and security,’ Canberra, 6 December 1996.

\(^{205}\) Speech, Downer to the Asia-Pacific Security Forum, ‘Security through cooperation,’ Canberra, 2 May 1996.

\(^{206}\) The Howard Paradox, 45.

\(^{207}\) Ibid., 48.
tightly than anything else. He couched his rhetoric in terms Americans would understand — for example, after returning from a visit there in 2002 he told a Liberal Party conference that while preparing for a speech in the US he had tried to distil the values that both societies shared,

and those values were a belief that the individual is more important than the State. A belief that strong families are a nation’s greatest resource ... and the best social welfare system ... a belief that competitive capitalism is the real key to national wealth and a belief that decency and hard work define a person’s worth, not class, race or social background. 

One may be forgiven for thinking that even before 9/11 Australia’s strategic posture would shift, if not unambiguously back to forward defence, then perhaps to a compromise which favoured it. Indeed, Hugh White (then a senior Defence official) has said that in the 1997 White Paper Defence Minister Ian McLachlan wanted a more forward posture. Yet the minister ultimately secured only a minor shift in the relative prioritisation of the two primary sub-cultures, and continental defence remained dominant.

Specifically, for the first time in decades, strategic policy focused on China. It was not considered a definite threat, but the 1997 paper asserted that it is not yet clear how China’s power will be accommodated... [and] it would not be in Australia’s interests for ... [China’s rise] to result in a diminution of US strategic influence in the region. This unpredictability stemmed from China’s authoritarian political system, a clear example of a direct cultural/political-difference perception. And while the phrase ‘defence of Australia’ was dropped in favour of ‘defeating attacks on Australia,’ this remained the primary interest, followed by ‘defending regional interests’ and then ‘supporting our global interests,’ while the need for stabilisation missions in the region was also explored, although not at great length. Importantly, however, in the detail it was said that the ADF’s force structure would not change much because it was said that the ADF will therefore be developed to defeat attacks against Australia,

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209Speech, Howard to Asialink Centre, the 5th Annual Sir Edward ‘Weary’ Dunlop Lecture, Melbourne, 11 November 1997.
211Huisken and Thatcher, History as Policy, 178.
213Ibid., 29.
214Australia’s Strategic Policy, 32–3.
defend our regional interests. Priority will be given to the first of these tasks, but decisions will be influenced by the ability of forces to contribute to both tasks.\textsuperscript{215}

White claims that this heralded the eclipse of defence of Australia as the cynosure of our defence planning,\textsuperscript{216} but I disagree. The words of the White Paper itself do not support this interpretation, and I believe White puts too much reliance on one sentence which says our judgement on the priority we give to defeating attacks on Australia will be tested to see how well a force developed on this basis is able to perform other tasks.\textsuperscript{217} This seems to be no more than a declaration that Howard would be more flexible than Labor. Certainly Dibb and others interpret the 1997 White Paper as retaining continental defence as the primary (if watered down) determinant of the ADF force structure.\textsuperscript{218} In any event another White Paper was released in 2000, influenced by the lessons learnt in East Timor, which had demonstrated how woefully prepared the ADF was logistically to deploy a mere 5,000 troops, even to a close neighbour in the end US logistical assistance was required (as was its diplomatic support - see Chapter 8).\textsuperscript{219} This demonstrates that despite all the talk in the 1997 White Paper of reprioritising the ADF to perform forward defence roles, little had been done to actually acquire force-projection capabilities. By this time, too, the Asian Economic Crisis had swept through the region and swept President Suharto of Indonesia from power, giving new and urgent truth to the old phrase the arc of instability.

Accordingly, the 2000 White Paper reaffirmed again that the defence of Australia (so, continental defence logic using the old Labor-era terminology) would remain the first priority when the ADF determined its force structure but, tellingly, preparation for stabilisation missions in our immediate neighbourhood and in Southeast Asia became the second and third priorities, while the fourth was to contribute to maintaining strategic stability in the wider Asia Pacific region in concert with America. The fifth priority, interestingly and at odds with what

\textsuperscript{215}Ibid., 36.
\textsuperscript{216}Huisken and Thatcher, \textit{History as Policy}, 180.
\textsuperscript{217}Australia’s Strategic Policy, 36.
global stability through close ties with the UN. He seems to have been impressed by the recent and successful experience of working closely with the UN in East Timor.

While continental defence logic retained its priority in the 2000 White Paper, several defence expenditure decisions made then demonstrate the nature of Australia’s three-way strategic-cultural compromise on the eve of 9/11. First, the ADF would remain interoperable-enough with US forces to fight an intense conventional war with a hostile power and without it being stated openly in the paper, White (who was intimately involved in the drafting process) tells us that China was the anticipated enemy. This led directly to the decision a few years later to replace the aging F-18 fleet with a true fifth-generation fighter jet (then called the Joint Strike Fighter, now officially designated as F-35 Lightnings), and to expand the size of the fighter force (to 100, up from 70) in the largest single purchase in Australia’s defence history. But a strong RAAF is also a continental defence asset, and there would be further development of the ADF’s northern infrastructure to enable more effective sea-denial operations. Developing Australia’s north is also consistent with the other major procurement decision from the 2000 White Paper, namely, to acquire significantly greater RAN amphibious capabilities which, several years later, morphed into a decision to acquire two helicopter carriers. These very expensive assets could be used, it was expected, for a range of operations including those other than conventional war as well as offensive, forward-defence-like amphibious operations.

So, strategic policy as it was in 2001, just prior to 9/11, reflected a complex mixture of continental defence, forward defence and internationalism logics. This demonstrates, from a cultural affinity- or threat-perception perspective, how complex the cultural orientation at the heart of the government’s formal policy was. The UN was for a short time a ‘close other’, and the US remained so indeed, it is the only strategic relationship to which an entire section of the 2000 White Paper is devoted. There was also guarded frostiness towards China as a culturally-different and hard-to-trust (or perhaps just understand) potential foe, and it was acknowledged obliquely that the East Timor crisis had caused understandable tensions with Indonesia, explainable by differences in

221Huisken and Thatcher, History as Policy, 182.
222The initial cost was said to be $16 billion, but this rose to at least $20 billion as of 2010.
223Defence 2000, 10.
224Ibid., 33–6.
with Howard's general worldview he repeatedly referred explicitly to cultural similarity/difference to define Australia's in- and out-groups. Finally, the reference to unconventional threats suggested that new and perhaps less overtly threatening but still troubling actors were emerging: illegal fishers; drug- and people-smugglers; pirates; and even terrorists (but not specifically Islamic ones yet) were mentioned.

Australia's friend/foe calculus was therefore populated with a confusing proliferation of allies and enemies of all different types and varieties in mid-2001. This may also reflect that Australia had grown significantly since the early 1970s in both population and economic potential, meaning it could afford to take on more strategic roles this paper also foreshadowed that defence spending would steadily rise (i.e. especially to buy the new fighter-jets) by a minimum of 3 per cent per annum in real terms for at least a decade from its base at 1.9 per cent, taking it to at 2.2 per cent by 2010 (although by 2010 it actually remained well below this figure, at approximately 1.8 per cent). And the complexity of Defence 2000 probably also reflects the growing diversity of Australian society and opinions within it this was, interestingly, the first White Paper before which a comprehensive and expensive public-consultation had ever been systematically carried out. In strategic cultural terms perhaps the three-way compromise in the White Paper represented the plurality of opinion in Australia at the time, or that the nation's dominant cultural identity was multi-faceted and becoming more sophisticated after adjusting, for a decade now, to the end of the simpler Cold War era.

I finish this section with discussion of the Pauline Hanson incident, a debate about Australian identity which erupted in the mid-1990s which, because it concerned Asian immigration, morphed into a series of diplomatic ripples across Asia (but not a major strategic crisis). I have described in passing above the project by which progressive elements of Australia's elite, including in the ALP (i.e. especially Keating and Evans) called for

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225 Ibid., 41.
226 Wesley, The Howard Paradox, 52 9.
227 Ibid. 49–53.
230 Ibid., 3–5.
or was in government from 1983 to 1996. It was recognised in foreign IR circles that Australia’s identity, especially how it defined its in- and out-groups, seemed to be changing in the 1990s: Higgott and Nossal, in 1995, called Australia a liminal country, poised between social groups; and Huntington had called it (in 1997), along with Turkey, a nation torn between two of his civilizations, meaning that its elites wanted to take it into a different civilization (i.e. Asian) against its people’s wishes. In short, there was a perception that Australia’s culture and identity was changing in an elite-driven manner, elements of the community did not like it, and Pauline Hanson became the primary mouthpiece, for a time, for them.

She had been originally been a Liberal Party candidate whose endorsement had been withdrawn before the 1996 election after she claimed that Aboriginal Australians were unfairly showered with money. But she ran and won as an independent and extracts from her maiden speech to parliament nicely sum up her views, informed as they were almost entirely by perceptions of cultural similarity and difference (she was certainly no technocratic-strategic expert). She claimed the following:

I and most Australians want our immigration policy radically reviewed and multiculturalism abolished. We are in danger of being swamped by Asians.... They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos, and do not assimilate. Of course, I will be called a racist, but, if I can invite whom I want into my home then I should have the right to say who comes into my country. A truly multicultural country can never be strong and united. The world is full of failed and tragic examples, ranging from Ireland to Bosnia to Africa and, closer to home, Papua New Guinea.

Even though she was not talking directly to strategic issues, this speech is a fascinating example of debate about Australian identity in this era. First, she claims that cultural difference necessarily causes domestic strife, and later appeals to the public’s knowledge of ethnically torn societies using contemporaneous analogies. Then she essentially admits to being racist, but offers an explanation or justification for her prejudice by drawing an analogy between immigration policy and the everyday social context of inviting guests into one’s home. And, finally, the

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233 She had left school at age 15, and she had run a fish and chip shop immediately before becoming an MP.
Hanson caused a storm of controversy with these and other comments, including the wilder ones about Australia leaving the UN, diverting all foreign aid to internal welfare and reintroducing compulsory National Service. This last matter may suggest that she favoured a fortress Australia posture in the strong-isolationist sense of the phrase, but she never had anything particularly bad to say about America and would certainly not have stopped white immigration. She was, of course, a backbencher and under a relentless media and broader intellectual-elite assault she eventually, in what is often considered an overly-vindictive outcome, spent a short spell in prison for campaign financing offences.

The Hanson phenomenon was relatively short-lived and did not affect strategic decision-making directly. But it did have several important, and generally negative, effects on Australia’s foreign relations. First, Howard was criticised for not denouncing Hanson. This was no doubt due at least in part to his desire not to alienate One Nation voters (i.e. Hanson’s party) the Coalition parties needed their second preference votes in a number of marginal seats. But many felt Howard also sympathised somewhat with such voters if not with the confrontational and unsophisticated way Hanson presented their case. He said nothing for weeks after her sensational maiden speech but then told a party conference that Labor has lost touch with the mainstream of Australian community, they have quite literally stopped listening to the mainstream of the Australian community.... One of the great changes that has come over Australians is that they speak a little more freely and a little more openly about what they feel. In a sense the pall of censorship on certain issues has been lifted.... I welcome the fact that people can now talk about certain things without living in fear of being branded a racist.

This may have just been code he was talking to his own party after all for Labor is out of touch, we must keep them off balance given that he had just ended 13 years of ALP government. But it caused some of the criticism

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distance themselves from Hanson by tightening anti-discrimination legislation and praising Asian immigrants' contribution to society.\(^{237}\) Tim Fischer, the deputy prime minister and leader of the National Party, so the spokesman for rural and country interests which depended heavily on exports more generally (and also One Nation's main support base) mounted a sustained argument that what Hanson was suggesting was both morally wrong and likely to seriously jeopardise Australia's interests, especially its economic and diplomatic ones.\(^ {238}\)

Nevertheless, the whole episode caused some discomfort in Australia's regional relations. The *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 's summary of the major events in 1997 gave the ongoing Hanson debate top billing, with the author concluding that it seemed to have done Australia's reputation in the region lasting damage.\(^{239}\) A Japanese newspaper later noted that, despite Hanson losing her seat in the 1998 federal election, One Nation had garnered 23 per cent of the vote in Queensland's state election held earlier that year, suggesting that about 1 million Australians had voted for a party of racists.\(^ {240}\) Michael Wesley, writing almost a decade later, demurs from these strong assessments of the damage done by the Hanson incident and says that while it did cause some tensions Howard successfully reassured most of the region's leaders that she did not represent official policy.\(^ {241}\) Still, the issue continued to echo: some regional critics, such as Mahathir bin Mohamad, Malaysia's prime minister between 1981 and 2003, continually reminded Australians of it; and it would spawn similar debates regarding what sort of strategic role Australia would play in the region, like the 'deputy sheriff' debate (discussed below).

To finish discussion of Australian strategic culture on the eve of 9/11 I offer two observations. First, there had been, I concede to White, some 'drift' in strategic decision-making logic under Howard: in 1997 it had shifted a little more towards a traditional forward defence role while still remaining informed mainly by continental defence logic. And then in 2000, while continental defence was still said to be the primary driver, a sort of mixed, part-

\(^{239}\) Russell Trood, 'Perspectives on Australian Foreign Policy – 1997,' *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 52:2, 194.
\(^{240}\) The Age, 7 October 1998.
\(^{241}\) This is Wesley's 'Howard Paradox' or the main theme of his book – despite being perceived as being unlikely to 'get along with Asians' Wesley concludes that Howard actually did quite well through skilful diplomacy, both bi- and multilateral, and that he was aided by events: in particular the Asian Economic Crisis, 9/11 and the Boxing Day tsunami gave him a chance to engage with (mainly by aiding) other states in the region, especially Indonesia in response to all these three crises: *The Howard Paradox*. 240
forward defence but also part-internationalist role (i.e. ‘stabilisation missions’ of all sorts of different types and levels of intensity) would be the second major determinant of the ADF’s force structure and doctrine. But, second, the Pauline Hanson episode was, in the opinion of several contemporary Australian historians, very much a debate about culture, emotion and sentiment, not technical or rational considerations. David Ip and his colleagues have claimed that these attacks [on immigrants] were coded in terms of ‘our way of life,’ citing ‘community attitudes’ in a way that constructed a narrow and exclusive community, and asserting that special provision for Aboriginal people or migrants amounted to reverse racism... [T]he recent immigration debates are framed by the ‘third wave’ of the new emigration from Asia. At the bottom of all the rhetoric, arguments and even hostility, the crux is about how Australia is able to cope with cultural and regional change and differences. 242

So, into this tinderbox of culturally-charged debates about immigration and what it meant to ‘be Australian’ was thrown the spark of 9/11.


John Howard was in Washington on 11 September 2001 and he was the first foreign leader to meet with President Bush (the next day) to express Australia’s support. Upon his return home he set the tone of debate about the looming conflict as one about values and the need to defend the Western ‘way of life’ from this newly-threatening cultural/religious-Other: he noted on 14 September that ‘in a very direct way ... [9/11] was an attack upon Australians’ ability to go about their daily lives and to move about the world with ease and with freedom from fear’ 243 and he called the new strategic challenge

Australia’s fight too. [I]f we left this fight to America, we would be leaving it to them to defend our rights and those of other people around the world who have a commitment to freedom and liberty. We will not do that, that is not who we as a nation are.... Australians have always been a people prepared to do their bit, to fight their own fights. 244
And so began Australia’s involvement in the War on Terror. From a strategic cultural perspective we can see a degree of dissonance (as Evans and Kilcullen claimed) emerging in this era between Australia’s strategic policy, which remained oriented towards continental defence, and its strategic behaviour, which took on more forward defence-like characteristics. This latter trend was also reflected in several major procurement decisions, especially the confirmation that Australia would buy the two helicopter carriers. But the decision to replace the aging F-111s with US-Navy-type but land-based F-18 Super Hornets also showed a clear appreciation for the need to retain assets useful in continental defence roles.

We cannot properly understand the effect of 9/11 without considering the domestic political climate of the time. In early 2001, with an election due before the end of the year, the ALP, led by Kim Beazley, was leading in the polls and looking likely to win the 2001 election. But beginning in August 2001 the ‘Tampa Affair’, along with several other illegal-immigrant scandals like the ‘Children Overboard’ affair,245 prompted a political crisis. Wesley notes that normally these would have been treated as immigration issues, but the situation was immediately cast in terms of Australia’s security.246 Howard had, in early 2001, listed a range of new security threats like drug smuggling, illegal fishing, cyber-crime and people smuggling,247 and the hardline approach after August 2001 to illegal immigration later struck a powerful chord with the public and delivered Howard a resounding victory in the November 2001 election. He skilfully created a climate of fear about threats to Australia’s identity, and it was not

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245 This affair involved the declaration on 7 October 2001 by Phillip Ruddock, the immigration minister, that the passengers and crew of SIEV 4 (i.e. ‘Suspected Illegal Emigrant Vessel, No. 4’) had ‘thrown their children overboard’ to gain entry to Australia. The Australian populace was incensed, and the ‘hard-line’ on illegal immigration that the Coalition government had made a central plank of their election manifesto seemed, initially, to have been vindicated. It is indisputable that the crew/passengers began to sabotage their vessel after the Navy demanded that they head back to Indonesia. It is also clear that several adults deliberately jumped overboard on 7 October. As SIEV 4 began to show signs that it may sink the Navy requested at one point that women and children be taken off first (i.e. by jumping into the water where navy divers waited with floatation devices). This request was refused, but later, on 8 October 2001, the vessel sank precipitously and all the passengers and crew were rescued from the sea. The scandal broke later, both before but especially after the 10 November 2001 federal election. Rumours leaked out in late October that the Navy had indeed first provided ambiguous reports that could have been construed as suggesting that children had been deliberately thrown overboard by the refugees, and that these had prompted Ruddock’s announcement on 7 October 2001. However, a parliamentary enquiry (held in 2002 after the Coalition had won the election) later found that the Navy had immediately (i.e. within two days) begun to back-track from the claim of children being deliberately thrown overboard, and that the government had consistently failed to disclose these clarifications. The Senate Committee found that ‘a number of factors contributed to the making and sustaining of the report that children had been thrown overboard.... They included genuine miscommunication or misunderstanding, inattention, avoidance of responsibility, a public service culture of responsiveness and perhaps over-responsiveness to the political needs of ministers, and deliberate deception motivated by political expedience.’ Senate Select Committee Report, A Certain Maritime Incident (Canberra: Senate Printing Unit, 2002), xxi, http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/maritime_incident_ctte/report/report.pdf.


while Howard never drew an explicit parallel between them he did little to oppose the association. \(^{248}\) Wesley notes that the furore over illegal immigrants and the attacks in America were physically separated, but conceptually related events... occurring almost simultaneously, leading to an overwhelming sense of crisis.... [Together they] seemed to remove the caution... from Howard and his ministers, and the new logic of foreign policy emerged and endured. \(^{249}\)

So, just as Australia was emerging from the Hanson-era debate about ordinary (Asian) immigration it was plunged into another debate about illegal (Middle Eastern) immigrants in the run up to a federal election that was held in the shadow of 9/11. Howard spoke the language of an electorate which was not particularly interested, and even less expert, in the technical aspects of strategic decision-making but which was nevertheless deeply unnerved by 9/11. This constitutes a classic example of a norm-entrepreneur who has been socialised strongly (conservatively in his case) and who intuitively grasped that Australians were still very worried about identity issues. His speeches were laden with images in which certain Others (i.e. terrorists and illegal immigrants) were implicitly connected, and then tied into an explicit ‘both-different-from-us’ conflict binary that resonated strongly with his audience.

With regard to the wider War on Terror, and from a strategic cultural perspective, Howard believed very strongly in the importance of defending Australia’s values and in picking its co-belligerents with culture in mind. He made a very favourable impression when he sat with a few aides in a near-deserted public gallery after the attacks in New York and Washington, watching Congress mourn the victims in a late-night impromptu session on 11 September 2001, and one observer noted that his adherence to the US was not so much a rational calculation as a matter of profound belief. \(^{250}\) He also openly accepted the corollary, namely, that relations between culturally-different states would be qualitatively poorer and required more ‘management’. The Australia-China relationship, he noted,

is sound because it is built on upon the important principles of mutual respect for one another and a recognition that societies that have different cultures and different histories can nevertheless work together

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\(^{246}\) Speech, to the National Press Club, Canberra, 8 November 2001.

\(^{248}\) Wesley, ‘Perspectives... 2001,’ 54.

... if they understand those differences and they focus less on what divides them and more on what brings them together ... like trade.\textsuperscript{251}

Despite the musing of his strategic planners in the late 1990s that China may pose a long-term strategic threat, by 2001 for the first time in over a decade another monolithic-seeming enemy had appeared in the guise of Islamic fundamentalism. Howard played hard upon this theme, noting that Jemaah Islamiya (JI) (i.e. the perpetrators of the October 2002 Bali Bombings) planned to create a Southeast Asian Caliphate that would incorporate all Muslims in the region, and which would also annex the northern half of Australia to tap its mineral wealth.\textsuperscript{252} Foreign Minister Downer also drew specific historical analogies between the new threat and the old Soviet menace;\textsuperscript{253} and the government focussed hard on different-from-us threat-perceptions: for example, in a speech entitled Ideas as Weapons,\textsuperscript{254} Downer asserted that the terrorists were driven by a totalitarian mentality of violent extremism\textsuperscript{255}; and a week later he elaborated in a speech entitled Terrorism: Winning the Battle of Ideas that the terrorists’ worldview was based on a distorted and selective interpretation of Islam,\textsuperscript{255} which indicated that the government also took to heart the lesson learned after George Bush divisively labelled America’s early response to 9/11 a crusade, suggesting force would be used against Islam per se. Accordingly, Australia’s government carefully provided subtle friend/foe signals,\textsuperscript{256} differentiating between moderate and fundamentalist Islam by repeatedly claiming that it would support the moderate Muslims to ensure that they successfully defeat the divisive message of hate, tyranny and intolerance propagated by the extremists.\textsuperscript{256}

Whilst doing this Howard had to be careful not to upset several neighbours, especially Indonesia, which is the largest majority-Islamic country in the world.\textsuperscript{257} He had upset Indonesia during the Tampa affair (i.e. many people-smugglers operated there) and when Indonesia’s President Megawati Sukarnoputri refused repeatedly to take

\textsuperscript{251}Speech, ‘Ready for the Future.’
\textsuperscript{253}Huisken and Thatcher, History as Policy, 106.
\textsuperscript{254}Speech, Downer to the International Institute of Strategic Studies, London, 15 September 2006.
\textsuperscript{255}Speech, Downer to the Sydney Institute, Sydney, 1 November 2006.
\textsuperscript{256}Speech, Downer to the Multifaith Conference for Peace and Harmony, Sydney, 24 October 2007.
\textsuperscript{257}India is actually home to more Muslims, but it is majority Hindu (and about five-times the size of Indonesia).
At least initially after 9/11 he also upset some in the region with his strong and vocal support for the US, especially the cultural tone of his remarks. Then after the Bali Bombings killed 88 Australians, Howard commented that he would consider using unilateral pre-emptive strikes against terrorists operating within neighbouring state if an attack on Australia was imminent. This so-called Howard Doctrine elicited a chorus of condemnation in Asia, leading many governments to criticize Australia’s refusal to sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, which had been signed by most countries in the region, including New Zealand. The furore was serious enough for Malaysia and Thailand to threaten cancelling some bilateral strategic ties (such as officer-exchanges) with Australia.

These controversies later morphed in the deputy sheriff (i.e. to America’s sheriff) saga. The phrase was actually first used in 1999 when a journalist asked Howard if Australia played such a role in Asia. Howard initially failed to contest the notion, but later backtracked. The controversy flared up again in 2003 when Bush, when asked whether he saw Australia as a deputy sheriff, stated No, we don’t see it as a deputy sheriff. We see it as a sheriff [laughter]. There is nothing deputy about this relationship. Malaysia’s combative Prime Minister Mahatir responded by accusing Australia of unmitigated arrogance and went on to say When Australians claim to be Asian they see only themselves lording it over [Asia]. Yet despite these public relations gaffes Australia actually worked closely and successfully with regional states (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines especially) who also had strong interests in also combating terrorism in the region.

Regarding Australia’s specific strategic behaviour during the post-9/11 period, Howard personally invoked ANZUS in his first meeting with Bush on 12 September 2001. The ADF was then ordered to ready several companies of Special Air Service (SAS) troops, RAAF transport elements and a squadron of F-18s, and an RAN...
ance the Americans may request. As it turned out only 150 SAS soldiers would take part in the overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan, although the RAN participated with the resupply mission mounted off Pakistan and RAAF transports began flying regularly into Kabul as soon as the airport was secured.\textsuperscript{266} Journalist Geoffrey Barker argued that Howard was also at first reluctant to commit many troops to the subsequent stabilisation mission,\textsuperscript{267} however under American pressure eventually around 1,500 were sent, split roughly into an infantry battalion and an equal number of special forces and logistics units, enabling the contingent to engage in regular combat.

 Yet Australia’s commitment to the invasion of Iraq became the single most important strategic effect of 9/11. It stands as a clear example of strategic behaviour driven by forward defence logic. The contingent was a little larger (i.e. over 2000) than that sent to the first Gulf War in 1991 and included: four RAN vessels; niche engineering and mine-clearance units; a squadron of F-18s for combat missions and RAAF transport planes\textsuperscript{268}; all the SAS troopers not in Afghanistan; and later a battalion replaced them and protected unarmed Japanese combat engineers. As an aside, this last deployment demonstrates how far relations between Japan and Australia had come in half a century. Australia offered to protect the Japanese troops as a favour to Bush, who was trying to prod the Japanese into contributing more to global security, and the Japanese were very pleased to work with the ADF because they trusted Australia. This led to Australia signing along with America and Japan the Trilateral Security Dialogue, only the second post-Second World War security treaty Japan is a party to.\textsuperscript{269} Australian forces remained at the level of about 1,500 until their withdrawal by the incoming Labor Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in late-2007.

 At first glance it may look like Australia did something similar to 1991 in the sense of supporting the US diplomatically but only sending a token force. But this ignores three aspects of Australia’s second deployment to the Gulf after the end of the Cold War. First, Australian troops did plenty of fighting, especially the special forces, who confirmed their reputation as some of the very best of their kind in the world.\textsuperscript{270} And the entire Allied force was far

\textsuperscript{266}Blaxland, Strategic Cousins, 200.
\textsuperscript{269}Huisken and Thatcher, History as Policy, 118. See also Nick Bisley, 'The Japan-Australia security declaration and the changing regional security setting: wheels, webs and beyond?,' Australian Journal of International Affairs, 62:1 (2008), 38–52.
\textsuperscript{270}Blaxland, Strategic Cousins, 206.
than it had been in 1991. Iraq’s army was much less capable twelve years after its bruising first encounter with America, which itself had been followed by a decade of arms-embargos and occasional allied bombing campaigns, meaning that there was simply less need for Australia to send a major contingent in 2003.

Second, Australia was strategically stretched much further in 2003 than it had been in 1991—indeed, the ADF was stretched thinner than it had been since Vietnam—given that troops were still deployed in East Timor and Afghanistan and, later in 2003, an ADF force would deploy to the stabilisation mission in the Solomon Islands (discussed below). These last liming circumstances, admittedly, had been created by the several decades of continental defence planning that had kept the ADF small and not configured for large-scale conventional campaigning. Nevertheless, the deployment of troops to Iraq while three other simultaneous 1500–3000 troop deployments (each) were also taking place therefore constitutes a significant aberrant instance of strategic behaviour, inconsistent with the continental defence logic that formally informed strategic policy.

Yet third there was nothing like the broad Coalition of 1991, meaning that in 2003 there was demonstrably less international legitimacy. This was dented further when UN authorisation to invade failed to materialize, and it evaporated completely when the UN left Iraq in 2004 after a truck-bombing. Canada and New Zealand, similar Others whom Australia had regularly fought beside in the past, also declined to join the Coalition of the Willing unlike in 1991 or, tellingly, in contemporary Afghanistan. The manner in which Howard’s government stuck so fast to America in Iraq therefore provides an excellent example of the sort of powerful cultural-affinity perceptions that motivated its strategic behaviour in this era. It has been said that Howard was viscerally committed to the Anglo-American alliance ... and he saw [it] as having a strong moral basis. He said for example that do believe that common values that bind countries together are very important ... Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom are three of a handful of countries that have been continuously democratic for the last 100 years.... [This] tells you about the reliability of such countries.

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272 Quoted in Garran, True Believer, 105.
He was justifying Australia’s close strategic affiliation with its Anglo-partners as something that was ‘natural,’ but he also conveyed the impression that the Anglo-states were mature and responsible, that they were ‘shouldering special responsibilities’ to guarantee international peace and stability given that the UN (by now Howard was very critical of this entity) could not do so. This was an ambitious attempt to ‘recast reality’ given that Australia and its allies were actually very isolated. In a social context they were actually behaving quite irresponsibly, or at least contrary to the majority of world opinion, including the stances of many of their traditionally close allies.

Unlike the mission in Afghanistan, bipartisan support for the Iraq adventure was lacking and large protests, rivalling in size if not duration the Vietnam-era demonstrations, were also held in Australian cities in 2002 and 2003.\textsuperscript{273} Still, Howard won another election in 2004, mainly on the strength of his economic credentials but partly because the Opposition Leader Mark Latham was seen as somewhat anti-American (see Chapter 8),\textsuperscript{274} demonstrating that even if a particular instance of strategic behaviour (e.g., vis-à-vis Iraq) was unpopular, general support for a continuing strong American alliance remained high.\textsuperscript{275} This enduring aspect of Australia’s dominant cultural identity explains why forward defence continues to resonate well with Australian strategic decision-makers and their electorate, especially when a new and culturally (if not conventionally) threatening strategic entity, Islamism, emerged.

So, there was a degree of dissonance between these instances of aberrant strategic behaviour and the official strategic policy of the era. Beginning with the 2003 Strategic Review (entitled \textit{A Defence Update}), Defence Minister Robert Hill’s foreword notes that ‘while the principles set out in the [2000] Defence White Paper remain sound, some rebalancing of capability and expenditure will be necessary’ given the effects of 9/11.\textsuperscript{276} Perhaps the most important single statement is the following:

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\textsuperscript{273}O’Connor, ‘Perspectives on Australian Foreign Policy – 2003,’ 211.
As a result of the reordering of power relations and increased US strategic dominance, the threat of direct attack on Australia is less than it was in 2000. Paradoxically, however, in some ways certainty and predictability have decreased ... [which] means that our emphasis must be on having the flexibility and adaptability to answer the unexpected as much as the expected.277

The review contained three main sections entitled Global Terrorism, The Threat of WMD, and A Troubled Region. The first two are specifically intended to justify Australia’s deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq (i.e. it still wasn’t clear when the review was published that the Iraqi WMD threat had been an ephemeral one) and the third section justified the operations in East Timor and Solomon Islands.

This last operation says much about the influence of the three major sub-cultures at the time. The deployment of about 2000 troops to stabilise a deteriorating situation in the Solomon Islands was in large part inspired by concerns related to the general War on Terror. It was not directly connected because, obviously, there are few Muslims, let alone jihadis, there. But Australia had turned down an urgent distress call from the troubled country’s prime minister in 2000,278 suggesting that while humanitarianism and concerns about a close neighbour’s well-being obviously played a part of the ultimate motivation to deploy the ADF in 2003, the tipping point was reached when more general fears about regional instability and the opening these may provide to terrorists were considered. One observer has said that the story can be told as part of a wider set of concerns about failed states and their role in harbouring terrorists.279

More specifically, the 2003 Strategic Review mentions terrorism first and explores this threat in depth before noting that there are other non-terrorist related security challenges like illegal fishing, people smuggling, money-laundering and drug-running, as well as more conventional threats (which are not examined in detail).280

Regarding whether the 2003 Strategic Review paper actually elevated forward defence logic above continental defence, the review is a little confusing: it is said that for the near term there is less likely to be a need for ADF operations in defence of Australia but then it is explained that only a few counter-terrorism measures will be taken

277Ibid., 9.
280Australia’s National Security, 18.
that the major (i.e. expensive) conventional-weapons acquisitions flagged in 2000 would go ahead. Ultimately, continental defence logic remained dominant although it was almost certainly now more watered down than it ever had been before.

It is therefore difficult to determine exactly what primarily motivated the Solomons operation. There were undoubtedly general background humanitarian concerns. But, arguably, it was carried out more with forward defence logic than internationalism in mind, so a concern to ensure that this unstable region would not become linked more closely to the War on Terror, although it is important to note that Australia worked assiduously to secure the support of a number of regional South Pacific states, including a large contingent from New Zealand, to supplement the main ADF and policing effort.281 The fact, however, that Australia led the effort and did not seek any major US participation other than general diplomatic support is also actually consistent with a continental defence posture, or at least an activist one – indeed, in 2002 scholars had drawn attention to the dangers in the arc of instability.282 This operation involved, in effect, Australia taking independent strategic action in its near-abroad to prevent an enemy from establishing bases, making the Solomons operation consistent with Dibb Report-like continental defence logic emphasizing the importance of dominating the arc of instability. But the matter is confused further by the fact that the sort of force projection assets the ADF would require to carry out such missions (i.e. larger infantry forces, helicopter carriers) seem to be more consistent with a forward defence posture. Finally, Robert Ayson also believes that Howard’s decision to intervene in the Solomons was partly an effort to defuse the perception that he was too focussed on global cooperation with America during this period (i.e. right as the controversy over the Iraq invasion was most intense in 2003), so perhaps it was also in part a signal to the domestic audience.283

At least one thing seems obvious: the multifaceted motivations behind the Solomons operation reveal how complex Australia’s strategic culture is in the contemporary era. Both Dibb and White have recently stated that forward and continental defence logic were by 2007 essentially equally influential, or perhaps that the former had

283 Ibid., 216, 225–6.
decades of subordination. Howard himself said that another Strategic Review, published in 2005, was ‘not a major departure from the 2000 White Paper,’ although Dibb noted that ‘defending Australia’ was listed third in this paper, after ‘significant security responsibilities in the immediate region’ and having the capacity to make meaning contributions further afield. But this review also goes to some pains to stress the way the ADF was being rebalanced rather than changed fundamentally, and that it must retain the capability to respond comprehensively to contingencies that may arise that threaten Australia directly. Still, Dibb’s opinion in 2006 was clear—the 2005 Strategic Review, he asserted, had largely abandoned his favoured geography- and existing capabilities-focused (in my words) pure continental defence logic in favour, once again, of expeditionary forces to operate in a subordinate role to allies in distant theatres.... What we have now is a hybrid force that claims to draw its rationale from the 2000 Defence White Paper. But in the last three years ... [i.e. since the Iraq invasion] force structure decisions are being made on the run without adequate explanation.... *Defence Update 2005* is a muddled confusion between strategic guidance and force structure decisions.

Dibb complained that Australia did not need the expensive new American Abrams battle tanks it was acquiring at the time, nor did it need to buy two of ‘the region’s largest amphibious assault ships’ (i.e. the two helicopter carriers) which also forced it to go ahead and build at least three and maybe four of the expensive Air Warfare Destroyers to protect them. Dibb was concerned that these massive acquisitions decisions ‘the carriers cost several billion dollars each’ appeared to confirm that Defence Minister Hill was determined to relegate the RAN ‘merely protecting the army.’ The fact that the carriers only deploy helicopters and not fixed-wing aircraft means that they will best used in roles like supporting a humanitarian or stabilisation mission, carrying out amphibious invasions or persistent raiding (i.e. deploying army units) in hostile actions in the arc of instability, or as part of an integrated US Navy task force (i.e. to utilise their strong anti-submarine capabilities). But as an asset for use in actually attacking a hostile invasion force, so in a classic continental defence-style sea-denial role, their utility is limited.

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286 Ibid., 26.
288 Ibid., 252.
from the 2005 and the 2003 reviews goes on expensive new assets for the RAN and RAAF and the army is only hardened a little (i.e. with 87 new tanks), although it was expanded from six back to eight battalions. The ADF is not therefore retreating significantly from continental defence but is being weakened to provide extra strategic options. Ross Babbage, for example, believed that Australia had by 2008 transcended the continental versus forward defence debate because it was now big- and wealthy-enough to afford a flexible ADF. By then White was agreeing with Dibb, namely, that forward defence logic seemed to be just barely dominant again, although in a confused and precarious way. But he differed from Dibb in that he felt the change was a necessary and rational response to a changing external strategic environment, most obviously the post-9/11 world and the rise of jihadist threats requiring cooperative action with traditional allies. The most interesting aspect of White’s assessment, however, is that he focuses attention later in his piece on China’s rise as a potential future strategic problem for Australia, consistent with his more developed thoughts about this aired in an article from 2005. So, White’s preferred variety of forward defence logic seems more conventional unlike the government, which was inching Australian strategic policy closer to a posture in which the ADF could contribute to US efforts in the current War on Terror, he was looking decades ahead to a time when Australia may have to commit to more conventional hostilities against China, alongside the US.

White’s work illustrates how ordinary non-theoretical, policy-oriented commentary on strategic affairs by experts who straddle the academic and strategic decision-making career paths integrate cultural matters into arguments that also draw on the more traditional rationalist-materialist tradition of IR theorising: but they tend to do so in an ad hoc and theoretically unsophisticated way. So, despite the fact that White does not cite Organski in his 2005 article we can see him constructing a very similar argument about how the most dangerous time for Australia is likely to be just around the time (if it occurs) he is not entirely dismissive of America’s potential staying power.

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289 Personal conversation with the author, Canberra, 4 June 2007.
290 White in Huiskens and Thatcher, History as Policy, 170–4.
292 White served as a Senior Advisor to both Kim Beazley and Bob Hawke, as a Deputy Secretary in the Defence Department, as the head of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, and he is currently the head of the Strategic and Defence Studies centre at the Australian National University: Biographical Statement, http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/people/personal/whith_sdsc.php.
And then he (again without citing, for example, Glenn H. Snyder) says that Australia could face the ultimate problem confronting small allies, namely, 'entanglement' in their larger ally's war.

White therefore uses cultural details to add social context to the bare bones of, in this case, power transition theory and alliance-dynamics theory. China's leaders are said to be uninterested in reform towards democracy, which makes their political system opaque, unpredictable and somewhat capricious, at least compared to an 'open and free' society like those found in Australia's 'natural allies.' And the success of China's authoritarian development approach means that there may even be new models for national success in the twenty-first century that are different from America's and which may constitute alternative 'international social roles' for states to play (and these are generally portrayed by him as threatening roles from Australia's perspective, revealing a certain amount of 'implicit assuming' on White's part consistent with democratic peace theory's main tenets). Ultimately what he suspects will drive China's strategic decision-making in the long term, with possibly quite poor consequences for Australia, are also deeply strategic cultural factors, like China's 'pride in a long history of past greatness, resentment of more recent humiliations, and surging confidence in a glorious future' all of which, although he doesn't say it specifically, give meaning to China's ever expanding material capabilities in a way that constructivists would grasp immediately. It should therefore be clear how deeply strategic-cultural assumptions imbue the sort of strategic analysis White and others engage in, despite a complete absence of discussion of such in an overt, theoretically-sophisticated manner.

Conclusion

Despite this last observation above, in the Australian strategic discourse from the last decade or so the continental and forward defence traditions are discussed very prominently. This is not something entirely new as we saw Menzies and Hasluck were using the phrase 'forward defence' regularly in the early 1960s while continental defence had been discussed for decades in its 'Defence of Australia' or 'Fortress Australia' guises. But my impression is that

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293 Ibid., 475.
294 Ibid., 472.
295 Ibid., 473.
commonly than ever before in the contemporary era as sort of general reference points for debate. Without pretending the following is a comprehensive list, in the academic literature explored so far Albinski, Ayson, Ball, Babbage, Bell, Cheeseman, Devetak, Dibb, Dobell, Edwards and Goldsworthy, Michael Evans, Gareth Evans and Grant, Goldsworthy, Grant, Farran, Fealy, Kilcullen, McDougall, Renouf, St Barclay, Thompson, Wesley, and White, all refer to the primary traditions explicitly, while about half the scholars just listed mention internationalism too. So, and in terms of the strategic-cultural model offered herein, the primary strategic sub-cultural traditions in particular orient both the contributors to the strategic debate and their audience. These traditions act just like the collective cognitive schema described in Chapter 3, providing cognitive short-cuts and packages of information which include a mix of strategic cultural detail (i.e. about who Australia's friends/foes are and who/what sort of strategic actor Australia should be) and technical matters, like how much defence spending Australia can afford relative to others, or geographical limits on the effectiveness of certain weapons systems.

So, what was the Australian strategic-cultural mix in the aftermath of 9/11? By about 2005, it was recognised widely that the relatively calm geostrategic environment of the 1990s was a thing of the past: there were new uncertainties and new strategic actors emerging in the 1990s, although a sense of urgency was lacking. After 9/11, however, one aspect of these new security challenges, global terrorism in its jihadist form, had suddenly emerged as a terrifying (for deeply cultural reasons) strategic threat which within a year had struck indirectly but devastatingly against ordinary Australians in Bali too. There was a clear sense, at least until the US started to get bogged down in Iraq, that this campaign would require close cooperation with America and other like-minded states, by which Howard also meant regional neighbours interested in stamping out the terrorist threat. In short, the independent-Australia cultural orientation at the heart of continental defence no longer seemed as relevant to the external strategic environment and forward defence urges began to manifest themselves. It is also telling that critique of the government's position also tended to favour non-isolationist responses consistent with an internationalism posture (i.e. like new Interpol procedures, strengthening and harmonising anti-terrorism laws through ASEAN etc). Finally, no commentators that I am aware of (except perhaps Howard himself superficially when he made the Howard Doctrine gaffe, from which he rapidly retreated) offered robust continental defence-like
fully-independent capability to deter and if necessary hunt down and destroy any terrorist groups threatening Australia entirely.

This last point leads to an important conclusion about continental defence during this period. Because its logic, or at least that of the pure or bare varieties like Dibb, is so sparse in a cultural sense it simply does not resonate well in an age where the fault-lines of conflict are deeply cultural. This is not to say that they weren’t in earlier eras too – racial divides were strong before the Second World War while during the Cold War political and economic aspects of culture were the main points of difference but in this new post-9/11 world religious-cultural differences between ‘us’ and the enemy are the sharpest. This is why the War on Terror features so many complex domestic-political elements too – debates about banning the burqa, the practice of polygamy, the propriety of arranged/child marriages etc. These also tie into wider debates about identity which were so prominent in this era, with the Hanson episode and the furore over illegal immigrants setting the scene for all the cultural, so including strategic cultural, controversies that would flow from Australia’s close involvement in the War on Terror.

So, a Dibb-like continental defence posture which is largely silent or openly neutral about cultural matters simply doesn’t capture the extent to which Australians are deeply concerned by such matters. Dibb continues to rail against Senator Hill’s supposedly erroneous statement that ‘Australia’s security interests are not defined by geography alone and that values matter too’ – statements which Dibb claims ‘confuse our broad security interests with our vital defence interests which, for him, should be determined very strictly by attention to non-cultural factors. To my mind, however, it is very difficult if not impossible to achieve a hermetically sealed approach by sectioning off strategic issues from cultural ones, and so I therefore stress the importance of also taking culture into account, and not just material factors like geography and relative military capabilities, when trying to understand (or practice) strategic decision-making. Dibb puts much stock on the enduring meaning of Australia’s geography, but I maintain that interpretation of it changes over time for cultural reasons. He refuses to acknowledge this, probably because his rationalist-materialist, neorealist-like worldview is ill-equipped to do so.

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I end the chapter with one final comment on the character of John Howard himself. I have shown above repeatedly how important cultural matters were to informing his views about the world and the types of relationships Australia could and/or should forge in it. It may be, however, that he is somehow more ‘culturally obsessed’ than the average policy-maker. He was, after all, the only prime minister to ever utter the phrase ‘strategic culture’ in public. But having said this about Howard I also note that other politicians of this era whose views on strategic matters differed profoundly also had their own favoured and cognitively-inescapable if still implicit and unstated (or in Mark Latham’s case, deceptively secretive – see Chapter 8) cultural orientations guiding their own arguments about what should occur and why in the strategic realm. So, Howard may simply be more honest or forthright about such things than his rivals. One thing seems certain, however – all strategic decision-makers operate with strategic-cultural assumptions about friends and foes that then give meaning to the external strategic environment they are reacting to, whether they aware of (or acknowledge) these deep-seated assumptions or not.

I have been in this and the preceding chapter examining the primary strategic sub-cultures, the ones which have been most relevant and have resonated most, albeit to different degrees and in different variants from time to time. Accordingly, the greater part of the discussion of Australia’s strategic culture has now been completed. I proceed in the next chapter to examine the less influential strategic sub-cultures, starting with the internationalist tradition that I have mentioned from time to time, before Chapter 8 ends with discussion of the more properly latent strategic sub-cultures.
Chapter 8

Other Strategic Sub-Cultures

The discussion so far has touched at times on the internationalist strategic sub-culture, and has mentioned others fleetingly. These are the subject of this chapter, so in the first half of it I examine internationalism which, while it has been influential, never been dominant\(^1\) it has been at best a ‘strong-subordinate’ tradition. In the second half I examine other sub-cultures, including ‘fleetingly influential’ sub-cultures like the anti-conscription movement and anti-American attitudes which have emerged in the strategic discourse from time to time. But these alternative strategic sub-cultures have rarely exercised enduring or direct influence on strategic decision-making, meaning that they tend to straddle the boundary between weak-subordination and latency. The discussion then briefly considers some examples of the truly-latent strategic sub-cultures that have never affected strategic decision-making at all, like that favoured during the Cold War by the Communist Party of Australia. Exploring such matters ensures the study is falsifiable, and also emphasizes how influential the primary sub-cultures really are.

Internationalism Defined

‘Internationalism’ as a ‘position’ in the field of IR has a long but potentially confusing history. In 1950 John Herz\(^1\) described a number of approaches to understanding international politics as ‘internationalist,’ including ‘idealistic’ nationalism, which he felt had ‘elements of romanticism’ and which asserted that only when nations achieve self-determination could they live peacefully with one another.\(^2\) Herz also pointed to ‘revolutionary movements’ like those behind the French and Russian Revolutions, at least to the extent that they were ‘genuinely universalist,’ as examples of internationalism.\(^3\) But when he discusses ‘the facile proposal of the world’s federalists that all is needed [to avoid future wars] is to abolish sovereignty by fiat of international law’ and the ‘internationalist-pacifist

\(^2\)Ibid., 161–163.
\(^3\)Ibid., 164–172.
ideology based on the assumption that once the "irrational" monopolistic, militaristic and nationalistic obstacles to free trade were eliminated, all nations would realise their common interest in peace. We come closer to what most contemporary scholars would recognise as an internationalist position. Herz was not, however, as scathingly dismissive of liberal internationalism as these last two quotes immediately above may suggest: he finished by endorsing a position he calls Realist Liberalism which he said was broader than the liberalism of the nineteenth century free-traders and constitutionalists [and] includes all socialism which is not totalitarianism, all conservatism which is not authoritarianism or mere defense [sic] of some status quo. So, instead of dismissing idealistic internationalism entirely he was also critical of cynical realism and he ultimately plumped for a compromise not unlike that advocated famously by E.H. Carr in *The Twenty Years Crisis*.

So, the word internationalism was still used very broadly at this early stage of the debate to describe a number of approaches to understanding international politics. And some modern American scholars have also used it in a similar sort of broad brush-stroke manner – Jeffrey Legro, for example, when explaining why America’s foreign policy orientation altered radically during and after the Second World War, defines internationalism as a belief that social well being is best served by supporting international institutions and committing national military power to maintain relationships with the major powers in Europe. Yet such wide definitions of internationalism do not really capture the manner in which it is typically used in the English-speaking world today, at least outside America. Legro’s definition, for example, contains alongside a commitment to international institutions a commitment to military alliances and the projection of American power overseas in pursuit of the national interest. In other words, when he says internationalism he means only mere activism, so just the opposite of isolationism. We should therefore turn to consider how the meaning of the word internationalism has developed in Canada.

It has been said that internationalism is Central to Canadian foreign policy. If not quite the official religion, it is certainly much revered by those who manage and debate policy. Munton has described the early post-Second World War years as a so-called golden era in which internationalism became the watchword of

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4Ibid., 172–175.
5Ibid., 178.
Canadian foreign policy, with the figures of Lester B. Person (in politics) and John Holmes (in academia) its most ardent advocates. Munton and Keating note that Holmes used the word not only as a noun but also as an adjective and an adverb... with a variety of modifiers attached: pure internationalism, active internationalism and, of course, Canadian internationalism, although he also preferred not to define it positively, suggesting that he assumed his audience knew instinctively what he meant. But Holmes was very clear about what was not internationalism. Again, Munton and Keating summarise Holmes’ position: it is most certainly not isolationism and the avoidance of commitments. Nor is it neutrality or continentalism. Nor, for that matter, is it anti-Americanism. It is compatible with nationalism, but not a morbid nationalism. For Canada, it was based not on woolly-minded idealism but rather on a hard boiled calculation of the Canadian national interest.

Munton and Keating trace the evolution of the debates about internationalism in Canada in the second half of the twentieth century, noting that despite differences in detail, and especially a greater willingness to define internationalism more specifically than Holmes ever did, a number of scholars including Michael Tucker, Dewitt and Kirton, Kim Richard Nossal and Andrew Cooper have all been arguably singing from the same Holmesian hymnal. Nossal, for example, wrote in the mid-1980s that internationalism comprised at least four strands: activism; multilateralism; support for international institutions; and commitment of resources for the betterment of the international system. Munton and Keating, for their part, prefer a single sentence definition whereby internationalism means active participation, multilateralism [and] commitment and pursuit of a common good. Having said this, Cranford Pratt argued that the 1980s saw an erosion of commitment to internationalism in the halls of power in Ottawa. Nossal claimed that this continued into the 1990s, and he chided Canadian governments from

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12 Canada as a Principal Power (Toronto: Wiley, 1983).
14 Canadian Foreign Policy: Old Habits and New Directions (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1997).
15 Munton and Keating, 'Internationalism and the Canadian Public,' 530.
16 Summarised in ibid., 529.
17 Ibid., 531.
or policies which he and his co-authors have recently said might be thought of as “internationalism lite,” pushing the rhetorical envelope of international engagement while not actually doing very much. But putting aside the substantive debates regarding the degree to which Canada’s foreign policy is truly internationalist or not, the same authors nevertheless consider that internationalism was a dominant idea in Canada during the Cold War era, and beyond. They defined internationalism in 2011 as comprising five elements:

First, it puts a premium on the notion of responsibility: Each state with an interest in avoiding war must take a constructive part in the management of the conflicts which will inevitably arise in global politics. Second, multilateralism is essential for defusing the clashes of interests that can lead to war. Third, participation in international institutions is a cardinal principle, for institutionalization promotes multilateralism and dampens the unilateralist impulse. Fourth, support for institutions must be given concrete expression by a willingness to enter into formal commitments to use national resources for the system as a whole. Finally, the stability of the global system must also be assisted by the reinforcement of, and respect for, international law.

This definition, while clearly stated, still leaves room for interpretation: committing to act responsibly and multilaterally does not mean that Canada will necessarily do so through truly globally-representative or non-aligned international institutions, as Canada’s participation in NATO’s war against Serbia in 1999, without UN approval and in the face of resistance from China and Russia demonstrated. There remains considerable scope for interpretation of, and political manoeuvre within, this and most other definitions of internationalism, allowing both sides of a debate to claim to represent a ‘true vision’ of internationalism. Some scholars, for example, denounced the prime minister in 1970, Pierre Trudeau, as a heretic for abandoning Pearsonian internationalism and Canada’s role as a helpful fixer of international disputes, with particular reference to his unwillingness to contribute substantial forces to peacekeeping missions. But others pointed out at the time that Trudeau significantly increased international development assistance aid, and decreased Canada’s close adherence to American foreign policy

20Kim Richard Nossal, Stéphane Roussel and Stéphane Paquin, International Policy and Politics in Canada (Toronto: Person, 2011), 143.
21Ibid., 135–147.
22Ibid., 136.
An Overview of Australian Internationalism: Variations on a Single Theme?

In the context of Australian foreign policy debates, the internationalist sub-culture is relatively diverse, and its meaning is perhaps even less clear-cut than it is in Canada, although it is also apparent that the Canadian discourse has affected Australian thinking about such matters (an example is explored below in the context of the ‘middle power’ debate). There are, of course, variants in the primary strategic subcultures too—forward defence with Britain and one with America, and continental defence can be either like Dibb, shorn of cultural preconceptions, or informed by deep racism, distrust and hostility, like Billy Hughes’ views of Japan in the 1930s. But the internationalist tradition is even more variable.

I noted in Chapter 7 that Martin Indyck,24 Richard Devetak25 and Derek McDougall26 all accept that realism has traditionally been the strongest influence on Australian analyses of international politics. I consider IR theories to be a level of abstraction up from strategic cultures—more like collective cognitive schemas that contain values and technical information packaged together too, but whose application is obviously more general and not just focussed on Australia alone. These meta-strategic-schemas also shape Australian perceptions of and perspectives on international politics. For example, the influence of realism on both forward and continental defence is readily apparent: the former is marked by a keen appreciation of the balance of power and how Australia can contribute to maintaining a favourable global status quo; while the latter assumes Australia is strategically isolated but not deeply insecure, meaning that it should remain vigilant but only marshal enough resources to defeat the credible threats it faces.

Liberal-theoretical themes obviously feature in the general discourse about internationalism, like the notion that Australia should contribute readily to UN-led collective defence efforts, or the idea that Australia is a ‘middle

is rather than brute power (which it lacks) to shape international outcomes. These and other themes (democracies are not inherently threatening; multilateral diplomacy should be pursued vigorously; international law should be followed; human rights must be defended) all owe an obvious debt to liberal thought. It may be a little artificial to claim these variations of the internationalist agenda all share a single common theme, but if pressed, perhaps they share a basic commitment to ‘good international citizenship’ – the idea that Australia should pursue justice in international politics, and support the international institutions and refine the international laws which provide such. This is not to say Australia should ignore its traditional interests and become an international altruist, but more that it should pursue enlightened self-interest in a manner broadly similar to how Holmes urged Canada to eschew ‘woolly-headed idealism’ when pursuing Canadian national interests.

When I use the word ‘internationalism’, then, I prefer a more specific definition than ‘mere activism’ as mentioned in Chapter 5. David M. Jones and Andrea Benvenuti consider the Australian nation to have always had an ‘extrovert personality’, meaning that isolationism was never considered as a serious strategic option (as I demonstrate below). So while an internationalist position is certainly activist, confining the definition to this aspect of international behaviour alone does not sufficiently distinguish it from the primary sub-cultures. I also do not use internationalism to describe Australia’s close alliances with its great and powerful friends: to be sure, most internationalists have not rejected such alliances outright, but instead they have favoured working with such allies when the latter were also prepared to ‘work through’ international institutions, and when the traditional allies were not so inclined, the internationalist position would generally hold that Australia should be prepared to sometimes part ways with these close allies, as amicably as possible of course, in pursuit of more consensual, multilateral, or legalistic remedies to international problems. I also disagree with Wesley and Warren’s claim that Australian internationalism bears little resemblance to the internationalism of Kant or Woodrow Wilson, viz, that the growth of international society among liberal democracy will bring peace and prosperity. More economic than idealist, Australian internationalism is not so much Kantian as Ricardian. I explain in more detail below why

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I demur from this definition so, ultimately, I favour one similar to that proposed by Munton and Keating whereby internationalism means a preference for active multilateralism, working with and through international institutions by committing resources to securing (where realistically possible) the international common good. This definition is also generally consistent with the five-part definition proposed by Nossal, Roussel and Paquin.

Turning now to more properly strategic-cultural discussion, and regarding the degree to which the internationalism sub-culture resonates, those who think Australia should pursue justice, fair dealings, humanitarianism, international development outcomes and other related matters, and should do so multilaterally and without resorting to brute force to achieve the nation’s goals in international politics, will be drawn towards this strategic sub-culture. It is important to note, however, that this tradition is the prime example in Australian strategic culture of a sub-culture with a fairly complex, abstract cultural orientation at its core. It argues Australia’s international role, including aspects (i.e. because it has never been dominant) of its strategic role, should be “like” an abstract ideal, the image of a trustworthy collective-citizen not unlike the citizen-ideal underpinning Australia’s domestic society. This idea is Australia’s Self, while there are plenty of Others too, implicit in this cultural orientation, including historical Others that Australia should not be like again (such as White Australia Policy-era Australia) and also other international systems (i.e. the unstable early twentieth century; the tense Cold War era etc) that should be avoided or mitigated.

With respect to the relevance of the internationalist sub-culture, the internationalist agenda’s liberal heritage causes it to be quite aspirational in tone, and somewhat less overtly analytical than the other primary traditions tend to be. This is not to say that the primary sub-cultures do not aspire to anything they do, most obviously Australia’s security and prosperity, and continental defence in particular includes an important independent streak. But the aspirational tone is strongest in internationalism. This is surely because there is a fundamental tension, explored at length in IR theory debates since E.H. Carr,29 of the notion that states should act like democratic citizens observing laws; participating in their making; shouldering collective responsibilities and the actuality of an anarchical international system populated by sovereign states, some of which have potent military capabilities. Again, this is

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not to say that Australian proponents of internationalism are or were all ‘idealists’, because many have presented solid, rational arguments for pursuing Australia’s national interests objectively. Indeed, sometimes their analyses seem less clouded by hostile-emotive or positive-sentimental attitudes towards Others, whether foes like Asians or communists, or friends like Britain or America. Nevertheless, the international system remains characterised more by the absence of central authority than its presence, meaning that internationalism has always been, and remains, a ‘project’ in the broadest sense, which may in part explain why it has tended to be more influential, and occasionally dominant, in the more permissive or forgiving foreign- rather than the strategic-policy realm.

Finally, it is important to reiterate again that internationalism has never been a dominant strategic sub-culture. The cultural orientation at its core is more complex than the relatively simple binary ‘us-them’ or similar-to/different-from perceptions underpinning forward defence logic. The self-reliant nature of a continental defence posture is also relatively simple compared to the leap of faith required to pursue Australia’s interests wholly or even primarily through the complexities of international law or remote international institutions. Sticking to one’s ‘cultural mates’ or ‘going it alone’, as the average Australian may put it, are surely more instinctive responses than that implicit in the technically detailed and conceptually diverse internationalist tradition. Nevertheless, and despite the more complex cultural orientation at its core, internationalism climbed out of near-latency or weak-subordination into a more influential position in Australian strategic culture beginning in the 1970s, peaking in the 1990s, and receding a little, perhaps, but certainly not disappearing after 2001. As I have done in earlier chapters, I mainly focus on issues of resonance in the following analysis, which begins with the influence of internationalism before the 1970s, although I also note at times how changes in the external strategic environment (most notably the lessening of Cold War tensions from the late 1980s onwards) also boosted the relevance of internationalism.

**Internationalism Before 1970**

Before the First World War Australia did enmesh itself in ‘international’ agreements—but these were limited mainly to *Imperial* treaties. Although Australia was sometimes consulted about treaties signed on its behalf by the Imperial government in London, such as that between Britain and Germany regarding the South Pacific islands in 1886, others like the Anglo-Japanese treaty of 1902 were signed by Great Britain despite Australian misgivings. Even after
part of collective security organisation in the form of a formal Pacific Pact, it was obvious that his intent was to keep a culturally-different Other (Japan) in check while a culturally-similar Other (America) would be more deeply engaged in Australia’s region. In any event, an isolationist-inclined America brushed him off.

After the First World War, spurred by the establishment of the League of Nations, there was a brief flowering of interest in internationalism in Australia and, indeed, while its influence always remained strongly-subordinate to forward defence logic, this interest continued throughout the inter-war years. In 1928 Fredrick Alexander, a history professor at the University of Western Australia, published *From Paris to Locarno and After* which considered the effectiveness of the League. His final opinion was less than sanguine about the prospects of the League restraining great power rivalry into the future, but he nevertheless concluded that the world was a very much better place to-day because of the League and he had suggestions about how it could be improved and which aspects of its work Australia should support. E.L. Piesse’s views were also broadly internationalist, especially his calls for greater engagement with Asia, although he favoured bilateral links based on *deal*(i.e. trade-related) interests rather than multilateral schemes. W. MacMahon Ball’s *Possible Peace* argued that the deepening sense of fear, insecurity and distrust of the inter-war period may still be alleviated by honest and fair dealings at a new international peace conference, while Ian Clunies Ross and Jack Shepherd both advised Australia to loosen its ties to the Empire and look to its interests in Asia more assiduously. It is telling, however, that all these were scholarly studies. Internationalism was not, before the Second World War, a tradition which influenced the practice of or planning for actual foreign policy much, let alone the strategic aspects of such, amongst the actual decision-makers in Canberra.

After the war, however, Ball led a goodwill trip to Asia in 1948 which, despite a series of controversies spurred by the Labor government’s determination to retain the White Australia Policy, was generally judged a success, and his subsequent report to parliament strongly influenced ALP policy for decades. In the words of a

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30 Letter, Deakin to Lord Crewe (British Colonial Secretary), 2 September 2909, *National Archives of Australia* (NAA), PRO, FO 800/91.
that Australian policy should be to support the emerging nations of Asia with economic and technical aid. In sum, the revolutions in Asia were seen by the government’s leading policy makers as fundamentally national rebellions against colonial rule and poor living standards with only minority involvement from communist parties, which, in any case, were not controlled from Moscow.35

The most obvious and immediate manifestation of this attitude was in Labor’s approach to Indonesia’s attempts to achieve independence, which it generally supported, obviously to the chagrin of the Dutch and also at times of the Americans and the British too. Indeed, this stance contributed significantly to the falling out between Evatt and the Truman administration (see Chapter 6).36 The policy was implemented largely by John W. Burton, a close personal friend of Chifley and one of the foremost members of that new generation of tertiary-educated officials who came into the federal bureaucracy during the Labor government in the 1940s.37 After serving as private secretary to H.V. Evatt, the foreign minister, he was appointed to head the Department of External Affairs as secretary from 1947 until 1950, when Percy Spender, the minister for external affairs in the Menzies government that had returned to power in 1949, appointed him as high commissioner to Ceylon in what became a minor public scandal.38 However, Burton resigned to contest the 1951 election for the ALP (he lost the electorate of Lowe in NSW to William McMahon). In 1954 he wrote *The Alternative*,39 which argued for the end of Australia’s close strategic relationship with America and he was subsequently appointed to academic positions at Australian National University (ANU), University of London, and a number of American universities. After his retirement and return to Australia in the 1990s, some of Burton’s writings took on a dejected and distinctly critical tone, reflecting a sort of lost hope in Australia’s (and Labor’s) commitment to promoting international justice.40 Thus even when the

36Goldsworthy, Facing North, Vol. 1, ch. 4.
37Ibid., 120.
38It was widely assumed that Burton had been ‘pushed upstairs and out’ by Spender; ibid., 180.
40After calling America ‘imperialist’ and asserting that Australia has meekly acquiesced in American machinations since 1945, Burton laments in a chapter entitled ‘The Failure of the Labour Tradition’ that the ALP ‘no longer represents the remaining alienated peoples it initially [i.e. in the late-1940s] sought to incorporate into the political and economic system.’ In David Lee and Christopher Waters, From Evatt to Evans: The Labor Tradition in Australian Foreign Policy (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1997), 31.
when Gareth Evans was minister of foreign affairs from 1988 to 1996 (discussed below) Burton was not satisfied and wanted Labor to go much further, especially by repudiating ANZUS to give Australia greater freedom of action.

With regard to the Chifley government itself, the years from 1945 until 1949 were characterised by strong declaratory commitment to internationalism, especially by Evatt. His greatest achievements at the San Francisco Conference were consistent with internationalist logic: despite failing to water down the veto power wielded by the permanent members of the Security Council he successfully ensured that the UN General Assembly (UNGA) would be more powerful than had initially been envisaged. As he put it, he hoped that the use of multilateral organisations, the concept of collective security, and the use of the provisions of the United Nations Charter to resolve international conflict would succeed.41

Having said this, it is important to note that Evatt was not just motivated by high-minded commitment to internationalism on principle; everything he did was primarily designed to secure Australia’s interests, and he simply believed that restraining the great powers would give Australia more latitude to chart its own course in the world. Still, despite these early successes (Australia won enormous goodwill from everyone except the Americans and British, and was elected to the inaugural Security Council) later in the 1940s Evatt suffered setbacks to his internationalist agenda: his proposal for a more specific Pacific-focused collective security pact, under UN auspices but focused on America,42 stalled when Washington dismissively rejected it; he dragged out negotiations over US development of a base at Manus Island, to the point where the frustrated Americans scrapped the idea;43 and he failed to secure the sort of tough peace treaty with Japan that he, and the Australian people, wanted. And the US soon defused both the first and last of these problems by offering the ANZUS alliance as a sort of quid pro quo to Menzies in 1951 in return for Australia’s acquiescence to the ‘soft’ treaty that was eventually signed with Japan, delivering Evatt’s political opponents an important ‘win’ in the strategic policy realm.

I will say no more about this brief, abortive flowering of internationalism under Chifley, and instead I simply cite several general sources and parliamentary speeches in which Labor’s internationalist principles are stated

41Christopher Waters, ‘Creating a Tradition: The Foreign Policy of the Curtin and Chifley Governments,’ ibid., 50–54.
43Neville Meaney, Australia and the World: A Documentary History from the 1870s to the 1970s (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1985), 520.
g that forward defence logic actually remained dominant in the strategic policy realm during Chifley’s tenure (see Chapter 6). Second, events conspired against Australia’s post-war flirtation with an internationalist foreign policy stance after 1950. Even before then Menzies and Spender had welcomed the UN only cautiously, and by 1950 the Cold War had become the outstanding feature of international politics, especially from the Australian perspective given that Asia was such a prominent theatre of superpower rivalry. In such circumstances internationalism lost relevance rapidly, epitomised most starkly by the superpower-stalemate in the Security Council that ensued after the Soviet miscalculation at the beginning of the Korean War. And it also failed to resonate with Australians, who had been plunged back into a binary-conflict relationship seemingly not dissimilar in global scope to, if less openly violent than, the Second World War. Perhaps if Labor had stayed in power after 1949 it would have tried to continue practising internationalism. But the fact that the party split so badly in 1955 when the DLP hived off (see Chapter 6) suggests that Cold War pressures were severe, and it is difficult to see how an Australia under Labor governments in the 1950s could have avoided a fairly close re-alignment with its traditional allies as it became clearer how ineffectual the UN was when deadlocked by the superpowers.

For the next two decades internationalism remained a minor influence on Australian strategic decision-making. In 1955 the ALP, recently shorn of its anti-Communist wing (i.e. the DLP), released a statement about foreign affairs which, although points three, four and five were internationalist in tone, also noted as its first point that Australia must remain a member of the Commonwealth, while its second called for continuing cooperation with America in the Pacific. Despite this, Labor continued its rhetorical support of internationalist principles: in 1956 Evatt lauded the UN’s role in averting the Suez crisis (see Chapter 7); and Calwell, when criticising Menzies after the latter’s embarrassing retreat over the Dutch New Guinea issue in 1962, declared that there be no doubt where the

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Finally, when Calwell criticised the government’s policies in Vietnam he often called for UN-mediated negotiations. But, having said this, opposition leaders enjoy a rhetorical leeway which narrows substantially if they become prime minister, and of course Calwell never attained this office and had no direct effect on strategic decision-making.

**Internationalism in the 1970s**

After about 1970 internationalism again began to regain influence over Australian strategic decision-making and part of the reason was that the Western Cultural Revolution (see Chapter 7) had wrought changes in Australian society, making the public somewhat more receptive to internationalism in a similar manner to the way that continental defence began to resonate more during this period. Indeed, both traditions share a general cultural orientation that favours greater *independence*, although obviously internationalism provides a more detailed and complex explanation of how Australia should deal with the world around it as opposed to the more (mildly) isolationist-inclined, and so inherently simpler, continental defence tradition. And it must be noted too that the less-tense global strategic situation in the 1970s also arguably raised internationalism’s relevance a little, if only in the sense that the external strategic environment was more permissive, allowing a little more latitude in policy-choice, broadly speaking. I focus herein on just three aspects of foreign and strategic policy during the 1970s as evidence of the growing influence of internationalism on Australian strategic culture after 1970: Whitlam’s foreign policy reform agenda; Fraser’s human rights policies; and the growth in Australia’s institutional links to the outside world.

Whitlam believed he had a mandate for changing Australian foreign policy quite radically, and when first addressing parliament about foreign affairs in May 1973 he declared, in a clear break from the previous conservative governments’ style, that *an approach to foreign policy ... which is solely an extension of defence policy ... will in the long run distort both.*

He soon recognized China and North Vietnam and also established better bilateral ties with a number of Soviet-bloc states. He also allowed several of his ministers to *crack down* on some of the

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The Murphy raid\textsuperscript{50} on the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO) occurring during a diplomatic-spying crisis, and after Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) agents in Chile were suspected of assisting the CIA-backed coup in that country in 1973, the Australian government issued pointed public statements explaining that from now on the government’s more shadowy arms would operate more in accordance with international law.\textsuperscript{51} Finally, Australia increased its involvement with UN-affiliated bodies, especially the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the peacekeeping organisations,\textsuperscript{52} and Whitlam announced changes in many voting stances: Australia would now consistently vote against apartheid South Africa; and it would support the calls in the UNGA from the Third World for a New International Economic Order.\textsuperscript{53} Still, while Whitlam did intend to reshape Australian foreign policy along internationalist lines, and it is conceded that he said a lot about it, it is not clear exactly how much actually changed in his three short and turbulent years in office. In particular, he did not alter strategic policy much and instead just confirmed that a shift towards continental defence was required before letting actual policy continue to meander in this direction (see Chapter 7). Coral Bell notes that without undue cynicism, one might say that the changes in rhetoric and attitude and image were a good deal larger than those in substance.\textsuperscript{54}

So, internationalism was certainly an influence, but not a particularly strong one yet, on Australian strategic decision-making in the mid-1970s. Fraser charted a slightly different course by returning the focus to the Cold War global balance in a manner not unlike the conservative governments prior to Whitlam, but his more progressive (at least vis-à-vis his conservative forebears) thinking on racial issues, and his inclinations towards realist-power-balancing logic, led him to promote human rights where it coincided with [his] perceptions of Australia’s geopolitical and strategic interests.\textsuperscript{55} Most of this played out in forums or discussions that were not specifically strategic-focused (such as the Commonwealth and the UNGA), especially regarding South Africa and Rhodesia, but at this time a debate also broke out within DFAT concerning whether human rights were universal or relative.

\textsuperscript{50}So named because it was authorised by Whitlam’s Attorney-General, Lionel Murphy.
\textsuperscript{51}Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988), 130–134.
\textsuperscript{52}Whitlam, CPD, HR, 1974 Session, Vol. LXXXIX, 4654–8, 5 December 1974.
\textsuperscript{53}Coral Bell, Dependent Ally, 173.
\textsuperscript{54}Ibid., 122.
felt that human rights were relative to a large extent and gave a very early, rough statement of what would later become the Asian-values position. A departmental circular argued that much of the West’s talk of human rights masked attempts to continue its traditional dominance of non-Western societies, and he argued further that there were plenty of examples of ‘inherently Asian’ philosophies and traditions concerning humanitarian issues.  

But the universalist position won the day with Fraser, and he would promote liberal rights as normally understood, subject of course to the realistic appreciation of the prospects of such efforts succeeding and the benefit to Australia in doing so.

Tellingly, Australia under Fraser always stressed that pragmatic economic development should be favoured over the pursuit of full political and human rights, or at least that it should come first to create the conditions for the latter as a society ‘matured,’ and while Fraser rhetorically supported the continuing calls for a New International Economic Order he did little of substance to reform Australia’s economy by, for example, opening it further to trade with the Third World. So, Fraser’s human rights agenda was clearly subordinate to the two primary traditions when it came to strategic policy and generally so on foreign policy issues more generally. For example, Australia participated in no humanitarian interventions other than maintaining the higher (but still not particularly high) level of involvement in UN peacekeeping missions that Whitlam had initiated. And despite the confusion about how the ADF should evolve away from forward defence (see Chapter 7) the changes that were made to its force structure were certainly not mainly motivated by internationalist logic, if at all. This compromise, in which internationalism came at best a distant third to the two primary strategic sub-cultures probably reflected the times in which, on the one hand, many Australians were more interested after the Vietnam War-era protests in human rights issues, and Fraser was aware of this.  

But on the other hand racial attitudes in some sections of society had not changed enough, and the Cold War had still not cooled down sufficiently, for a majority to demand that Australia pursue foreign, and especially strategic, policies primarily predicated on internationalist logic.  

The final aspect of the influence of internationalism during the 1970s concerns the quite spectacular growth of Australia’s institutional connections to the rest of the world. Whitlam had increased funding to and the size of the

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56 ‘Limited circular memorandum 27, UN Political Section to various posts,’ 15 May 1978, NAA, A1838, CS: 929/31/2, PART 2.
58 Ibid., 86.
and accelerated the expansion of the Department of Foreign Affairs, which had gone from under 1000 employees in 1962 to a little under 3000 by 1972 and it almost reached 5000 in 1975. Fraser stopped this growth by cutting the department’s budget marginally, but he did not roll it back much and the department began slowly expanding again after 1977. This reflected the influence of a number of factors. First, there was a growing focus on expanding bilateral trade links with Asia especially, leading to the growth of many of Australia’s overseas missions (and the establishment of new ones) in Asian capitals. Second, there was generally more Australia involvement in multilateral forums, and not just global ones like the UN or semi-global ones like the Commonwealth, but also the pursuit along with Japan of multilateral trade initiatives in Asia through the Organisation for Pacific Trade and Cooperation which the two states established in 1978 and which later morphed the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC).

Apart from these trends there were also a number of new internationally-focused semi-independent bodies created, like Office of National Assessments (ONA), and the Defence Signals Directorate (DSD), first established secretly in 1947, was ‘outed’ by Fraser in 1977, although of course its work remained classified (and it grew significantly). Then in the late 1970s the Tange Reforms, named after the influential senior civil servant Sir Arthur Tange who directed them, abolished the Service Ministries (i.e. for the Army, RAN and RAAF) and they were amalgamated into an enormously expanded Defence Department after 1975. As an aside, this was also when the term ‘ADF’ became an official designation for Australia’s armed forces. The growth of Australia’s internationally-focused institutions during this period, by itself, does not constitute definitive evidence of the greater influence of internationalism — a larger foreign service can also be used to pursue traditional interests bilaterally but the two were not completely unrelated.

\[61\] Gyngell and Wesley, *Making Australian Foreign Policy*, 69.
Internationalism was most influential during the years of ALP ascendancy from 1983 until 1996, especially as Cold War tensions receded. Internationalism bloomed in the 1990s and strongly influenced the making of Australian foreign policy, although it was less influential in the realm of strategic policy. This was so mainly because Hawke was wary of repeating Whitlam’s mistakes, and Hawke had also been more generally pro-American than most of the other influential Labor figures in the early 1980s. Having said this, he was not determined to avoid internationalism — he merely wanted to act with circumspection.

Accordingly, Hawke eschewed the appeals for sweeping international economic reform that Whitlam had started and Fraser had continued, but which now grated on an America led by Ronald Reagan and mired in economic problems, and Australia also adhered closely to America during the 1984 ANZUS crisis (see Chapter 7). But Hawke also promoted regional engagement, both by increasing links to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including establishing a permanent observer mission at its headquarters, and by also building bilateral links throughout the region. Australia also signed the Rarotonga Treaty establishing the Pacific Islands region as ‘nuclear free’ (although US warships still docking in Australian ports were excluded), and also signed a number of other treaties regulating things like fisheries, tourism and air-travel, typically with Australia and New Zealand taking on ‘extra burdens’ and promising greater development aid to the small island states. Finally, in this period Australia also hotly disputed French nuclear testing at Mururoa Atoll, bilaterally as well as in international institutions like the UNGA, the International Court of Justice and the IAEA in circumstances in which polls showed over 90 per cent of Australians supported the government’s position.

Near the end of the 1980s Hawke’s government began to move more confidently towards an internationalist position in foreign policy generally. The reasons are complex and, by the mid-1990s, its internationalist agenda had morphed into efforts to integrate Australia more closely with Asia: this of course was the ALP project which spawned the Hanson-era backlash (see Chapter 7). The easing of Cold War tensions in the late 1980s explains much of this trend, if only in the sense that Australia was both inspired by and involved in (although as a minor player) the

62 Bell, Dependent Ally, 173.
63 Ibid., 184.
various arms-limitation and 'confidence-building' treaties being signed with the USSR. Certainly Gareth Evans saw the end of the Cold War as an opportunity to change the world for the good, and some of his rhetoric suggests he was quite taken with Francis Fukuyama’s thesis about the end of history and the triumph of liberal-democracy.\(^{65}\) Evans felt the changes opened space for new efforts to protect human rights, and he claimed in 1990 that the current atmosphere of ... rapprochement has created a prospect for progress in areas previously blocked through ideological confrontation.\(^{66}\) His biographer says about the effect of his legal background

Like Whitlam ... he regarded the law as an instrument of progressive social change ... [and] he approached it as a reforming politician-lawyer, not as a man destined for life at the bar.... [H]e was drawn to those places where the law intersects most clearly with the political process; the use of the law to serve political ends; the legal constraints under which governments operate; the way the law can help or hinder social change.\(^{67}\)

Evans was the outstanding foreign policy figure of the years between 1988 and 1996. As a staunch believer in the value of multilateral diplomacy he was instrumental in urging Hawke to prominently start, in a speech the latter gave in Seoul in 1989,\(^{68}\) the process that led to the creation of APEC. Evans also argued in different forums (both foreign and domestic, official and scholarly) that the principles of justice, equality, opportunity for talent and respect for achievement over status and power must be strengthened across the region because, as he put it, internal stability fostered by liberal-democratic principles created better conditions for regional and global peace. He expressed these views in much more detail than any previous foreign minister had done, sometimes with direct reference to IR scholars working in the democratic peace theory tradition like Michael Doyle and Bruce Russett.\(^{69}\) To return briefly to a matter discussed earlier, these and other statements\(^{70}\) underpin my assessment that Wesley’s and Warren’s claim (see above) that Australian internationalism has tended to be relatively uninterested in promoting democracy, and instead it is largely economic-focused, is inaccurate and a poor definition of the Australian internationalist position.

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\(^{66}\) Ministerial submission, Evans to Cabinet, 15 November 1990, NAA, A9737, CS: 92/010180, PART 4.  
\(^{67}\) Keith Scott, *Gareth Evans* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1999), 80.  
\(^{70}\) Evans also said ‘for a country like Australia, human rights policy involves an extension into our foreign relations of the basic values of the Australian Community: values at the core of our sense of self, which a democratic community expects its government to pursue’; Gareth Evans and Bruce Grant, *Australia’s Foreign Relations in the World of the 1990s* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1991), 154.
Evan's tireless efforts to create a stable, democratic Cambodia only reinforce my opinions regarding this matter. Perhaps the single most successful episode of Evans’ career was his stewardship of the Cambodian peace process. Indeed, he later set such a triumphalist tone that it required cartoonists to bring him back to earth: one cartoon played on the cultural theme that Australia, under Evans, typically practised ‘dog-horn diplomacy’ in the region, offending Asian sensibilities, while their own cultural foibles prevented the Asians from confronting him, meaning that they ended up ingenuously flattering but largely ignoring him. Yet whatever one thinks about the manner in which he pursued his goals, it is indisputable that his vision was bold and his achievements impressive. The centrepiece of his new proposal, articulated first in late 1989, was that the UN should step into Cambodia for several years to implement both the ceasefire agreed in Paris a few months earlier and to oversee the holding of new elections and the creation of the machinery of government. Evans recognised that the UN had never tried anything like this scale of nation-building effort before, but he felt the times both permitted and demanded it. Australia, through the frantic ‘shuttle diplomacy’ of Evans’ secretary, Michael Costello, eventually built enough consensus on the mission for it go ahead largely as envisaged by Evans. About 1500 ADF and police were deployed in a total force of about 15,000 commanded, not coincidentally, by Australian Lt. General John Sanderson. This multinational force disarmed the various belligerent factions and protected UN officials and civilian contingents, like that from Australia (numbering 2000, the single-largest). Eventually, and despite problems in 1991 before the return from exile of Prince Sihanouk, the UN mission in Cambodia succeeded perhaps better than even Evans had hoped. It is also interesting to note that DFAT’s ‘Red Book,’ a compilation of reports and statistics about Cambodia, became the basis for many decisions made by the UN’s transitional authority.

The Cambodian mission leads nicely to discussion of the aspect of internationalism, or perhaps one of its sub-sub-cultures, whereby it is argued that Australia should act like a ‘middle power.’ The concept had been mentioned prior to the late 1980s, especially by Evatt in the 1940s, and Barwick used it to describe Australia’s role

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71 One cartoon shows Evans at the UNGA microphone, saying ‘Speaking with all due modesty, I suppose I'd have to agree that yes, I was the one who was instrumental in getting all the parties to the discussion table’ while in the background one Asian diplomat whispers to another ‘It was the only way we could get him to SHUT UP!’ See Scott, Gareth Evans, 215.
74 Scott, Gareth Evans, 219.
75 Ibid., 200–1.
ixed in geographic (i.e. Australia is in Asia and cultural (i.e. it is also of Europe) arguments to explain how Australia can act like a bridge. By 1971 internal circulars in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) were casually referring to Australia’s new role as a middle power in trying to bring strategic stability to a region in which the US presence had diminished, while Fraser used it occasionally in a semi-realist sense of Australia being too weak to effect most international outcomes on its own but being large enough to have a crucial swing vote, albeit only on issues that did not involve either superpowers’ vital interests, so usually not strictly strategic issues (such as his efforts in the anti-apartheid campaign). But, as Carl Ungerer notes, Evans trumpeted the middle power concept most vociferously and stressed that Australia was pursuing its interests, but in both a more practical and more enlightened sense that revolved around knowing when it had, in Evans’ own words, enough clout to punch above its weight.

From a strategic-cultural perspective, Evans wanted Australia to be an active good international citizen: this would be its international role; it would draw inspiration from this idealised Self. He sets out his thoughts most clearly in *Australia’s Foreign Relations in the World of the 1990s*. The most succinct statement of what he (and his co-author, Bruce Grant) considered Australia’s role to be is as follows:

The characteristic method of middle power diplomacy is Coalition building with like-minded countries. It is also usually involves niche diplomacy [or] concentrating resources in specific areas best able to generate returns worth having, rather than trying to cover the field. By definition middle powers are not powerful enough in most circumstances to impose their will, but they may be persuasive enough to have like-minded others see their point of view, and to act accordingly.

The publication of this book in 1991 proves Evans’ strong scholarly bent, and indeed his biographer lists over two pages worth of academic contributions over Evans’ career, including a 200-plus page book (*Cooperating for Peace*) written while he was a minister. Indeed, the Australia-as-middle power sub-sub-culture is the most

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77 Minute, EJ Bunting (PM&C Secretary) to Cabinet, NAA, AS882/2, CS: CO1191, 7 June 1971.
78 Bell, *Dependent Ally*, 146.
80 *Cooperating for Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond* (Sydney, Allan & Unwin, 1993).
developed and coherent of the various strains of the internationalism tradition, not least because it has been a staple topic of the Australian (and other, especially Canadian and British) academic community. For example, Evans’ thoughts in these directions sparked a lively debate in Australian IR circles. Richard A. Higgott, who was teaching at ANU at the time, collaborated with the Canadian academics Andrew Cooper and Kim Richard Nossal to author *Relocating Middle Powers* which became an influential book focussing on similarities between Australia’s and Canada’s international roles. This prompted others like Briton Andrew Linklater to chime in with a more general exploration of what the role of ‘good international citizen’ really meant. And Australian scholars participated in these debates too, of course, with figures like John Ravenhill (Higgott’s colleague at ANU) also drawing parallels, and noting some differences, between the Australian and Canadian approaches to middle power status.

Still, and despite Evans’ preferences for a more internationalist approach, he was unable to secure in the face of resistance from Defence (headed by a powerful minister in his own right, Kim Beazley) substantial changes in the ADF to enable Australia to take a more activist strategic-internationalist role (see Chapter 7). And, of course, the other side of being a middle power is knowing when to ‘back off,’ and Evans obviously appreciated that it was not worth expending ‘internationalist capital’ on opposing Indonesia’s brutal occupation of East Timor. For these reasons I continue to maintain that despite the internationalist tone of Australian declaratory rhetoric, and without ignoring the effort in Cambodia, internationalism still was nowhere near dominant as an influence on Australian strategic decision-making.

Evans was also a vocal participant in the debates about Australia’s wider identity which I labelled, in Chapter 7, a sort of ‘elite/ALP-led project’ and which was the main cause of the Hanson-led backlash in the late-1990s. Again, these complex debates were focussed as much on domestic issues ‘left over’ from the 1970s, like the nation’s still-troubled relationship with its Aboriginal peoples and what multiculturalism meant in practice, as they did on foreign policy. But they did involve discussion of Australia’s ‘evolving’ relations with the world, especially the region, and Evans repeatedly argued that ‘our future lies, inevitably, in the Asia Pacific region. This is where we

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Paul Keating, as both Treasurer in the 1980s and as prime minister from 1991 to 1996, also supported stronger links with Asia, and in particular drove (despite not holding the education portfolio) a major education reform after 1988 to teach Asian languages in schools and encourage the study of Asian cultures.\(^8\)

From a strategic-cultural perspective these debates can be divided into two general elements. The first concerned mainly domestic-harmony and revolved around the effect of immigration on Australian culture, especially regarding the implications of the historically-high levels of Asian immigration. Note, however, that just under 40 per cent of immigrants were Asians in 1995, while almost as many arrived that year from Britain, Ireland and New Zealand,\(^9\) meaning that most of the \(\text{\textit{Asianisation}}\) that was perceived to be occurring was driven by predominantly white, elite Australians rather than by massive and rapid changes in demographic profile. Changes in Australia\(\text{\textit{\&}}\) identity were therefore more of an \(\text{\textit{imposed project}}\) than a grassroots phenomenon, which only fuelled the resentment of Hanson\(\text{\textit{\&}}\) white, lower-middle class supporters concerned about \(\text{\textit{societal security}}\) or protecting their culture. In other words, there was an element of racism, or at least unease about the reality of \textit{ethnic} difference manifested at a \(\text{\textit{deep-emotive}}\) or instinctual level, meaning mere cultural difference was interpreted by many Australians, and not just those who voted for Hanson and One Nation, as vaguely but inherently threatening to the \(\text{\textit{Australian way of life}}.\)

The second aspect of these broad debates was more \textit{technical} but still very cultural because it concerned Australia\(\text{\textit{\&}}\) institutional and political future. Mary Quilty says that the \textit{pro} side of the debate could be roughly broken into two streams of thought. On one side were the \textit{maximalists}, like the former ambassador to China, Stephen Fitzgerald. In \textit{Is Australia an Asian Country?} Fitzgerald essentially concluded that Australia \textit{was} becoming more Asian, at least in the sense that elites were regularly interacting with Asia and were driving (rightly in his opinion, because it would make Australia more prosperous and safer) a subtle but strong \(\text{\textit{Asianisation of society}}\) that would enable even closer future links.\(^8\) Others like Greg Sheridan, an influential journalist at \textit{The Australian},

\(^{85}\)Evans and Grant, \textit{Australia\'s Foreign Relations}, 348.


evolution is sweeping across Australia. The nation is changing fundamentally and irreversibly. I speak of the Asianisation of Australia. The academic Alison Broinowski did not agree that this was happening as fast and as comprehensively as Sheridan had suggested, and the Hanson episode would prove her right, but she did feel that this process should be speeded up to ensure Australia gets over its sense of estrangement from Asia, concluding that everything ... should be linked with the Asian region.

There was, however, a surprising lack of detail even from the most ardent proponents of Asianisation about what specifically would have to change institutionally, other than those amorphous things called general attitudes. But in any event the maximalists were outnumbered by the minimalists, like Evans, who subtly argued that with the end of the Cold War democracy and liberal rights were advancing in Asia, along with steady economic growth, which enabled nascent civil societies to emerge, meaning Asia was actually becoming more like Australia. He argued, therefore, that it was in Australia's interests that these processes continue, and that it should both offer assistance and adjust its own policies to reflect the changing reality. He did concede that Australians would have to change in some ways, but he also argued consistently that this would not involve any sacrifice or subordination of our own distinctively Australian national characteristics... [Nor would it] thwart our national values and culture, or deny our history to be a generally successful one. Keating echoed these sentiments and explained that his poor relationship with Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad was related to his strong objection to the latter's favoured Asian values thesis, which Keating dismissed as a speciously self-interested excuse for authoritarian paternalism. Indeed once, when questioned specifically if the Asianisation of Australia meant becoming more like Malaysia the fiery Keating responded with an emphatic and culturally-typical no bloody way followed by some sharp comments about Malaysia's political failings which sparked another minor diplomatic flurry.

From a strategic-cultural point of view these debates show how Australia determined its in- and out-groups

91Evans and Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations, 351.
92For an example, see: speech, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, ‘Agenda for a New Asia’, to ASEAN Society, Hong Kong Center Fall Gala Dinner October 28, 2000, Hong Kong. http://www.aseansec.org/2805.html.
93F. A. Mediansky, Australian Foreign Policy: Into the New Millennium (South Melbourne: Macmillan Education, 1997), 252.
ments that were made to Australia’s foreign policy in this period did not concern strategic policy much because, as explained in Chapter 7, the 1993 Strategic Review and the 1994 White Paper both remained dominated by continental defence logic. There was, at best, a hesitant and explicitly aspirational, minor shift towards internationalism in strategic policy. So, to conclude this section, while internationalism was no longer a distant third influence on strategic-decision-making, as it had been in the 1970s, it still could not be considered a primary tradition despite the best efforts of its always energetic and occasionally eccentric advocate-in-chief Gareth Evans. I move now to discussion of the fortunes of internationalism under John Howard with particular attention to the East Timor operation.

**John Howard and Internationalism: 1996-2007**

To recap John Howard’s approach to foreign policy, he was open regarding his assumptions about what cultural similarity and difference tended to mean for relations between states: he had a strong conservative-liberal moral compass; and he was determined to focus on tangible and practical bilateralism. But I also note again Michael Wesley’s grand theme in *The Howard Paradox*. He argued that Howard, despite causing ‘tiffs’ with insensitive comments here and there, was still able work effectively with most regional states, especially in the strategic context of the War on Terror. Even before 9/11, and continuing after, Howard did not shun multilateral forums and merely declined to embark on any grand schemes. He downplayed, for example, the significance of being essentially vetoed by Malaysia from participating in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in 1998 by declaring that Australia ‘had ceased being the “demandeur,” badgering our neighbours for attention and recognition and claiming “we] do not view regionalism as a creed.”

In short, Howard took a deeply pragmatic approach towards foreign policy, and given the depth of discussion in Chapter 7, in this section I focus mainly on the 1999 East Timor intervention. It is an excellent example of an aberrant instance of strategic behaviour because, first, it was quite a large deployment motivated mainly by humanitarian concerns which involved, if hardly any fighting by the ADF as things turned out,


96Occasional fire-fights with Indonesian irregular militias took place in the deep jungle near the border, with no ADF casualties.
put on course, indeed, the RAN fleet supporting the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) was shadowed by, and chased off, a mysterious (but obviously Indonesian) submarine in late-September 1999, showing just how tense the situation was then.97 Second, the East Timor operation occurred in circumstances in which, following the 1997 White Paper, Howard’s government was ostensibly creating a more even balance between continental and forward defence, with only limited concessions to internationalism. But peculiar strategic circumstances arose in which the dominant continental defence strategic sub-culture did not really apply, apart from the potential for Indonesian military activity in East Timor to spill over and affect the Australian fishing or off-shore energy-extraction industries. And the most influential subordinate strategic sub-culture, forward defence, also did not really apply except in perhaps the very long-term sense that an intervention to prevent chronic and spreading instability in the region could have been warranted to prevent Indonesia sliding into serious civil war which, obviously, is a nightmare strategic scenario for Australia. Yet the actual situation in 1999, when the intervention went ahead, was not nearly so dire as either of these hypothetical scenarios, and indeed on the face of it a decision to intervene at this crucial point when Indonesia was politically could reasonably be expected to have had a destabilising effect. Howard, and especially his foreign minister Alexander Downer, were aware of this risk, and in the early stages of the crisis (i.e. in 1998 the general unrest in Indonesia was especially bad in East Timor, but had not degenerated into unrestrained mob-violence yet) they tried to stress that Indonesia’s sovereignty should not be threatened and that the East Timorese should only negotiate for a form of autonomy.98 Yet the government’s subsequent comprehensive survey of East Timorese thoughts on the matter revealed strong opinions in favour of moving, slowly if necessary, towards independence. Indeed, the exiles consulted by DFAT were virtually unanimous in demanding that their people should at least have the chance to determine their own future in a popular vote. Accordingly, and crucially as it turned out, Howard decided in December 1998 to write a letter directly to then-President Habibie suggesting that a quick agreement on autonomy could also include provisions for a subsequent referendum. Indonesia initially rejected the advice, but Downer later noted that this was a key turning point in the crisis that at least prompted

97 Paul Dibb, ‘Essays on Australian Defence,’ Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, no. 82, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 61.
By early 1999 Indonesia was under considerable pressure to conform with international human rights opinion at a time in which it needed substantial international financial backing in the wake of the regional economic troubles and its own domestic political upheavals. Habibie eventually decided that holding on to East Timor was not worth the trouble, although the Indonesian armed forces argued that to let East Timor go would set a bad precedent for the future of the federation. Nevertheless Habibie, determined to cauterise the wound quickly now that he had decided to act, announced to widespread foreign (and domestic) amazement in January 1999 that a popular vote on independence would be held (and respected) before 2000.100

Yet soon after Habibie’s announcement pro-Indonesian militias began to intimidate indigenous East Timorese far more openly, brandishing weapons that could only have come from the army and police forces, and when the vote was held on 30 August 1999 with almost 80 per cent voting against the autonomy package on offer (i.e. a strong majority wanted to pursue independence) violence broke out on an unprecedented scale. Estimates vary but as states like Australia scrambled to withdraw their unarmed missions at least 5000 East Timorese were killed and, perhaps more ominously, as many as 200,000 (about a quarter of the population) were forced by the militias in a disorganised manner that led to several more thousand deaths by disease, to move into West Timor in an apparent effort to convince international opinion that the vote had not been a true expression of the people’s will.101

Frantic negotiations to secure Indonesia’s acquiescence to an international stabilisation force led by Australia then began, including a dramatic intervention by Bill Clinton on 9 September and one by the IMF the following day, leading to Habibie’s eventual decision to accede to the pressure on the sidelines of the fortuitously-timed APEC meeting being held in Auckland on 14 September.102 Tellingly, Habibie asked Thailand to organise an ASEAN force, although in practical terms this organisation then immediately referred the matter to the UN, and the Security Council passed the necessary resolution by the evening of 15 September. The operation was led by an Australian, Major-General Peter Cosgrove, and the first troops of a contingent that eventually numbered about 8,000

100James Cotton, East Timor, Australia and Regional Order (London: Routledge, 2004), ch. 4.
101Ibid., 65.
the bulk of the force) began arriving on 20 September. By the end of October the territory had been largely stabilised and many of the deportees were returning. Eventually INTERFET, the organisation deputized by the UN with intervening rapidly, was replaced by a more traditional peacekeeping operation, UNTAET, in early 2000.

It is difficult to fully understand why Howard ordered such a risky venture without attention to strategic cultural matters. There was a grave humanitarian crisis demanding immediate attention, but it was also a potentially explosive situation involving Australia’s closest neighbour, with whom strategic relations had always been variable at best. But we can understand this aberration from the strategic-cultural norm, or least from the official strategic policy as it was at the time, by noting that the Australian public reacted strongly to the graphic and lurid media reporting from journalists covering the referendum in what was a rare example of Australians taking an interest in a regional political event. Tens of thousands demonstrated across Australia when the violence flared in September, and Canberra faced a storm of criticism for having accepted Indonesia’s undertaking that it could manage the vote without international assistance.  

In short, the public appeared to be tired of the tortuously contradictory policy whereby Australia had done business with an unpleasant Suharto regime and turned a blind eye, as Fraser, Hawke and Keating/Evans had done since 1975, to the shabby treatment of the East Timorese people, especially after the 1991 Dili massacre.

So, in the midst of the wider debate about what Australia’s role in the region occurring during this period (i.e. the Hanson episode), there was a powerful moral and emotive element driving calls for, finally, something to be done for East Timorese. Indeed, the East Timorese had bravely assisted Australia’s Z-Force (a commando unit) to sabotage Japanese installations on Timor during the Second World War, while it was widely remarked upon in the decades after 1945 that Sukarno had been a collaborator. Not coincidentally, the 1982 movie Attack Force Z was broadcast on Australian TV just as the ADF was departing (and it was repeated twice in the next few months

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103Ibid., 244–6.
105Wesley, The Howard Paradox, 75.
culture therefore reused old stereotypes to reinforce the new-found sense of empathy towards the long-suffering but valiant East Timorese who, it was widely accepted, faced oppression at the hands of what had become in the popular Australian perception (again) the menacingly-aggressive, sinister Indonesians.

James Cotton believes humanitarianism was the primary motivation behind Australia’s bold and risky stance on the East Timor, alongside an eventually steely determination on Howard’s part to address once and for all a perennial problem between Australia and Indonesia even if that meant a short-term deterioration in relations. Indeed, Howard conceded in 2000 that serious damage was done to the bilateral relationship: Indonesia abrogated the 1995 treaty and neither country has tried to revive it since. While bilateral ties have improved somewhat, continuing human rights abuses by Indonesia’s Kopassus special forces (especially in Papua in 2006, and again in 2010) continue to pose a major stumbling block. But in 1999 Howard skilfully read the Australian public’s mood: cultural affinity-perceptions (or at least strong sympathy-with sentiments – Australians tend to be ignorant of East Timorese culture) had shifted enough for the public to not only acquiesce in but to urge the deployment of the ADF in a risky overseas adventure to protect an Asian-Other. Interestingly, the government provided another reason for the intervention in logic compatible with a different stream of internationalism from that concerned strictly with upholding human rights, being that Indonesia’s own transition to true democracy, coupled with resolution of the East Timor problem, would remove perhaps the major obstacle to it playing a positive role in the world and the region, enabling it to participate more earnestly in the workings of international institutions.

In Chapter 7 I argued that the more internationalist tone of the ALP’s strategic policy statements from 1993 and 1994 had not been excised entirely from Howard’s 1997 White Paper. I also noted that the poor logistical shape of the ADF (which ended up relying heavily upon American support) when it first deployed to East Timor

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106 This movie had been made, not coincidentally, seven years after Indonesia’s 1975 invasion of East Timor, and at a time when considerable controversy remained concerning the fate of five Australian journalists who had disappeared during the fighting. It was suspected at the time, and has now been confirmed, that they were summarily executed by Indonesian forces. Attack Force Z starred a very young Mel Gibson who teams up with the heroic locals to defeat the Japanese and their sinister turncoat ‘Javanese,’ so implicitly Indonesian, allies.


111 Ibid., 100.
ADF for overseas interventions of any kind, humanitarian or otherwise. Accordingly, and because the whole operation was so risky, we should conclude that the intervention in East Timor constitutes a clear example of an aberrant instance of strategic behaviour forced upon Australia by the pressure of immediate external strategic circumstances. But the actual response was mediated through Australia's strategic culture, meaning that a usually-subordinate strategic sub-culture, internationalism, briefly rose to dominance because it gave meaning to the crisis in East Timor, suggesting responses that seemed more relevant than those offered by rival strategic sub-cultures, and which also resonated well with Australia's dominant cultural identity as it had become by 1999.

**Internationalism in Summary**

Regarding the lasting effects of East Timor on Australian strategic decision-making, it was noted in Chapter 7 that it influenced the drafting of the 2000 White Paper enough for stabilisation missions (not just humanitarian — resisted interventions too) to be placed second in priority after continental defence. This decision to increase the ADF's force projection capabilities eventually morphed into a plan to acquire two helicopter carriers, which will make the ADF the most mobile force in Southeast Asia. It is important to remember, however, that this decision was finalized after 9/11, as was the decision to send troops to the Solomons in 2003 and policing-missions to PNG several times in the past decade.

The humanitarian concerns behind the East Timor deployment would also transform, after 9/11 added additional urgency, into a more hard-headed determination to prepare for missions in which the ADF may deal out death as well as hand out aid. But John Howard's rapid and generous reaction to the Boxing Day tsunami in 2005 demonstrated that Australia's humanitarian instincts were not just limited to the East Timorese, and Wesley says specifically that Australia's reaction to the tsunami showed how far the frontiers of popular consciousness had extended past the Arafura sea [i.e. to Australia's north]. In other words, most Australians had reached the point where they included, if perhaps hesitatingly and conditionally, the Indonesian people (if not its government) as part

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112 Wesley, The Howard Paradox, 204.
After 9/11 Australia’s strategic culture began to reflect a complex mix of forward defence urges to confront terrorism well away from Australia, appreciation of the need to maintain continental defence capabilities in a somewhat unstable regional strategic environment, and a sprinkling of humanitarian concerns consistent with internationalism.

So, while the internationalist tradition has never been dominant it has been influential at times, especially recently, securing some degree of compromise in strategic policy. And at times, most notably in East Timor but also with respect to Cambodia, internationalism has had a direct impact on Australian strategic decision-making. Nevertheless, it has never achieved the sort of dominance it arguably enjoys now in another historically-very-similar-strategic-other, New Zealand. This is in part because internationalism is only occasionally relevant in a world of still-sovereign states, namely, when the great powers acquiesce in and support the operation in question. This means, in effect, that Australia is unlikely to undertake stabilisation missions on its own to anywhere other than micro-states like the Solomons, and with the greater demands made by War on Terror-related ADF operations it is likely that future interventions will be more motivated by concerns with strategic stability than by pure humanitarianism of the sort which drove the East Timor operation. Finally, the emergence of a strong China, jealous of its sovereignty and seemingly uninterested in participating deeply in regional institutions, especially in the strategic realm, suggests that conditions remain inauspicious for internationalism to become more relevant than its rival traditions.

With regard to resonance issues, the cultural orientation at internationalism’s core is complex and multifaceted, so it tends not to resonate very strongly outside elite-circles. Given that Australian strategic decision-making is usually insulated from public opinion (apart from specific episodes like the conscription debates in 1916/17, Vietnam and East Timor) internationalism may, possibly, become dominant again amongst elites, and not just in foreign policy but in the strategic realm too. But internationalism exercised its influence in the 1990s through its hold on the Labor elites (especially Gareth Evans and Paul Keating) imaginations, and there was a grass-roots backlash, which suggests strongly where the limits of the possible are when it comes to efforts to redefine

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113 Ibid., 202.
This analysis focused on the middle power and the humanitarian strains of the internationalist tradition. There are, of course, other aspects of internationalism, like support for international institutions and law, or statements about how better trading relationships can enhance the prospects for peace, which I did not explore for want of space. Nevertheless, while the complexity which characterizes internationalism draws and drives brilliantly-intellectual individuals like Evatt and Evans, and occasionally seduces morally-driven and determined figures like John Howard, it also probably doesn’t resonate all that well with an Australian public not particularly interested or well versed in the complexities of international politics, except for when a geographically close and historically-linked Other like East Timor descends into horrific violence and triggers a strong emotive response. Having said this, it may be the case that Australia’s dominant cultural identity outside elite-circles is continuing to change. Perhaps internationalism will resonate more strongly as tertiary education becomes more widely available and the size of IR programmes continues to increase, as it has done impressively since 9/11, if only because internationalist logic is somewhat more complex than the more intuitive forward and continental defence positions, and perhaps to some degree requires more specific explanation before it is accepted. Whatever the case may be on this last point, I now move to consider the less influential traditions within Australian strategic culture.

Bordering on Latency: Anti-Conscription, Anti-Americanism and Robust Self-Reliance

The three strategic sub-cultures discussed herein are barely subordinate in two senses (although the anti-conscription tradition is a special case). First, they rarely affect strategic decision-making, or they may exercise some enduring but only minor influence. Second, they are all variations on the continental defence theme indeed, perhaps if the strategic-cultural tug of affinity perceptions towards America had been weaker continental defence may have evolved into one of these sub-cultures. The strategic sub-cultures discussed here are therefore both rationally and culturally available in the sense that they are not completely irrelevant to Australia’s external strategic environment, and they also resonate to some degree with its dominant cultural identity. In a strategic-

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I call the first of these sub-cultures ‘anti-conscription’ because its cultural orientation is essentially isolationist, or at least relatively non-activist. It perceives, broadly speaking, a world of at least potential threats, but it also tends to assume that these can generally be avoided, so it manifests itself in actual politics, so in its technical details, as a broadly anti-conscription-for-overseas-service position. In other words, it is not strictly pacifist. For example the ALP, long an advocate of this position, never argued that Australia should disarm completely, indeed, it supported comprehensive cadet conscription scheme of 1909. But when Billy Hughes tried to introduce universal conscription to fill out the ANZAC units thinned by the relentless carnage in France the ALP split, prompting his desertion from it, and he was defeated twice (see Chapter 6). This demonstrates how influential the tradition was momentarily in the pressure-cooker environment of late 1917 when the outcome of the war was still uncertain. But, importantly, it was never dominant; it won on this issue only, and grumblings about the high taxes and stringent labour conditions that sustained the war effort, for example, were never the subject of serious action in the political arena.

Nevertheless, the anti-conscription stance became a staple of ALP politics for many decades, being regularly reaffirmed by senior figures like Curtin in the 1930s, and the party stuck to this position technically throughout the Second World War. To recap briefly, Menzies had never seriously tried to introduce ‘true’ (i.e. unconditional) conscription while prime minister at the outset of the war, and when Curtin took office in late 1941 he retained the distinction between Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and militia units (although he continued the exception by which the latter could be sent to Papua New Guinea, which was still formally Australian territory for military purposes). In 1943 he extended this zone to cover much of the Dutch East Indies but distinctions between the militia and the AIF remained real to the end: the latter bore the brunt of offensive actions in the final years of the war; only the AIF was deployed to the Asian mainland after the war to demobilise Japanese troops; and only AIF divisions would have taken part in the invasion of Japan, had it been required. Consistent with their anti-conscription philosophy, facing budgetary problems and to release much-needed labour for reintegration in the

117 Ibid., 143–5.
The government quickly wound down the universal conscription scheme that had fed the militia units.

Yet Menzies soon reintroduced national service in 1951, albeit involving shorter, less-onerous and so cheaper training than the wartime scheme, in reaction to Korea and the heightening of Cold War tension.\(^\text{118}\) Still, he never sent such units to Korea itself and instead when they went overseas they only filled in for regular units as garrison-troops at, for example, the RAAF base at Butterworth, Malaysia. Tellingly, Labor's leader, Evatt, reacting to the public mood and aware of the ominous internal rumblings that soon caused the DLP's breakaway in 1955, did not strongly oppose the reintroduction of conscription in the early 1950s. Indeed, the old territorial conscript-service limits had lapsed as the old institutions were scrapped in the post-1945 demobilisation process and when the new Cold War-era scheme was reintroduced Labor only called for the government to give undertakings that non-volunteer forces would not serve overseas instead of pressing hard for such limits to be written into legislation.\(^\text{119}\) As the Cold War eased a little after the Korean armistice national service was scaled back in 1955 and again in 1957, and then suspended entirely in 1959.

The conscription hiatus lasted only six years, and ballot conscription (or the 'blood ballot' as its critics called it) was reintroduced to bolster Australia's contribution to Vietnam in 1965. Conscripts were paid a little less than regulars but served shorter tours and were integrated into regular units, and Jeffrey Grey notes that there was little of the disaffection between regulars and conscripts which characterised the American experience.\(^\text{120}\) Still, conscription became increasingly unpopular and was always opposed by the ALP under Calwell. The first poll showing overall support for Australian involvement in Vietnam to have dipped below 50 per cent, from December 1968, also showed that support for sending conscripts, which had never enjoyed majority support, had fallen to 34 per cent and it would fall further thereafter.\(^\text{121}\) Finally, the Moratorium movement was also strongly motivated by anti-conscription sentiments. In 1972 the unpopular 'blood ballot' was abolished as one of Whitlam's first acts as prime minister, although by then the slow but steady reduction Australia's force in Vietnam meant that few

\(^{118}\) Ibid., 200.
\(^{119}\) CPD, HR, 1952 Session, Vol. CCXVI, 598, 28 February 1952.
\(^{120}\) Grey, A Military History, 230.
\(^{121}\) Meaney, Australia and the World, 702.
Since the early 1970s, therefore, the anti-conscription tradition has actually become the ‘normal’ position. Indeed, when public figures like Pauline Howard or Bruce Ruxton, the former (and very colourful) president of the Returned and Services League\(^{122}\) have argued for the return of national service, most Australians do not recoil with horror so much as look bemused. Other Western countries are also steadily dropping their national service schemes, partly for budgetary reasons and partly because the Revolution in Military Affairs favours smaller, more specialised volunteer armies.\(^{123}\) Given these trends, Australia’s strategic circumstances would have to deteriorate significantly for conscription to become publicly acceptable again. So, in one sense, the anti-conscription strategic sub-culture is actually strongly dominant at present, but to look at it from the reverse angle, it has become a sort of non-issue, meaning that it is effectively or practically latent because virtually no one bothers to even discuss it any more. Still, if in future an Australian government decided conscription was required again no doubt some norm-entrepreneurs or schema-advocates would argue against it by drawing explicit historical analogies with Archbishop Manix in 1916 and Dr Jim Cairns in 1970 in classic strategic-cultural fashion.

The second barely subordinate strategic sub-culture is, roughly speaking, anti-Americanism. Obviously this implies a very different cultural orientation than forward defence especially, but also most varieties of continental defence given that even Dibb assumed that America’s strategic power was generally a good thing for Australia (see Chapter 7). The cultural orientation at the heart of the anti-American tradition, obviously, is one in which it is assumed that the US can be fully trusted to uphold its side of ANZUS, or perhaps advocates of looser ties fear Australia will be entangled in America’s wars or, finally, some extreme versions see the US as fundamentally a force for ad\(\tilde{n}\) in the world or, at minimum, as a source of instability. Admittedly, it is very rare for such perspectives to ever claim that America is a direct strategic threat to Australia, but there have been plenty of claims that US culture\(^{124}\) or trade policy\(^{125}\) is more directly threatening. Still, from a strategic-cultural perspective, America may be portrayed as a different-Other, or something Australia should not be like, rather than as a threat per se.

\(^{122}\) Before 1990, Returned Services League.

\(^{123}\) At ease: Germany’s armed forces, The Economist, 17 July 2010.

\(^{124}\) Phillip Bell and Roger Bell, Implicated: The United States in Australia (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1993).

It is important to note, given the charged nature of such debates, that I use ‘anti-American’ in a typological manner to describe a category of opinion rather than in the pejorative sense that it can take on at times. There were, of course, always critics of Australia’s alliance with America. Burton had written a serious book urging Australia to not pursue closer ties as early as 1954, and Bruce Grant wrote a short book on this theme in the early 1970s and another in the late-1980s (see Chapter 7), while Macmahon Ball, never a trenchant critic of America, also tended to argue that Australia’s ties to the US should be relatively loose, a position he held consistently during the various public spats he had with Casey in the 1950s and 1960s. Notable examples of books and scholarly articles that argue Australia should loosen or end its ties to America before the 1990s, other than those already mentioned, include Jim Cairns’ *Living With Asia* (1965), Gregory Clark’s *In Fear of China* (1967), and Alan Renouf’s *The Frightened Country* (1975). Joseph Camilleri advocated ending ties with America in his *Introduction to Australian Foreign Policy* (1979), and developed the theme in several books published in the 1980s. It was in that decade too that Jim George and David Campbell, writing from an explicitly critical IR perspective, led the emergence of many other studies which, speaking very generally, have also been critical of Australia’s relationship with America.

While the most prominent contemporary Australian critical security studies scholar who opposes Australia’s alliance with America is probably Anthony Burke, it is harder (and perhaps a little unfair) to single out individual scholars in this way at present given the diversity of contemporary Australian opinion on international matters. While those who are, broadly speaking, anti-ANZUS are far from the majority in Australian IR circles, such positions are firmly established as features of the commentary about Australia’s relationship with America, especially in the post-9/11 reality of closer strategic relations between the two governments. Still, sometimes the radically different viewpoint of such scholars excites agitation amongst the more traditionally-inclined – for example, Burke, who was working at the Australian Defence force Academy (ADFA) in 2008, was called a

131 This is the Canberra campus of the University of NSW and is restricted to ADF officer cadets only.
Involvement in the War on Terror before the ADF officer cadets being educated there, sparking libel proceedings and some media interest.\textsuperscript{132} At the political level, the Green Party has called for the US alliance to be scrapped, while the Australian Democrats, now largely defunct but a sort of third force in politics for several decades before 2000, were always somewhat cool on the merits of ANZUS. Still, anti-Americanism is largely absent from the Liberal and National parties while it is now basically considered political poison for an ALP leader. This is best shown by consideration of Mark Latham's brief time as Opposition leader in 2003 and 2004.

Latham reassured his backers for the ALP leadership before a razor-thin victory in 2003 that he would not threaten ANZUS. He needed to do this because he had publically called George W. Bush \textit{incompetent} and \textit{flaky and dangerous}\textsuperscript{133} prior to his leadership bid. But after losing the 2004 federal election Latham's political career came apart rapidly by late 2005 he had retired, written and released the controversial and widely criticised \textit{Latham Diaries}. In this book he called ANZUS \textit{just another form of neo-colonialism} and \textit{the last vestige of the White Australia Policy}, and urged Australians to \textit{look at New Zealand}.... They have their foreign policy right.... The US alliance is a funnel that draws us into unnecessary wars.\textsuperscript{134} He also claimed in a hectoring tone that because Australia is \textit{an American colony under Howard, that\textit{ not a nation worth leading}}\textsuperscript{135} which became the basis for the general dismissal of much of what he said, especially about foreign policy issues, as little more than sour grapes.\textsuperscript{136}

Yet it is clear that what Latham called the \textit{Big Mac} pro-American faction in the party, so Beazley, Rudd and most of the other senior figures, had been very concerned prior to the 2004 election to not project an anti-American image after Latham began criticising the justifications for the Iraq War and after he made a seemingly

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item\textsuperscript{133} CPD, HR, 2003 Session, Vol. 1, 2003, 5 February 2003, 10926, 10928
\item\textsuperscript{134} Mark Latham, \textit{Latham Diaries} (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2005), 391.
\item\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 393.
\end{itemize}
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essentially Òring the troops home by ChristmasÓ while being closely questioned by a talk-back radio host. This so-called Big Mac faction pulled Latham back into line by forcing him to reappoint his erstwhile competitor for the leadership, Beazley, to the Shadow Defence portfolio, but the damage had been done and Labor consistently trailed the Coalition in polling on defence issues, which were important in the 2004 election. Tellingly, in late-2005 Robert McClellan MP, whose vote had delivered Latham the leadership two years earlier, said ANZUS Òwas certainly a live issue during the leadership contest. He reassured me personally of his commitment to [it].Ó Mark Latham would not have been elected leader had he indicated these views [i.e. those in the Latham Diaries].Ó The attitude of the post-Latham Labor leaders will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 9, but suffice to say, every effort has been made since 2006 to project the impression that Labor firmly backs ANZUS.

This strategic sub-culture has been, therefore, generally latent in the sense that it has not affected Australian strategic decision-making enough for there to ever be a serious government effort made to end strategic ties to the US. Still, anti-Americanism is not Òfully latentÓ because it has always had a reasonably strong presence in the academic literature and occasionally influential political figures (i.e. Cairns and Latham) who hold what are in effect anti-American attitudes have held senior positions in the ALP. Perhaps while ANZUS exists as a Ògoing concernÓ it will always attract some sort of critique, so we can probably expect that this strategic sub-culture will continue as long as ANZUS does. Having said all this, however, close ties to the US remain very popular with the Australia people Ò polls show that while confidence in AmericaÓ handling of international affairs ÒgenerallyÓ fell from 66 per cent in 2001 to 37 per cent in 2007, the latter poll nevertheless also showed that 92 per cent thought Australia would retain ANZUS and 79 per cent felt that it should. In short, anti-Americanism does not resonate well, meaning that, barring some unforeseeable and massive shift in AustraliaÓs dominant cultural identity, the anti-American sub-culture is unlikely to become dominant other than through a precipitous rise in its relevance following upon

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137 Peter Hartcher, ÒBig Kim a sturdy bridge to the US,Ó The Age, 16 July 2004.
139 Phillip Hudson, ÒLatham a “threat to security,”Ó The Age, 18 September 2005.
America's departure from Asia for good should it revert to a more isolationist strategic posture, or be pushed out by China, or simply depart for some other reason largely unrelated to Australia's choice about the matter.

The final barely subordinate tradition is one that advocates Australia adopt a robust self-reliant posture. This tradition is a sort of extreme continental defence position, although there is one major difference: the more conventional continental defence approaches, like Dibb and the compromise-positions found in Strategic Basis and White Papers since 1971, see Australia as being relatively secure. In this view, defence expenditures can generally be quite low—around 2 per cent of GDP—as long as the ADF is expandable and a close eye is kept on changes in the regional balance of power.

The robust self-reliance position, by contrast, sees Australia as facing quite serious threats, even if only potential ones. But these potentials are taken very seriously, and usually in two broad ways. The first manifests itself as an appreciation that there has been steady regional economic growth in which Australia, relatively speaking, is being left behind (or, more accurately, others are catching up) which may translate into greater capacities to threaten Australia. This is not particularly controversial and accords with many such statements in White Papers from the 1990s. But, and in the more subtle second sense, advocates of robust self-reliance say that the near neighbours already, by their sheer demographic size, pose a threat either because they could engage in protracted harassment campaigns or possibly even rapidly mobilise, following a crash-rearmament programme, less-well-equipped and trained but enormously larger conventional forces capable of swamping the ADF, which is very small by regional standards. In other words, the robust self-reliance tradition is sceptical about what has become a staple of post-1970 Strategic Basis Papers, namely, the no foreseeable threat for at least a decade assumption.

Ross Babbage, the main proponent of this latter view, argued in the early 1980s that while Indonesia could not land an armoured division in Australia it could, in a re-run of Konfrontasi, make Australia's vast, thinly populated but mineral- and energy-rich north ungovernable or at least very unsafe by the infiltration of small parties of raiders and saboteurs. In Rethinking Australia's Defence he stated his position clearly, saying in the future,

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141 The best recent and comprehensive study of these matters which provides a wealth of statistical data and projections about the relative size of Australia versus other regional states is Alan Behm, Strategic Tides: Positioning Australia's Security Policy to 2050, The Kokoda Papers, no. 6, November 2007 (Canberra: The Kokoda Foundation, 2007).

142 Total ADF strength is 51,000 with 'manpower availability' of 5.2 million, compared to Indonesia's 297,000 and 65.1 million: CIA World Factbook, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html.
deploy and fight alone, but they may have to do so with very little warning ... [and] they will require a capacity to combat a much broader range of pressures and threats.  

This justified, in his opinion, drawing more extensively upon the latent capacities [for defence] already existing, although he avoided specifying exactly what proportion of GDP would have to be spent other than noting it would have to rise from the level of about 2.2 per cent that it was at around 1980.

In *A Coast too Long*, published in 1990, Babbage adapted his arguments to take into account that the Cold War was ending. He conceded that there had been some dampening down of strategic tension, but he also warned of newly emerging unconventional threats, saying Australia should at least retain roughly the same level of defence spending, so, he essentially argued against Australia taking a peace dividend. More specifically, he claimed that ordinary deterrence logic actually has only limited application in Australia's circumstances because it may overestimate the rationality of regional states who (he claims, in a fleeting dip into strategic-cultural analysis) have different cultures which means they may react unexpectedly and unpredictably, from Australia's perspective, to changing events and circumstances. He also said that the Vietnam War showed that when a technologically superior state (i.e. Australia vis-à-vis most of its neighbours) tries to overawe less advanced opponents by striking them with relative impunity using high-tech weapons, this may only serve to harden the victim's resolve.

Ultimately, Babbage argued that instead of relying on 'high-end deterrence' logic in the sense of striking immediately with the most potent military assets Australia has (i.e. the RAAF's strike squadrons and the RAN's submarines and destroyers) the ADF should be prepared to practise persuasion in an attempt to gain greater leverage over an opponent will to fight than they can exert over Australia. So, if Indonesia did mount a raiding/harassment campaign on Australian soil, the ADF should return the favour and be prepared to escalate: it could first begin retaliatory raids; it could go further by exploiting aggressively the personnel and private circumstances and interests of the decision-making elite which would include covert sabotage of civilian infrastructure, attacks on private property, and possibly even kidnapping or assassination missions; if this was

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144 Ibid., 210.
146 Ibid., 52–4.
147 Ibid., 113.
and directly assist rebel groups in traditionally restive provinces of Indonesia’s federation, like Aceh or Ambon, and so on. Ultimately, of course, because Australia would also retain strong conventional capabilities it could escalate to full-scale air-strikes or submarine attacks on Indonesian shipping, but the point was that the ADF should be configured and properly resourced to enable it to respond flexibly and lethally against a large range of threats.\textsuperscript{148}

Other scholars have adopted a roughly similar approach to that favoured by Babbage. Alan Behm is a contemporary example whose close attention to the likely future projections of Australia’s demography and economic growth relative to that of others in the region in the next forty years, especially China’s but also Indonesia’s, led him to the conclusion that Australia will need to significantly increase its future military capabilities.\textsuperscript{149} And in the years after the 1976 White Paper, while scholars were debating its meaning and how continental defence should be implemented, some noted that Sweden spent a little over 3.5 per cent of GDP on defence to achieve self-reliance, while Switzerland spent only a little less to do the same, meaning Australia may have to raise the defence vote significantly if it was serious about achieving self-reliance. But Babbage is the key proponent of Australia adopting a robust self-reliant strategic posture and he can be distinguished from scholars like Cheeseman (discussed below) because the latter, despite favouring greater self-reliance, also argues for reductions in defence spending and is very keen to adopt a truly neutral stance by repudiating ANZUS. Babbage, in contrast, is merely sceptical about the prospects of American aid being forthcoming in all circumstances\textsuperscript{150} and he is certainly not averse to Australia continuing to work closely with the US if the latter stays committed to Australia’s security specifically and Asia’s more generally.\textsuperscript{151}

As a final note on the robust self-reliance strategic sub-culture, the prime minister from 2007 until mid-2010, and the current foreign minister, Kevin Rudd, studied under Babbage while at Queensland University in the 1980s. They stayed in contact and in 2008 Babbage was appointed as an advisor when the 2009 Defence White Paper was being drafted. Babbage’s views at the time of his appointment were deliberately set out in an article

\textsuperscript{148}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{149}\textit{Strategic Tides}, 81–4.
\textsuperscript{150}\textit{Rethinking Australia’s Defence}, xx, 11–17, 53, 224.
\textsuperscript{151}\textit{Ibid.}, 15, 16.
In essence, he thought that China’s rise may eventually force America out of the region, or it would more likely precipitate some sort of major crisis in which Australia would need to contribute to an allied effort to contain or defeat China. Accordingly, Babbage called for Australia to develop the capability sufficient to seriously damage or, as he put it, ‘rip an arm off’ a great power (i.e. China) if forced to fight alone, or to be able to contribute decisively to defeating one when fighting in a Coalition. The white paper will be discussed in detail in Chapter 9, but for the present, without knowing exactly how much influence Babbage ultimately had during the drafting process, it did flag the likelihood of major increases in the potency of the ADF, like roughly doubling the size of the RAAF’s jet-fighter fleet and doubling from six to twelve, and possibly tripling to eighteen, Australia’s submarine fleet. Still, the paper was also light on detail about when such projects would start. They remain tremendously expensive, and some more recent press coverage suggests that they may not go ahead in full.

More generally, the robust self-reliance posture seems somewhat out of touch with Australia’s current, quite benign strategic circumstances. So, in strategic-cultural terms, Babbage’s favoured sub-culture seems not to be particularly, or at least pressingly, relevant. While the notion of being fully prepared to defend ourselves in a hostile region may initially resonate well with the average Australian, perhaps the same person may lose enthusiasm for it rapidly when the full costs of doing so was explained in detail. For these reasons this tradition has never become dominant, although if the future procurement plans outlined in the 2009 Defence White Paper are followed religiously it may become so by about 2025. If this occurs, then perhaps 2009 will be seen as a crucial turning point and Babbage may attain the sort of status that Dibb has enjoyed for several decades now as the progenitor of a major strand of Australia’s strategic culture. But only time will tell, and until now this strategic sub-culture has historically been only barely subordinate.

‘True’ Latency: Neutrality, Pacifism, and Communist Sympathisers

154 Dan Oakes, ‘Pressure on to sink subs plan,’ The Age, 11 September 2010.
have been, except perhaps with the exception of pacifism during the Vietnam War protest-era, truly latent in the sense that they exist in the strategic discourse but have never really exercised any influence on Australian strategic decision-making. The reasons are simple, although obviously different in the detail depending upon which tradition one is talking about they are usually judged to be either irrelevant to, or at least poor fits with Australia's external strategic environment and/or they do not typically resonate well with Australia's dominant cultural identity.

With respect to strict neutrality, the most influential figure in this tradition was the scholar Max Teichmann. The detail of his arguments changed over the years, from greater emphasis on a Babbage-like armed neutrality posture in the mid-1960s to more positive assessments of Australia's strategic circumstances in the mid-1970s, leading him to urge Australia to work through international institutions (especially the Commonwealth) to achieve security. By then Teichmann had developed an argument resting on two main pillars, namely, a classic guns-versus-butter argument and a deep distrust of America. Indeed, after dismissing American efforts against Japan during the Second World War (i.e. they were, he said, entirely self motivated, they cared not a whit for us) he remarked I think you will have difficulty in finding a single instance, a single occasion, where we were able to say truthfully and not rhetorically Thank God for the American Alliance. I don't know of a single such occasion. Obviously his cultural orientation was quite anti-American, but I include him in this section because he also focussed much of his work investigating what to do after ANZUS was dropped, so he explored how Australia would be neutral and which international institutions (the UN? The Commonwealth? The Non-Aligned Movement?) would be the best ones for Australia to work closely with. Others also argued for strict neutrality, with John Birman organizing the first and only academic conference devoted to exploring the possibility of Australian neutrality in Perth in 1976. He enticed Sir Arthur Tange to the conference the latter however, was politely sceptical about the prospect of Australia ever being neutral.

Graeme Cheeseman's entry into the debate in the early 1990s sought to capitalise on the opportunity...
lish ideas about Australia’s future strategic course, and he offered what is probably the most developed and coherent of any the neutralist options. First, he argued that while on the face of it Australia had moved away from forward and towards continental defence after the early 1970s, he believed (in 1993) that Hawke’s predilection for ‘pushing around’ the island states of the South Pacific and his strong support of the US (against New Zealand in 1984, and especially against Iraq in 1991) meant that forward defence had actually returned to dominance. Cheeseman therefore called for a proper or full application of continental defence principles, but he went even further than Dibb had in the mid-1980s and called explicitly for ANZUS to be scrapped, claiming Australia should adopt an unambiguously ‘non-offensive defence’ posture. So, unlike Dibb’s classic sea-denial deterrence strategy or Babbage’s ‘persuasive’ or comprehensive deterrence posture, Cheeseman wanted Australia to eschew strike options (i.e. like those offered by F-111s and submarines) on the basis that merely possessing these capabilities raised tensions in the region and initiated ‘insecurity spirals,’ which in turn made Australia even less safe. Instead, he urged Australia to disarm significantly and begin planning for a mixture of conventional military, para-military and non-military strategies, all aimed at denying an aggressor an easy victory or the anticipated gains of offensive actions. The quite radical cultural orientation, especially the call for abrogating ANZUS, of this version of the neutralist tradition may explain why it failed to resonate at all outside academia, and why it has exercised no discernible influence on Australia strategic decision-making. But from a relevance perspective it seems also to be a self-defeating approach in the sense that Australia actually has to be occupied, at least in part, for his ‘defence’ policies to become relevant.

There are also obvious similarities between these neutralist traditions and the more properly pacifist strategic sub-culture. Unsurprisingly, because pacifism has a long heritage in western culture, a pacifist tradition has always existed in Australian strategic culture — for example, Arnold Wood, the history professor who opposed Australian units being sent to the Boer war, referred to principled pacifism as one of his reasons. Unsurprisingly, the popularity of pacifism was boosted by the carnage of the First World War, especially in the aftermath as the conflict was widely referred to as ‘the war to end all wars.’ But of course by the late-1930s recent events were...

159 Ibid., 212.
160 ‘The War in the Transvaal,’ The Daily Telegraph, 19 October 1899.
undermining the validity of a strict pacifist position, and after the Second World War the prevalence of the ‘lessons of Munich’ metaphor (see Chapter 6) demonstrates how ‘idealistic’ strategic sub-cultures like the true-pacifist tradition were regarded as, generally speaking, completely nonsensical and virtually indefensible, at least in ‘serious’ strategic decision-making circles.

The Vietnam War gave some impetus to the pacifist tradition and brought it into the public consciousness, if not into the properly strategic discourse. As in America there were plenty of ‘Make Love Not War’ signs at Moratorium movement rallies, and in a sort of hippie-popcorn-culture way pacifism became prominent at certain points during the Vietnam protest-era, not least because there were plenty of controversial incidents in which troops had blood thrown on them by protesters during parades. Yet it is always tempting to read too much into casual displays of affiliation with idealistic causes, and apart from a dozen or so sit-ins at courts and government offices by university groups which included pacifists (and which, ironically, typically degenerated into unruly brawls when police intervened) pacifism had virtually no influence over strategic decision-making. More tangible concerns, like ending Australia’s involvement on fiscal or prudential grounds, and the unpopularity of the blood ballot, mainly drove the protests and there was little serious thought given by the senior figures of the movement to pursuing complete disarmament.

The only time when the pacifist strategic sub-culture was able to exert any sort of real (and in the end it was only ‘potential’) influence on strategic decision-making came in the early 1980s when the Nuclear Disarmament Party (NDP) made a brief appearance on the Australian political scene. The controversies over French nuclear tests in the Pacific and then the fatal French raid on the Rainbow Warrior, renewed Cold War tension, the 1984 ANZUS nuclear-ship crisis, and a general rise in the strength of a European-based anti-nuclear movement, all meant that in the early 1980s Australian pacifists were focused on ending the threat of nuclear holocaust and the public was perhaps more receptive to this position than it ever has been before or since. When Hawke stood firm in the face of criticism about US bases in Australia in 1983 several MPs split from the ALP and formed the NDP with the backing of peace activist and philanthropist, Dr Michael Denborough. The party enjoyed a brief moment of glory in 1984

when pop-culture icon Peter Garrett, the lead singer of Midnight Oil, wrote a best-selling album about the dangers of nuclear war and ANZUS before running (unsuccessfully) as a candidate for the Senate on the NDP ticket. But this minor ALP split failed to cause lasting damage to the party: the NDP only secured 4 per cent of the vote nationwide, returning a single Senator in the 1984 election. In 1985 most of the party (including Garrett) walked out in protest at what they claimed was an internal takeover of the party by the Socialist Workers Party (a Trotskyist radical-left group). The sole NDP Senator, Jo Valentine, became an independent, and while the party itself continued to contest elections for over twenty years it failed to return any MPs before its formal demise in 2009.

In some ways the Green Party has taken up the NDP’s mantle recently. It has a much wider policy-platform, and it typically returns two or three Senators and can gather a little over 5 per cent of first preference votes consistently, and up to 12-15 per cent in a few crucial seats in the lower house, meaning that it is able to act as a swing-vote in the Senate (often along with the several independents that are typically elected to the Australian Senate at most elections). Indeed, at present it is unprecedentedly strong, with polls conducted in several months on either side of Christmas revealing a consistent 12 to 14 per cent level of primary-vote support nationwide although I return to discuss its recent fortunes in more detail in Chapter 9. The Greens also typically extract concessions from Labor in exchange for second preference support, although it is important to note that the party is relatively uninterested in foreign policy matters and instead mainly seeks concessions on environmental policy.

Indeed, the Greens, while broadly pacifist in orientation, are generally uninterested in strategic issues. Although their leader, Bob Brown, vociferously attacked the ADF’s involvement in Iraq, it is telling that the Green Party website contains no prominent category for ‘Defence’ and one must follow links from ‘Human Rights and Democracy’, ‘International Relations’, and then to ‘Peace and Security’. Here, buried deep in the party’s website, it is said that the Greens believe that

1. genuine security rests on cooperation, fair economic and social development, environmental sustainability, and respect for human rights, rather than on military capabilities.

163 The album’s title, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1... (but usually called ‘10 through 1’) implied the world sat on a ticking nuclear timebomb. Garrett joined the ALP two decades later and became Environment Minister under Kevin Rudd.
2. Non-violent conflict management is the most effective means of promoting peace and security in the international arena.

3. UN mandated military action should be a last resort and can only be justified if it is necessary either to avert a major violation of human rights or attempted genocide, or to counter the military invasion of a country.\(^\text{167}\)

Despite the relative neglect of strategic matters (as ordinarily understood), it is my impression that in the (highly unlikely) event that the Greens formed government in their own right they would apply something similar to Cheeseman's notion of non-offensive defence: at a minimum they would slash defence spending, perhaps by half. But they rarely influence strategic decision-making, other than through publicity stunts akin to Vietnam-era blood-spatter protests. For example, Brown and fellow Green Senator Kerry Nettle heckled and tried to physically jostle George W. Bush while he was addressing parliament in 2003, leading to their ejection from the chamber.\(^\text{168}\) So, in a strategic cultural sense, pacifism is a strongly-latent strategic tradition which is favoured by only a few norm-entrepreneurs who, by mainstream standards, espouse quite radical positions which neither resonate well with the general public nor seem very relevant to conventional interpretations of Australia's external strategic circumstances.

The final truly-latent strategic sub-culture was that favoured by the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), during the Cold War. Its cultural orientation set it apart starkly from all the other traditions because the (foreign) communists were considered the ‘similar-Other, not Britain or America. Moscow and occasionally Beijing (and even Hanoi) were seen by the CPA as role models to be emulated, at least in an aspirational sense. So, from a technical point of view the communists in Australia accepted that Western states were powerful and able to largely determine the nature of the global status quo. But because this was a capitalist status quo the meaning given to this, to the material condition or reality of the global distribution of power, was radically different from the norm it was seen as ‘bad’ and something to be overthrown rather than preserved. This is therefore the clearest example of how a radically different cultural orientation, accepted by only a very small minority of the community, can cause such a group to propose technical or ‘rational-from their-perspective’ proposals that differ widely from the strategic-cultural norm. Chapter 7 discussed how the Monash University Labor Club tried to raise funds in Australia to be handed


student group, along with others on different campuses, tempered its position by claiming the money would only be spent on medical aid, but this and other incidents (for example, all staff at the University of Melbourne found one month that their pay-packets contained pamphlets appealing for funds supposedly for similar purposes) excited enormous controversy and many Australians considered such people close to traitors. One sergeant-major, serving in Vietnam, was quoted widely: he responded by demanding that the government round up the students and ship them over here because we have plenty of captured Vietcong weapons.... We could arm them ... [and] turn them out to join their VC mates. We’ll give them a day’s start and then come looking for them. Such sentiments were surely not unusual in the highly-charged political atmosphere of this restive era.

Scattered communist sympathisers had opposed Australia’s involvement in the First World War on the basis that the international proletariat should not fight itself, so to speak, on behalf of the bourgeoisie. But the CPA itself was not founded until 1920 and for its first few years it was very marginal, both politically and in the union movement. By the late 1920s it was becoming more significant, driven in the main by the efforts of the Canadian communist Jack Kavanagh, but in 1929 it became caught up in Stalin’s attempt, using Comintern, to foster greater revolutionary spirit in communist parties all over the western world. A Soviet emissary purged Kavanagh and others from the party and in effect brought the CPA under the tight control of Comintern until the 1960s. It gained a small measure of respectability when (at Comintern’s direction) it announced in 1935 its united front against fascism agenda, and despite some embarrassment several years later when news of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact broke, the party did wholeheartedly support Australia’s efforts to combat fascism when war broke out in September 1939. Still, despite membership peaking at just over 20,000 in 1943 it was largely unsuccessful in penetrating the unions given the stiff resistance from the Irish-Catholic unionised workers, many of whom who would eventually vote for the DLP. It only ever got one candidate elected, and only to Queensland’s state parliament.

Menzies unsuccessfully tried to have the CPA banned in the early 1950s, only desisting in his efforts after

169 A report to Cabinet from the Education Department lists the disturbances on Australian campuses; see A.H. Ealnor (Education Department Secretary), ‘Aid to the National Front of North Vietnam,’ 14 August, NAA, M3787/1, CS: 2.
170 ‘Australian troops livid at Uni club proposal,’ report of Newspaper Article, to Minister of Defence, ibid.
172 ‘Communists’ views,’ The Sydney Morning Herald, 15 September 1939.
1952. But, facing enormous legal bills, the CPA’s victory was a hollow one; the party’s membership base had been decimated and its finances were in tatters, so until the Vietnam-era the CPA was deeply marginalised, with it members routinely suffering casual discrimination at best and sustained, vitriolic and highly personal public humiliation at worst. It is not clear, even taking into account the reportedly tight links to Comintern during this period, to what the degree the CPA really was ‘run from Moscow,’ and whether it deserved being called a ‘nest of social misfits and base traitors’ as Menzies claimed at one point. But it is indisputable that for most of the 1950s and 1960s its members were virtual social outcasts. In short, this strategic sub-culture was not just latent; it was actively (but ultimately not legally) suppressed. Still, the CPA was rehabilitated to some degree by the public’s turn against Australia’s involvement in Vietnam after 1968, and it participated openly in the Moratorium movement. Importantly, by this time the party had essentially ended its dependence on Comintern, and as an aside, the recent publication of diaries and personal papers of several senior ALP figures from this era confirms that at least some of the party’s staffers, and perhaps even one MP, were secret CPA members.

The CPA struggled through the 1980s after again becoming the subject of some public acrimony following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and ultimately the dissolution of the USSR was preceded, only one month earlier, by the CPA’s own implosion. Another party was reconstituted under the same name in the following years: but it is almost entirely an ‘intellectual’ movement with only the most tenuous links to unions; it has completely dropped any pretensions to revolutionary activity; and it has never made even the slightest ripple in Australian electoral politics since. So, again, the cultural orientation of this tradition has typically been so radically contrary to Australia’s dominant cultural identity that it exercised absolutely no influence on strategic decision-making. It is, effectively, a fully latent or, more accurately, a ‘former, now defunct’ strategic sub-culture.

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174 Stuart Macintyre concludes that Comintern’s men, like Lance Sharkey and Jack Miles, ‘deformed the left in Australia’ through their slavish devotion to Moscow until they were forced out by ‘homegrown Marxists’ in the early 1960s; ‘Dealing With Moscow: The Comintern and the Early History of the Communist Party of Australia,’ *Labour History*, 67 (November 1994), 141.
To this point, nine strategic sub-cultures have been discussed: two primary traditions; a strong-subordinate tradition; three barely-subordinate examples; and, finally, three truly-latent sub-cultures. There are others out there which are, strictly speaking, rationally available strategic options. This is unsurprising given the sheer size of large modern societies and the tolerance for eccentricity that marks a modern liberal democracy like Australia. In other words, there are a number of extremely marginalised opinions that purport to be, or perhaps are only technically, strategic sub-cultures in the wider public (but not the professional) strategic discourse. I consider these to be crazy-latent traditions, and they are typically held only by extremist groups of which there are thankfully only a few very marginal ones operating in Australia, including in the contemporary era several isolated and scattered jihadist groups whose stated goal is to spread their radical Islamism widely, overthrow all existing governments and, eventually, to re-establish a globe-spanning Caliphate. But groups such as these are obviously very marginalized and, crucially, their favoured cultural orientations are wildly out of touch with Australia's dominant cultural identity.

Yet there are other strategic options that may conceivably resonate more readily with the majority of the population were the culture of this majority somewhat different, namely, more inclined to support an expansionist or even imperialist agenda in the local region. To be sure, Cheeseman and others at times have chided various Australian governments for seeking to be the South Pacific hegemon, for example. Yet no one ever seriously argues that Australia should become a conquest state, or play an international role similar to that played by Nazi Germany or Napoleonic France except in deliberately humorous or satirical contexts, and usually only vis-à-vis New

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178 Hitz-ut-Tabir, a group which promotes jihad but assiduously ensures it has no direct links to terrorist organisations, has a small branch in Australia, and held a rally on 4 July 2010 Sydney in 2010: Melanie Phillips, ‘Jihadist groups a threat to us all,’ The Australian, 6 July 2010. For a list of all terrorist groups proscribed by the Australian government, including details of which have operated (typically by trying to raise funds) in Australia, see ‘List of proscribed terrorist organisations’, Attorney-General’s Department, [http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/rwpattach.nsf/VAR/28153683DB7E984D232148D871B2AC75E8%29~Attachment+AG+PDF/$file/Attachment+AG+PDF](http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/rwpattach.nsf/VAR/28153683DB7E984D232148D871B2AC75E8%29~Attachment+AG+PDF/$file/Attachment+AG+PDF) (accessed 6 December 2010). Another very small group, calling itself Sharia4Australia, has also been established recently. It openly advocates the use of violence to overthrow Australia’s democracy, following which theocratic rule will be established with the aim of eventually incorporating Australia into a global Islamic Caliphate: Sally Neighbour, ‘Full Bred Aussie with a Longing for Sharia Law’, The Australian, 21 January 2011.

179 In The Search for Self-Reliance, vis-à-vis Hawke’s alleged ‘bullying’ of the South Pacific island states.

tensions between Australia and New Zealand are excited far more seriously by sporting rivalry like the incident in the early 1980s when some very poor-sportsmanship by the Australian cricket captain, Ian Chappell, caused a minor ripple in bilateral ties similar in type but not seriousness to the sort of cricket-related incidents that regularly mar Indo-Pakistani relations.¹⁸²

Consider, however, that in an acultural and strictly-rationalist (but belligerently so) hypothetical world akin to that which the neorealists envisage, a state the size and location of Australia may well seriously consider strategic action against a state like New Zealand. The former is five times the size of the latter demographically, had an economy more than eight times as large in 2010, outspends it at almost a 10:1 ratio on defence and has enjoyed higher average rates of economic growth for half a century now. More pertinent, New Zealand is one of the most isolated states in the world, meaning that its annexation would be less likely to excite the fears of other states or at minimum it is nothing like early-20th century Belgium or Holland, perched as they were between the French and German behemoths. Granted, the ADF is certainly not large enough at present to actually occupy New Zealand, but the RAAF and RAN even at present strength are undoubtedly capable of enforcing a blockade of the islands, especially now that New Zealand maintains no fighter jets. Australia could therefore bully New Zealand into acceding to its demands, whatever they may be (in this unrealistic and fanciful hypothetical world without culture). Granted, New Zealand would not have allowed its military to deteriorate so much had Australia ever posed a real threat but this is exactly the point neither nation, for strategic cultural reasons, finds it even remotely possible that the other would threaten it strategically. Indeed, the ‘ANZAC relationship was so close for so long that as New Zealand pulled away a little from the 1980s on (i.e. after nuclear ships row in 1984) their actions were perceived as a threat only in the sense that the nations’ joint defence efforts would be weakened somewhat. Indeed, the strongest feelings of strategic animosity between the two states are caused by perceptions by many Australians that New Zealand's batsmen needed to score a four off the last ball by hitting it into the fence. Chappell ordered his younger brother Trevor to bowl a ‘grubber’ or underarm-ball that rolls along the ground and which is virtually impossible to score from, instead of the normal fast-one-bounce delivery. Australia won the match in highly dubious fashion and sporting ties were marred for years – and grubbers are now absolutely banned in all forms of cricket.

¹⁸¹ For an example, see a humorous story featured in FHM (For Him Magazine), August 2004, which explained how and why Australia should invade New Zealand; several satirical advertisements prepared for a comedic television show playing on the theme of how easy it would be invade New Zealand can be viewed at www.youtube.com - search for ‘Australia invades New Zealand.’ ¹⁸² New Zealand's batsmen needed to score a four off the last ball by hitting it into the fence. Chappell ordered his younger brother Trevor to bowl a ‘grubber’ or underarm-ball that rolls along the ground and which is virtually impossible to score from, instead of the normal fast-one-bounce delivery. Australia won the match in highly dubious fashion and sporting ties were marred for years – and grubbers are now absolutely banned in all forms of cricket.
This matter illustrates that, in its simplest sense, the concept of strategic culture describes the range of culturally-possible or thinkable options that a state perceives itself to have. In other words, there are a whole range of actually or purely-rationally-available options, in particular like invading New Zealand, but also a strictly-pacifist posture or the suggestion that Australia align with Moscow during the Cold War, and many others, some of which I have mentioned and others (especially Islamic-extremist positions) which I have not investigated in depth. But these tend to be (or were) deeply inimical for cultural reasons to the vast majority of Australians and their strategic decision-makers. There is therefore only a limited range of culturally-acceptable strategic options, informed by various and competing strategic sub-cultures which offer cognitive shortcuts and ways of interpreting the world to guide thinking and behaviour in the strategic realm.

Finally, the mere existence of latent strategic sub-cultures, options that do exist on the strategic cultural menu, so to speak, but were rarely or perhaps never chosen, should show that the strategic sub-cultures that I actually identify as influential, especially the primary ones which have vied for dominance now for over 100 years, really are important influences on strategic decision-making and that they are not just epiphenomenal manifestations of underlying and dispassionate material forces. They are not totally unrelated to such forces—the respective fortunes of the primary sub-cultures and the strong-subordinate internationalist tradition have waxed and waned as Australia's external strategic circumstances have changed—but to focus on these matters of relevance only, and to ignore the more cultural notion of resonance, would be a mistake. Strategic sub-cultures offer competing ways of seeing or interpreting or giving meaning to the world, and in turn they suggest various ways of dealing with the strategic challenges and opportunities posed by it, and some are more influential than others at different times. But the patterns are not wholly chaotic, and by assessing the degree to which a strategic sub-culture seems relevant to Australia's external strategic environment, and by paying attention to the degree to which it resonates with Australia's dominant cultural identity, we can have some small measure of confidence in predicting in a broad sense the likely future direction of Australian strategic decision-making. Or, at a minimum, once we have become familiar

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183 Fenton, ‘Has New Zealand Let Down the ANZAC Tradition?’
it has evolved to be as it is, we can begin to speculate about what sort of things may alter the relationships of dominance, subordination and latency between the various strategic sub-cultures that populate Australia’s or another state’s strategic culture in the future. I speak to these matters briefly in the next and final short chapter.
Chapter 9

The 2009 White Paper and Final Thoughts on Strategic Culture

This chapter deals with three final issues. First, the several turbulent years of Australian politics that followed the defeat of John Howard at the 2007 Federal Election are explored and the 2009 Defence White Paper is examined. The argument presented is a simple one, namely, that this White Paper heralds a significant (although probably not 'momentous') shift in Australian strategic policy. However, at the time of writing it is far from clear whether the bold strategic vision outlined by the white paper will be fully realised, although, intriguingly, the reasons why it may not seem to be more related to ongoing domestic political uncertainty than to difficulties caused by insufficient economic capacity.

I then discuss the possibility of future forecasting. This will not be particularly ambitious, but because the strategic cultural model I offer is falsifiable, the discussion will focus on the degree to which it may be possible to chart the future course of Australian strategic decision-making by paying close attention to changes in Australia's external strategic environment and its dominant cultural identity, and how such may affect the relative influence of the various strategic subcultures identified in previous chapters. Finally, I explore the implications of the Australian case study on future strategic-cultural projects. This case was not, as the reader will recall, chosen solely to contribute to the substantial matter of understanding (and predicting the future course of) Australian strategic decision-making alone. It was also chosen because I argue that the Australian case is a good one to illustrate the new approach to strategic culture offered in Chapter 3. I therefore end with a few thoughts about the possibility of applying (and refining) the strategic cultural model offered herein in the future.

The 2009 Defence White Paper

At the November 2007 federal election, an ALP led by Kevin Rudd handed John Howard's conservative Coalition a heavy defeat, securing a solid majority of 83 of the 150 seats in the House of Representatives. Howard's defeat was
made even more ignominious by the fact that he lost his own seat, making him only the second sitting prime minister to do so and the first since 1929. It is generally accepted that his unpopular efforts to reform industrial relations laws had been the most contentious policy issue of the campaign, with the next most important policy issue being a perception that Labor would produce better environmental policies, although it is also important to note that Australia’s economy remained buoyant, with unemployment under five per cent and inflation safely within the target range of 2½ per cent. But despite the general perception that the Coalition was managing the economy well, many still felt that it had become somewhat tired after eleven years in office and, equally, Labor had successfully reinvented itself after Kevin Rudd assumed the party’s leadership.

Williams has argued that strategic policy issues did not feature particularly prominently in the election. Michael Clarke, however, felt that they were quite important, with the major ones being terrorism, Iraq, Afghanistan, South Pacific instability and the future of the US alliance. Williams concedes that Rudd exuded an air of competence when it came to foreign policy, and that he essentially stole the show at the APEC summit held in Sydney in September 2007. It was widely noted, for example, that Rudd’s early professional career had been spent as a diplomat and that he spoke fluent Mandarin. More generally, Rudd’s nuanced approach to the central strategic issues Clarke felt were important: he harnessed public disquiet about Iraq by claiming he would remove Australian troops, claiming that this campaign was not central to the War on Terror; but he also reiterated strong support for the ongoing effort in Afghanistan; then he claimed that Australia needed to do more in our own region, our own neighbourhood, our own backyard (i.e. the South Pacific); and, finally, as a member of the Big-Mac faction that saw off the anti-American maverick Mark Latham in 2005 (see Chapter 8) Rudd was well-placed to

3On 4 December 2006 Rudd and his deputy, Julia Gillard, ran on a joint ticket and unseated Labor’s then-leader Kim Beazley. Labor’s poll-numbers shot up immediately and by early 2007 they had risen comfortably above the Coalition’s and would remain there until the election: ibid., 107: Brett, ‘Exit Right,’ 3.
7Clarke, ‘Issues ... 2007,’ 275–283.
claim that despite his differences with Washington regarding Iraq he would ensure that Australia remained a key US ally in Asia, a point which he made in Washington in April 2007. Accordingly, when one of Rudd’s first decisions upon becoming prime minister was to announce the withdrawal of Australian troops from Iraq, there was little blowback from the US: not only had the move been canvassed with the Americans, it was also not inconsistent with the opinion of General David Petraeus, commanding general of the Multinational Force–Iraq, first aired in September 2007, that the US surge was succeeding and that US troops could begin leaving sometime in 2008.

It is important to note that the feeling in the electorate that Howard and the Coalition had run out of new ideas did not arise spontaneously: Labor cultivated it with care. The debate about Iraq (among many other issues) was replete with accusations by Rudd and other Labor figures that Howard was stuck in the past. So, Rudd announced in August 2007 that the last proper defence white paper had been released in 2000, saying Our strategic circumstances have change and it is time for a re-evaluation. The current government appears to have forgotten that defence doctrine must be constantly updated. And to allay concerns that his party may return to Latham-era anti-Americanism he also noted that

For Labor, the US alliance sits squarely in the centre of our strategic vision. Australia’s alliance with the United States is strong enough to withstand disagreements from time to time. Vietnam was one, Iraq is one and there may be disagreements in the future. But these are the exceptions rather than the rule.

Upon taking office, Rudd ordered a new white paper, but the drafting process became a drawn-out affair, in part because Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon cautiously examined all the commitments that John Howard’s government had signed up to (especially the Joint Strike Fighter program) and in part because the Australian dollar lost 40 per cent of its value compared to the US dollar in what we now recognise was the beginnings of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. This obviously disrupted budget plans which featured large procurements of American

11 Speech, Kevin Rudd, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Canberra, 8 August 2007.
was delivered in April 2009, the financial basis upon which it was to be implemented remained only tentatively stated.\footnote{14}

In Chapter 7, I noted that a number of previous procurement decisions (such as the two helicopter carriers) and strategic-behavioural decisions (like the deployment of forces to Iraq and Afghanistan) indicated that Howard was progressively ‘watering down’ continental defence principles as the basis for Australian strategic decision-making. Certainly Hugh White and Paul Dibb agreed on one point, namely, they both believed that perhaps forward defence had become ‘barely dominant’ again by 2006—although White lauded, while Dibb decried, this trend. I did not fully agree, and noted that statements about ‘defending Australia’ from direct attack still seemed to predominate in the 2000 Defence White Paper and the two Strategic Reviews (2003 and 2005) over statements indicating that the ADF would carry out overseas deployments as its \textit{primary} task. I also concluded that other procurement decisions (especially the Super Hornet purchase) and strategic-behavioural events (in particular the dispatch of the ADF to Solomon Islands) meant that continental defence logic remained ‘barely dominant’.\footnote{15}

This, then, was the somewhat confused state of affairs at the end of the Howard government’s eleven years in office in 2007. The 2009 Defence White Paper, on the face of it, clears away some of this ambiguity by ranking Australia’s strategic priorities (in the Executive Summary) in the following way:

\begin{quote}
Australia’s most basic strategic interest remains the defence of Australia against direct armed attack. Our next most important strategic interest is the security, stability and cohesion of our immediate neighbourhood. Beyond [this] Australia has an enduring strategic interest in the stability of the wider Asia-Pacific region. We [also] have an interest in preserving international order.\footnote{15}
\end{quote}

Here we see, at least ostensibly, a return to the sort of prioritising of interests according to geographical distance from Australia—the closer the interest, the more pressing it is—not unlike the sort of logic that informed the 1987 White Paper and subsequent white papers (see Chapter 7). And if there was any doubt about whether forward or continental defence was dominant the Executive Summary also noted that ‘Australia’s defence policy should

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\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030} (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2009), 15–16. \\
\textsuperscript{15}\textsuperscript{Ibid., 12.}
\end{flushright}

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reliance in the direct defence of Australia. However, it continues

but with a capacity to do more when required, consistent with those strategic interests [i.e. quoted above] that we

may share with others and within the limits of our resources.

Yet immediately following it is also said that

the ADF of 2030 will need to be a more potent force in certain areas, particularly undersea warfare and

anti-submarine warfare, surface maritime warfare, air superiority, strategic strike, special forces [r]econnaissance, and cyber warfare. The major new direction that has emerged is a significant focus on enhancing our maritime capabilities.\textsuperscript{16}

On the face of it, therefore, Australian strategic policy returned to a firm continental defence posture, and the white

paper's overall purpose seemed to be to reduce the ambiguity associated with the drift toward forward defence

under Howard. Yet when one considers the procurement details the picture is perhaps a little less clear. Virtually all

the major procurement decisions made by the Howard government were endorsed,\textsuperscript{17} including the helicopter
carriers, their three escorting Air-Warfare Destroyers, eight Future Frigates, and a large strategic sealift ship (to
move the Army's heavy equipment).\textsuperscript{18} In Chapter 7 I noted some critics had observed that the helicopter carriers will

not be especially useful in classic continental defence roles, given that they will not operate fixed-wing aircraft, and

instead they and the heavy-lift ship seem best suited to either humanitarian and/or stabilisation missions, offensive

operations in the arc of instability, or integration into US-led battle flotillas. The white paper also confirmed that as

many as one hundred F-35s will be purchased, which was near the high end of the range previously discussed,

along with five airborne tankers and six AEW&C planes.\textsuperscript{19} These RAAF assets will be classic dual-use items useful

in both continental and forward defence roles.

Yet a number of other weapons systems which were intended to enhance Australia's continental defence

capability were also announced. The most striking was the decision to double the submarine fleet from six to twelve

with the option to continue building additional submarines.\textsuperscript{20} Submarines are obviously very well suited to

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{16}] Ibid., 13.
\item[\textsuperscript{17}] Except for the infamously problematic Sea Sprite naval helicopter program, which was scrapped.
\item[\textsuperscript{18}] Ibid., 73.
\item[\textsuperscript{19}] 'Airborne Early Warning and Control': Ibid., 78–79.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
risk to any hostile naval armadas. According to the white paper, Australia would also acquire around 20 Offshore Combat Vessels or patrol boats. The vessels will be much larger than the current Armidale class and will feature a modular design to enable rapid refit with long-range anti-ship missiles.  

Both these ship classes thus significantly enhance Australia’s self-reliant ability to deter and defeat invasion attempts consistent with a continental defence posture. There are, however, other details which require consideration: for example, it was announced that the submarines would be purpose-built, in order to have a much longer operational range than any other conventional submarine in the world, making them more suitable for forward defence roles (i.e. blockade duties). And, finally, the acquisition of maritime-based cruise missiles (to be fired from submarines, frigates and destroyers) with a land-attack capability suggests the ADF could engage in decisive strategic strike operations in the region or further afield: at any event, cruise missiles are not typically employed as anti-shipping weapons, and so would not necessarily be useful for invasion-interdiction roles.

There are also regular mentions in the 2009 Defence White Paper of the need for the ADF to carry out humanitarian and stabilisation missions, meaning that internationalist logic also features prominently. The report claims that the most likely use of the helicopter carriers and the strategic sealift ship will be in such roles. However, the white paper added immediately that the ADF should be able to make contributions including potentially substantial ones to operations [in the wider] Asia-Pacific region. When this is considered in light of what is said about the US (it will remain indispensable to our security and the chief guarantor of a stable global strategic environment) and about China, it becomes somewhat clearer how important forward defence logic remains. It is said, for example, that:

the pace, scope and structure of China’s military modernisation 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. China has begun to do this, but it needs to do more. If it does not, there is likely to be a question in the minds of regional states about the long-term strategic purpose of its force

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21 Defending Australia, ibid., 73.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., 60.
24 Ibid., 50.
25 Ibid., 32.
modernisation appears potentially to be beyond the scope of what would be required for a conflict over Taiwan.²⁶

²⁶Ibid., 34.
²⁷Ibid., 38.
trying to smooth the waters in the face of even greater suspicion about Beijing’s future intentions.\footnote{Rowan Callick, ‘We are no threat, China seeks to reassure,’ \textit{The Australian}, 12 February 2011.}

However, confidential American diplomatic cables make public by WikiLeaks in 2010 help put the white paper’s view of China in perspective. In a conversation with Hillary Rodham Clinton, the US secretary of state, in March 2009 (in other words, just weeks before the white paper’s release), Rudd described himself as a ‘brutal realist’ when it came to China. He claimed that Australia, the United States, and the other democracies in Asia should be prepared to deploy force if everything went wrong, noting in particular that Beijing was dangerously paranoid about all sorts of threats to its absolutist rule, especially regarding Taiwan and Tibet.\footnote{Greg Sheridan, ‘Shrewd Captain of our ship of security’, \textit{The Australian}, 7 December 2010: Rowan Callick, ‘Rudd may come unstuck over China relations,’ \textit{The Australian}, 7 December 2010: Rowan Callick, ‘Rudd may come unstuck over China relations,’ \textit{The Australian}, 7 December 2010: Greg Sheridan, ‘The realist we need in foreign affairs,’ \textit{The Australian}, 9 December 2010.}

These cables also revealed that one of Rudd’s policy initiatives—his call for the creation of an Asia Pacific Community—was not necessarily motivated, as one may expect on the face of it, by internationalist logic alone. As he explained to Clinton, he wanted to see America more enmeshed in Asian multilateral forums to ensure China did not dominate them. Other cables revealed that this advice led to a significant reversal in thinking in Washington, following which the US joined the already-existing East Asia Summit (it had first been non-committal about the idea early on in Obama’s presidency).\footnote{AAP, ‘Hillary Clinton grilled Kevin Rudd on dealing with China, according to WikiLeaks cable,’ \textit{The Australian}, 5 December 2010.}

Rudd, in short, seemed determined to ensure that Australia should be in a position to help the US and other Asian states contain China if need be. Rudd’s thinking, however, did not strike a chord with Hugh White. In August 2010 White argued strongly that China should not be contained. He began his paper by noting

There is a problem with Australia’s view of its future. On the one hand we assume China will just keep growing indefinitely, buying more and more from our miners. On the other hand, we expect America to remain the strongest power in Asia. We will have a very nice future if both these things happen. The problem is that they cannot both happen at once.\footnote{Hugh White, ‘Australia’s Future Between Washington and Beijing,’ \textit{Quarterly Essay}, 39 (2010), 1.}

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30Rowan Callick, ‘We are no threat, China seeks to reassure,’ \textit{The Australian}, 12 February 2011.
32AAP, ‘Hillary Clinton grilled Kevin Rudd on dealing with China, according to WikiLeaks cable,’ \textit{The Australian}, 5 December 2010.
White believed the US had roughly three choices in its future dealings with China: withdraw from Asia, share power with China, or compete with it for primacy. He later assesses the implication for Australia of America’s various choices, arguing that even though both countries share similar cultural values, if the US abandoned strategic interests elsewhere in Asia Australia should not expect it to remain a reliable ally. Sentiment only goes so far in international affairs, he says, and Australia would have little choice but to adapt to life in China’s orbit. But if the US contested China’s rise a sustained strategic struggle would drive Asia’s economy backwards, taking Australia with it. Australia should instead try to persuade the US to share power with China and with the other major powers [earlier he mentioned Japan and India, and possibly Indonesia, in this regard] in a concert.

White’s article excited much comment. Fruelling and Freer respectfully noted that he wrote with characteristically elegant style but that nevertheless his argument is mechanistic in nature for two reasons. First, it too easily assumed that China’s economic raw-power rise was inevitable and would simply continue unabated for decades. Second it passes over the importance of political and ideological aspects of world affairs. In short, they felt that America was not necessarily alone in raw-power terms, and that in any event its power was based on its unique ability to create international alliances and coalitions around shared interests and values.

Others were less charitable: Greg Sheridan, for example, called White’s paper the single stupidest strategic document ever prepared in Australian history by someone who once held a position of some responsibility and accused White of advising Australia to sell out by pressing the US to roll over because apparently no one should ever criticise China.

While I feel Sheridan’s critique is too harsh, I also think White’s article is flawed. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that it has been overtaken by events given that, without knowing exactly when it was penned, it is likely that it was completed sometime in early 2010 to ensure it could be published in August of that year. To

34Ibid, 36.
36Ibid., 51.
37Ibid., 49.
38Stephan Fruelling and Benjamin Freer, ‘Hugh White and the hyperpuissance,’ The Interpreter, 15 September 2010.
which explains why, if America cannot remain the Asia-Pacific hegemon (an assumption I also question), Australia should be satisfied with some sort of concert arrangement to manage the region which, in turn, assumes China would be relatively satisfied with the current status quo. But, as I explain below, China’s behaviour in the past year, especially after the time when White presumably submitted his paper for publication, indicates the assumption that China is a responsible stakeholder (as Robert Zoellick famously called for it to be in 2005) may be flawed and that Rudd’s reading of China’s intentions may be the more accurate one. At minimum I harbour a nagging suspicion that White’s article may one day attain, with hindsight, a status somewhat akin to the first edition of E.H. Carr’s Twenty Years Crisis.

A quick survey of events which strained bilateral relations in 2009 is instructive. First, several state-owned Chinese companies tried to take major stakes in Australian resource companies in early 2009, and when the Australian government blocked them (as China does regularly with similar bids) several quite serious diplomatic tiffs broke out. In July 2009, the seemingly arbitrary arrest of a naturalised Australian citizen, Hu Stern, by Chinese officials excited significant agitation given the quite obvious (at least from Australia’s perspective) political and trade-related motives behind it. Then almost immediately a row broke out when China formally demanded that the Melbourne Film Festival not show a film directed by a Uighur activist and when the request was denied (and the Australian government refused to intervene) the Festival’s website was brought down by cyber-attacks emanating from Chinese IP addresses. Greg Sheridan took these and other events as proof that China seemed bent on using raw power to take whatever it wants and titled his piece with some pointed advice to the Australian

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42 This edition, published in mid-1939, included several paragraphs advising the democracies to ‘accommodate’ Hitler on the basis that being a realist sometimes required adjusting to rising powers. These paragraphs were excised from the second and all subsequent editions: Michael Cox, The Twenty Years Crisis by EH Carr (Basingstoke: Houndmills, 2001 [1946]), lxx–lxxx.
Another commentator noted in early 2011 that the 'tough turn' represented by the white paper turns out to be prescient.⁴⁷

In 2010, a series of events that did not directly involve Australia nonetheless worried China-watchers.⁴⁸ First, the Chinese government remained non-committal after North Korea sunk, in an unprovoked attack, a South Korean frigate, the ROKS Cheonan, in March 2010; likewise, when North Korea shelled South Korean islands in late 2010, Beijing did little to rein it in, causing concern in Australia and elsewhere.⁴⁹ When the Japanese coastguard arrested a Chinese fisherman off disputed islands, the Chinese government also reacted sharply, making tit-for-tat arrests of Japanese businessmen and freezing exports of rare-earth minerals to Japan for a time.⁵⁰ China also described the South China Sea as a core interest, a phrase hitherto reserved for Taiwan and Tibet. When China’s foreign minister, Yang Jiechi, was asked at an ASEAN forum in July 2010 what China meant by this, he responded that China is a big country and other countries are small countries, and that just a fact you [i.e. ASEAN states] will need to learn to live with.⁵¹ For his part, Paul Dibb mused that if China persisted with this sort of attitude it might need to be taught a naval lesson in the future.⁵² Finally, when Robert Gates, the US Secretary of Defense, visited Beijing in January 2011 news that the Chinese were developing carrier-buster ballistic missiles and a stealth-fighter prototype provocatively broke, leading some sources to wonder whether the PLA stage-managed the revelations without authorisation from the senior figures in Beijing in a brazen act of insubordination.⁵³ Babbage took the opportunity to chime in, noting that China’s sea denial strategy could readily be used against it by an RAN equipped with nuclear-powered submarines to blockade its coast, exploiting its heavy dependence on international trade to achieve growth.⁵⁴ These and other events, especially the serious strains in the Indo-Chinese

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⁴⁷The Australian, 20 September 2010.
⁴⁸Michael Sainsbury, ‘Our hard line turns out to be prescient,’ The Australian, 8 January 2011.
⁵¹‘If China bullies on the high seas, it may need to be taught a naval lesson’, The Australian, 8 November 2010.
⁵³China is not competing with the US on equal terms by seeking to project force globally: instead, it tries to deny the US Navy the ability to operate close to its shores: ‘Special Report on China’s Place in the World,’ The Economist, 4 December 2010.
⁵⁴Greg Sheridan, ‘Time to beat China at its own game,’ The Australian, 5 February 2010.
China’s announcement in March 2011 that it was planning to increase its military spending by almost 13 per cent, the largest single annual rise in three decades, seem to indicate that Australia’s external strategic environment is deteriorating, which in turn suggests that a rearmament program (albeit not a ‘crash’ one) of the sort outlined in the 2009 Defence White Paper is relevant.

Regarding matters of resonance, in response to Chinese belligerence the US began strengthening its presence in the region by upgrading its strategic ties with South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and even Vietnam. These and other moves suggest the administration of Barack Obama was seeking to ‘balance’ America’s strategic efforts away from the Middle East, where it has been preoccupied for a decade now, and towards Asia. And Australia was not forgotten: when Clinton and Gates attended the annual AUSMIN meetings in November 2010 several new agreements covering matters from a higher-tempo war-games schedule to enhanced space and cyber-defence cooperation were signed. The Americans even floated the idea that Australia could in future host a ‘lilypad’ (i.e. a store of pre-positioned US heavy equipment). Thus, in strategic cultural terms, forward defence logic remains a powerful driver of Australian strategic policy: while a ‘dangerous China’ would have to be handled by Australia alone if absolutely necessary, if the US is actively renewing its strategic commitment to the Asia-Pacific region it seems only logical that Australia would participate in multilateral, US-led efforts to face China down. Rudd’s white paper, therefore, seeks to chart a prudent course in which Australia will continue to enhance its self-reliant strategic capabilities, hedging against the possibility that the US may disengage in the future – indeed, the white paper specifically discusses the need to hedge in this manner without precipitously abandoning the valuable ANZUS alliance.

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56 Michael Sainsbury, ’Region nervous as China boosts defence spend,’ The Australian, 5 March 2011.
63 Australia-US Ministerial Consultations – the foreign and defence ministers/secretaries of each country meet annually.
64 Paul Kelly, ’Deeper US alliance in response to strident China,’ The Australian, 10 November 2010.
65 ’Defending Australia, 38.'
yet because the white paper was in many ways Rudd’s, it remains unclear whether the ADF will expand in the manner outlined by it. This is a real possibility because Rudd fell from power spectacularly on 24 June 2010.

One commentator, hours after the resignation, described the downfall thus:

Extraordinary. Absolutely extraordinary. Kevin Rudd, who won the heart of a nation with an apology to the stolen generations, is no more. Kevin Rudd, who achieved the highest approval rating of any prime minister ever, is history. Gone in the blink of an eye. [H]e presented as a politician who couldn’t for the life of him, figure out what had gone wrong; why somebody who had achieved so much could possibly have been rejected by his own party.64

The precise details of how this occurred cannot be detailed herein other than to say he made a series of policy gaffes (reversing Labor’s environmental policy stance, becoming bogged down in difficult reforms of the health and education sectors, precipitously launching a tax on mining profits etc) and he had already upset the powerbrokers in his own party by adopting a President-style whereby his minders and spin-doctors were perceived to be running the country, leaving cabinet out of the loop.65

The effect of Rudd’s downfall is the most pertinent issue. Labor was left confused with an election due soon: Julia Gillard had been a reluctant hatchet-woman and seemed not fully prepared to assume the top job at that particular moment66; the general public was unhappy with the way a new prime minister had been foisted upon them as a result of internal party machinations67; and Queensland voters (i.e. from Rudd’s home state) were especially aggrieved by the demise of their favourite son, the first Prime Minister from that state since the 1920s.68

With hindsight, perhaps Gillard should have opted for a poll in the final months of 2010, but she chose to call the election early and on 21 August 2010 the Labor party performed poorly, returning 72 seats, the same number as the Coalition. After three weeks of negotiation Gillard formed a minority government, relying on the votes of the first

66Graeme Richardson, ‘For heaven’s sake, PM, expose the Greens,’ The Australian, 12 November 2010.
67Julia Gillard’s Rising Waters,’ The Economist, 6 January 2011.
68This is not technically correct: the Queenslander Frank Forde was Interim Prime Minister for 7 days in July 1945 following John Curtin’s death, before being defeated by Ben Chifley in a Labor leadership ballot.
Green elected to the lower house and three independents. At the time of writing the government had survived for just over six months, but it has been plagued by pressure from the left (i.e. the Greens),\(^6^9\) the right (the Coalition)\(^7^0\) and fractious relations between the three independents.\(^7^1\) It is not clear, therefore, how long it will last.

Future financial restraints may well mean the 2009 Defence White Paper will not be implemented in full. But given the surprisingly strong performance of the Australian economy during the 2008-2009 Global Financial Crisis\(^7^2\) Australia was the only OECD country that did not fall into recession;\(^7^3\) it was not blighted by persistent unemployment; and it rebounded with strong growth\(^7^4\) it seems likely that the possible financial 'complications' touched upon in the white paper itself are unlikely to manifest themselves, at least in the near term. Instead, I maintain that any doubts one may have about whether the 2009 Defence White Paper will be fully implemented are related more to the spectre of political uncertainty and instability which hangs over the current government.

So, while the Greens, for example, are not deeply concerned about foreign and especially strategic policy (see Chapter 8), Andrew Shearer warned recently that they are still "the latest incarnation of the Loopy Left in Australia," noting that their manifesto and public statements reveal that they would (if they could) end Australia's multi-billion-dollar uranium export industry, abrogate ANZUS, allow ADF personal to conscientiously object to particular military missions they were ordered to perform, and reduce Australia's defence budget to combat climate change which, according to their leader Bob Brown, "represents by far the greatest threat to world peace and security."\(^7^5\) Then, in early 2001, prominent political figures responded vociferously to the call by Green Senator-elect Lee Rhiannon for Australia to impose a boycott on Israeli goods: Rudd noted that "this is the stuff of foreign policy being made by preschoolers," John Howard labelled it "an extremist position," noting that it implicitly aligned the Greens with Hamas; and Bob Carr, the former Labor NSW premier, commented that the Greens have been

\(^6^9\) Julian Drape, 'Greens MP warns Labor on unions,' The Age, 1 October 2010; Dennis Shanahan and Matthew Franklin, 'Labor revolt on gay marriage,' The Australian, 3 March 2011; Paul Kelly, 'Brown leads Labor on a merry dance,' The Australian, 4 March 2010.

\(^7^0\) Matthew Franklin and Sid Maher, 'PM Julia Gillard under attack over carbon policy,' The Australian, 4 March 2011; Paul Maley, 'Ruddock lashes Labor for asylum-seeker "disaster,"' The Australian, 10 January 2011.

\(^7^1\) Jame Walker, 'Bob Katter reveals three amigos schism,' The Australian, 20 January 2011.


is about time they faced some scrutiny. So, while the Greens experienced record levels of support in 2010-2011, they are highly unlikely to ever hold office on their own and they become especially exposed to accusations of amateurism when they venture into the foreign policy realm. Nevertheless, Australia’s preferential voting system does give them sway over the direction of Labor government policy. Moreover, after the 2010 elections, Prime Minister Julia Gillard had to rely on their single seat in the House of Representatives to govern.  

The uncertainty over the defence procurement plans announced in 2009 was perhaps best illustrated by the fact that in the 2010–2011 financial year the Department of Defence forecasted that it was planning to under spend its allocated budget by over $600 million, almost three per cent of the defence budget and this would occur despite the fact that the white paper expected defence expenditure would need to expand by a minimum of three per cent per year in real terms for a decade. Unsurprisingly, the radical expansion of the submarine fleet caused most of the concern. It was reported in September 2010 that when the Greens were negotiating with Labor the terms on which they would support a Gillard government, they indicated that they would press for a line-by-line revision of the white paper with special attention to the need to expand the submarine fleet.

On the other hand, it should also be noted that ordinary cost-controversies were not absent either: Andrew Davies estimated that twelve customised submarines would cost around $36 billion, while twelve off-the-shelf could cost under $9 billion. This is why Babbage suggested Australia should purchase American-made nuclear submarines, which are both off-the-shelf (and thus relatively cheap) and which also far out-perform any conventionally-powered boat when it comes to operational range. However, this was an unlikely option in a minority situation, since the Greens would never support an ALP government which equipped the RAN with nuclear-powered submarines.

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75 Ben Packenham and Dennis Shanahan, ‘Bob Brown puts Greens Left on notice,’ The Australian, 2 April 2011.
78 Brendan Nicholson, ‘Defence’s $600m under spend,’ The Australian, 15 February 2011.
79 Dan Oakes, ‘Pressure on to sink subs plan,’ The Age, 11 September 2010. It should be noted that one of the independents, Andrew Wilkie, also suggested that this item in particular ‘needed addressing.’
80 ‘How to Build and Buy a Submarine: Defining and Building Australia’s Submarine Fleet,’ Strategic Insights 48 (Australian Strategic Policy Institute), 29 October 2009.
81 Sheridan, ‘Time to beat China.’
While I have so far focused on obstacles to the realisation of the plans outlined in the 2009 Defence White Paper, there are also reasons why it could be implemented, if not in full then at least substantially. The first is the ALP's strong commitment to ANZUS. Julia Gillard has on a number of occasions reiterated that she and her party are deeply committed to ANZUS. Indeed, on a prime ministerial visit to the United States, she called the Americans ‘great mates,’ a social-relationship-signifier with great cultural resonance to Australians (who use it to describe their closest friendships). And as Rudd was wont to do, Gillard's professions of loyalty tend to be peppered with subtle but unmistakable signals to the effect that she will ensure Latham-like anti-American sentiment within Labor gets short shrift. Finally, when in Washington in March 2011 she agreed with Senator John McCain’s statements during a joint press conference that China had been behaving assertively in the region and that Australia and America should step up strategic co-operation with this in mind. Clearly, then, Gillard harbours similar doubts about China to those which informed Rudd’s 2009 Defence White Paper.

The second reason to expect that much of the white paper is likely to be implemented as long as the ALP forms the government is the fact that Kevin Rudd remained as a senior cabinet member after he was deposed. In September 2010, he was appointed foreign minister and it was widely acknowledged that Gillard took her lead from him when it comes to foreign policy matters: she openly admitted that she has little interest in or experience of international affairs and that Rudd’s advice was appreciated. Finally, there are few glaring differences between Labor’s favoured strategic policy direction and the conservative Coalition’s. Tony Abbott, the Opposition Leader, endorsed Australia’s continuing commitment to the Afghan campaign, he noted that he would support the government’s invitation for Japanese troops to train in Australia, and in his pre-election address to a foreign policy forum the only significant difference he identified between the Coalition’s and Labor’s defence policy related to

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82 Peter Hartcher, ‘Curtin call an excellent debut,’ The Australian, 27 June 2008
87 ‘Tony Abbott’s speech to Parliament on Australia’s deployment to Afghanistan: transcript,’ The Australian, 19 October 2010.
Future Forecasting: The Utility of a Strategic Cultural Approach

The strategic cultural model outlined in this thesis is an analytical one. It is essentially a variety of foreign policy analysis which, because it is falsifiable, enables us to make testable predictions about the future course of a state’s strategic decision-making. Specifically, because the influence of the various strategic sub-cultures over a state’s strategic decision-making is affected by their relevance to a state’s external strategic environment, and their resonance with a state’s dominant cultural identity, by paying attention to the possibilities for changes to both of these two broad factors it should be possible to make tentative conclusions about the future.

I admit that it is probably easier to predict how a state’s external strategic environment will change than it is to predict whether its dominant cultural identity will alter significantly. I say this because there are many statistics gathered in the modern world which seem to be more relevant for predicting future trends in the former than possible changes in the latter: statistics about GDP-growth, demographic trends, export volumes, development of new military technologies, arms sales and so on are all assiduously collected, disseminated and analysed to estimate the relative distribution of hard power in the international system. Even the less tangible notion of relative soft power can be approached statistically: the regular and very-large-sample, cross-national polling of attitudes towards America (among other issues) undertaken by the Pew Institute are useful in this regard, for example.

Having said this, it is not impossible to speculate about whether a state’s dominant cultural identity may shift: immigration statistics may indicate that this is likely to occur (or not); and consideration of internal polling data over time may help too. Still, it seems inherently more difficult to predict major shifts in cultural values and attitudes with confidence: who, in the 1950s, would have thought the Beat Generation poets bussing across America, or the surfers catching waves in Hawaii, were heralds of the cultural revolution that swept the West and changed it.

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89Speech, The Lowy Institute, Sydney, 24 April 2010.
said all this about predicting the future, I do not cite GDP statistics below (although I do touch on some immigration statistics), and nor do I chart the likely future course of Australian strategic decision-making in any significant depth: the intent of this study was not to actually predict the future of Australian strategic decision-making but to present a model outlining how one may do so. I will reserve more detailed analysis of this matter for future studies.

So, turning to the manner in which one might assess the meaning of changes in the external environment using my strategic cultural model, there are two major considerations which affect the relative influence of the various strategic sub-cultures over time. First, likely changes in the relative hard power of other states are obviously important: China is rising; India is rising too; Japan is declining, possibly absolutely; America is declining in relative terms, although because it is not suffering a demographic decline like Japan its potential for growth seems greater. Second, the purpose of this study was to demonstrate that such things do not by themselves determine how states behave. States’ intentions matter, as well as their capabilities, so we should also be sensitive to changes in what are, in effect, the great powers’ strategic cultures (and other states but obviously to a lesser extent). Will China play the responsible stakeholder role (as it repeatedly says it will), or will it assume the role of a regional bully-boy (as some believe its recent actions demonstrate it is becoming)? Will America remain a strong presence in the Asia-Pacific (as it repeatedly says it will) or will it slowly withdraw into neo-isolationism (as it has done before)? A subjective change in another state, a change in its attitude or its seeming intentions, given its recent behaviour, is in effect an objective change from Australia’s perspective.

So, changes in other states’ capabilities, and their intentions, shape the external strategic environment for the target state. And this in turn affects the relevance of strategic sub-cultures: to reiterate, if China were to become increasingly more assertive and aggressive both a change in America’s relative power (i.e. a decline) and a change in its strategic culture (i.e. a retreat into isolationism) would have obvious effects on the relevance of the forward defence sub-culture, or at least the traditional variety of such in which the US is Australia’s major ally. In such circumstances Australia would need to look to another power (India?) both powerful and determined enough to face down China, or to a non-Chinese regional multilateral alliance (built around ASEAN, plus South Korea, Japan and
continental defence would probably become ‘strongly dominant’, instead of just ‘dominant, but not especially so’ as it is at present and has been for several decades.

Other options are of course ‘possible’ in the widest sense of the word – a substantially-reformed UN could emerge as a sort of ‘real’ global government (rather than just a forum for states to meet) with both the capability and intention of imposing an effective collective security system, in which case internationalism may rise to dominance. And other possibilities could be envisaged in which one of the latent sub-cultures could emerge to dominance: a serious deterioration of the strategic situation in Asia to something resembling Europe in the late 1930s may demand that the ‘relatively-cheap’ variety of continental defence Australia has favoured for several decades be rapidly transformed into Babbage-style robust self-defence. But it should be clear by now that there is a reason why the primary sub-cultures are more relevant than the others – they have ‘fitted’ Australia’s historical strategic circumstances better, and to envisage other traditions rising to dominance requires speculating about the coming to pass of future scenarios which seem more and more removed from current realities.

How much, if at all, might Australia’s dominant cultural identity alter in the future? Such changes have obvious implications for the degree to which the various strategic sub-cultures resonate, and so for their influence over strategic decision-making relative to one another. Given that Australia’s dominant cultural identity has changed in the past it is probably only reasonable to expect that it will change somewhat in the future, but as noted above, charting the future of any state’s dominant cultural identity seems to be somewhat less predictable than speculating about changes in that state’s external strategic environment. I would suggest, however, that in Australia’s case we should pay particular attention to two matters: the rate and type of immigration, and the extent to which ‘basic assumptions’ change (and to illustrate the latter I explore how ‘green ideas’, put broadly, may be becoming the ‘new commonsense’).

With respect to the former, Australia has obviously always been an immigrant nation. In proportional terms the rate of immigration compared to the existing population has steadily slowed: for example, in 1960 there were 10.3 million Australians and in the following decade 1.3 million immigrants arrived, yet in 2000 there were 19.3 million citizens and over the next decade only 900,000 immigrants entered. The rate of arrivals did rise steadily
158,000 in 2008–2009, although changes to the eligibility of overseas students to remain in Australia after finishing their degrees saw a slight dip in the figures for the year 2009–2010, which is likely to persist. Whatever the details, the fact that immigrants continue to arrive in reasonably high, steady numbers would suggest that there is at least a possibility that Australia’s dominant cultural identity will alter simply because individuals with different cultural identities are entering the state.

There are, however, two reasons why it is unlikely that we will see a radical change in Australia’s dominant cultural identity. First, many immigrants assimilate or integrate substantially into the existing fabric of society and therefore probably do not substantially change the Australian state’s dominant cultural identity. Second, without entering the (vociferous and voluminous) debate about the exact extent to which this assimilation or integration process occurs or is likely to occur in the future, I do note that in 2008–2009 Oceania and Europe accounted for 49 per cent of the total immigrants, and overwhelmingly large numbers (over 95 per cent) of these were from New Zealand and Great Britain respectively. Asian immigration (including from India), on the other hand, comprised just over 20 per cent while entrants from the Middle East and Africa totalled 14 per cent. Thus substantial groups of immigrants arrive from cultures which are very similar to Australia’s, suggesting that future changes in dominant cultural identity are far from certain to be caused by immigration.

With regard to possible changes in the dominant cultural identity unrelated to the influx of individuals with different ideas and values it would seem quite difficult to predict such for the simple reason that in the past the most momentous cultural changes have occurred quite unexpectedly. But to illustrate how such might occur the best example I can envisage concerns the possibility that Australians (or just their elites?) are accepting green ideas more readily than ever in recent years. Why would this be occurring? Australia has always been regarded as a sort of land of extremes, a country in which the environmental balance is somewhat precarious. In the decade after 2000

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92 ‘Fact Sheet 2,’ Department of Immigration.
and floods were becoming worse as a result of climate change. Yet the percentage of people reporting that they felt Australia should take steps now to solve such problems—even if this involves significant costs—fell steadily from 68 per cent in 2006 to 46 per cent in 2010.

Perhaps more importantly, elite values on such matters seem to be shifting. Paul Kelly argued in early 2011 that the insiders, usually tertiary educated, are believers in climate change while the outsiders and disbelievers or doubters are found mainly in rural and regional Australia [and] the development states of Western Australia and Queensland. His instincts regarding this matter are supported by a study carried out by the Agriculture Department in late 2010 which found that while 58 percent of city-dwellers believed the persistent droughts which blighted the decade between 2000 and 2010 were caused by climate change, only 27 per cent of rural residents agreed. Kelly says further that The Greens, once outsiders, are becoming part of the insider culture as they gain power and influence. But he goes on to note that attitudes also seem to be polarising: as more people throw their weight firmly behind the Greens (i.e. evidenced by their strong showing at the 2010 federal election) there are also many whose climate-scepticism is hardening.

It is obviously too early to say exactly what this seeming shift in values will cause, politically speaking, in the future other than to note again that it may presage some sort of age of uncertainty (or at least persistent minority governments). Having said this, it can be argued that both the shift in attitudes towards the environment and the rise of the Green Party are actually not particularly important phenomena in the context of strategic culture if only because, first, voters keep environmental and strategic policy matters conceptually distinct and, second, the Greens are not especially interested in wringing concessions from Labor in the strategic policy realm. But it serves as an example of how we might track the potential for deep and profound changes in a state’s dominant cultural identity, especially if some sort of tipping point were reached: for example, a decade in which floods similar to those afflicting Queensland in January 2011 manifested themselves almost every year may tilt attitudes decisively in

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93Melissa Fyfe, ‘It’s not drought, it’s climate change, say scientists,’ The Age, 30 August 2009; David Fogarty, ‘Scientists see climate change link to Australian floods,’ The Australian, 12 January 2011.
95Sid Maher ‘Climate Change “long drought”,’ The Age, 9 January 2011.
96Kelly, ‘An irreconcilable difference.’
a decade of consistent-but-moderate rainfall in Victoria (i.e. a return to normal) may tilt cultural attitudes in the other direction.

So, it is these kinds of trends we should be paying attention to when we consider how the various strategic sub-cultures may rise and fall in relative influence vis-à-vis one another in future, at least from a resonance perspective. There are, of course, polls which track more properly strategic attitudes: the Lowy Institute’s *Australia and the World* poll in 2010 showed that the US alliance remains *important* or *very important* to a very strong majority of Australians (86 per cent)\(^97\) while the number who believe China is *trying* to dominate Asia has risen, from 60 per cent in 2008 to 69 per cent in 2010. But the same 2010 poll showed that 73 per cent felt that *China*’s growth has been good for Australia,\(^8\) which indicates that the sort of tension between economic and strategic well-being that White believed was present in Australian foreign policy may well one day *come* to a head with profound implications for Australia’s strategic culture. But, again, we must recall Gyngell’s and Wesley’s warnings (see Chapter 5) that public opinion tends to affect Australian foreign policy only fleetingly and inconsistently, and it is shifts in the beliefs and attitudes of the relatively small cadre of foreign- and strategic-policy makers which really matter. And to my mind there is little prospect that the mainstream-elite conception of Australia’s cultural identity will shift fundamentally to favour, for example, China over America as Australia’s main strategic ally. Indeed, even outside the mainstream, so especially in the Green party (putting aside Kelly’s belief that it is *becoming mainstream*) one would expect that China’s poor human rights record and patchy-at-best environmental record would not endear it much either.

**Future Studies: Applying the Strategic Cultural Model**

At the end of Chapter 3 I outlined three reasons why I had chosen Australia as my illustrative case study, and the following discussion is accordingly structured with reference to them. I decided to focus upon Australia because, first, it is neither too big to be *exceptional* nor too small to be *insignificant*, making it a fairly typical state - or at minimum it is a middle power, and there are quite a few other states of roughly the same economic size and

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\(^{97}\) Hanson, ‘Australia and the World,’ 12.

\(^{8}\) Ibid., 10.
productive (or war-fighting) potential. Second, it is an open, liberal-democratic society whose strategic discourse is available (for the most part) to scholars for study. And finally, perhaps most importantly, Australia is a prime example of a relatively monocultural state, with a single, stable, broadly Anglo culture.

Why would it be important to illustrate my strategic cultural model with reference to a middle of the range state? One reason is related to general academic- or policy-relevance: it is difficult to imagine many scholars being especially interested in the strategic culture of, say, Nepal or Paraguay because their inherent weakness means that they are unlikely to actually profoundly affect other states much. This is not always the case, of course: Israel is also quite small, especially demographically, but its unique history, critical location and diplomatic links with the world’s only superpower mean that it will continue to be closely studied by strategists: indeed, this state would provide a fascinating strategic-cultural case study. Nevertheless, readers can probably grasp intuitively that perhaps a little over half of the 200 or so states in the world are not especially important strategic players. That is not to overdo the importance of Australia, which is no strategic giant. But it is a player, if only a middling one, and there are quite a few which are in a roughly similar position. More theoretically, the minnows may also be particularly strategically-constrained by their relative weakness. In other words, their strategic cultures, their internal strategic preferences, may not really matter much in global political terms.

By the same token, but in the other extreme, it may be possible that the strategic cultural model outlined herein may not be especially applicable to great powers, and in particular the greatest of such, the hegemon (i.e. America at the moment) because they may be especially unconstrained. I am much less confident that this reversal of logic is sustainable: no matter how powerful the US is (or was in the 1990s, for example), it is and was quite manifestly subject to strategic constraints. Britain in the nineteenth century also failed to always get its way, and Napoleonic France learnt the limits of relative ascendancy harshly, as did Louis XIV (several times) and the Hapsburgs before him. Yet it is at least arguable that great powers are so powerful that the affect of their cultural preferences are somewhat muted because they have more scope for strategic choice than ordinary states. At the very least the impressive strategic capabilities which by definition make these powers great may mean that their strategic cultures are more flexible — their sheer size may simply give them more strategic options than most states.
Yet I do not press this last point, it is merely speculation requiring much more careful exploration. I have of course argued consistently that all humans think in all social contexts, including the strategic, through culture, or more specifically through the collective cognitive schemas that populate cultures. The leaders of great powers or hegemons are no different, suggesting that cultural analysis must have at least some applicability to them. And, further, another reversal of logic is relevant here: unlike the minnows discussed immediately above the great powers matter profoundly in the sense that their actions affect other states significantly. So, for this reason I ultimately call for strategic cultural studies of the great powers until such time as it was proven that such were not productive.

Having said this, however, it is still my belief that the best initial strategic cultural work using my model would be done on states which are roughly similar to Australia: so, middle powers which are not strategically insignificant but who are also not great powers. Study of such states, not least because there are many more of them, would also enable the development of more generalisable strategic-cultural theory.

With respect to the second general matter, Australia is and has always been a relatively open society. This means that its strategic discourse is available for scholars to study—the only important sources of evidence for strategic decision-making which are classified (and then for only thirty years) are the Strategic Basis Papers, and much of their content has been released publicly (albeit in sanitised form) in white papers or strategic reviews. Otherwise there is plenty of strategic discourse readily available to scholars from newspapers, academic journals and government sources: indeed, the recent explosion of foreign policy- and especially strategic policy-focused think-tanks means that significantly more discourse is being produced in the past decade than ever before.

This is a matter of no small importance when considering the states to which the strategic cultural model could be applied. There are obviously many whose strategic decision-making processes are far more opaque or whose strategic discourse is relatively less available. For example, a comparable study of South Africa would be difficult because the research material is more difficult to access. For example, in the absence of a strict 30-year rule, a sort of ‘apartheid-era hangover’ appears to have made post-apartheid governments reluctant to declassify historical strategic-policy documents. Likewise, resources pose a problem. The South African defence archives fill an entire eight-story building in Pretoria, yet they are run by a single professionally-trained official with a staff of three non-professional staff; the catalogue has never been digitized.

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different, sub-conscious biases may skew interpretation. Accordingly, the strategic cultural model outlined in this study is probably best applied to democratic and open, and therefore (generally speaking) developed and so quite wealthy and well-organised states which produce a vigorous strategic discourse. And there are, of course, practical language-barriers which may make close analysis of a state's strategic culture more difficult. While much of India's, or Malaysia's, or even the Nordic states' strategic discourse is conducted in English, the dominant medium of communications in the field of IR, unilingual English-speakers would nevertheless have to weigh their case study choices carefully.

Regarding the final general matter requiring discussion, Australia was a relatively easy case to illustrate the strategic cultural model presented herein because it is relatively monocultural. This is not to say that other cultural groups do not exist within the borders of the Australian state: cultural differences between Aboriginal Australians and Anglo-Australians remain significant, for example, but the fact that the former group comprises little more than two per cent of the population and remains relatively politically marginalised means that its influence upon policy matters generally, and especially strategic policy (i.e. which does not typically affect it directly like education, health or criminal justice policies do) is severely circumscribed. In short, there seems little prospect that another ethnically-, religiously- or otherwise culturally-distinct domestic group is likely to capture the state and bring a radically different set of basic, culturally-different assumptions about the world generally and strategic matters specifically to the fore. There are of course many states where similar conditions apply.

Yet there are a number of other states whose sectarian divisions, whether they be primarily ethnic or religious (or even class-based) pose various problems for strategic cultural analysis of the sort I have outlined herein. Take the case of South Africa: the antagonistic relationship between whites and blacks always meant that before the 1990s there was the potential for a radical strategic-cultural transformation. In other words, had a model like the one I have outlined been applied to this state in the 1960s, 1970s or 1980s the analysis would have been preoccupied with studying the various strategic subcultures within the white population which monopolised the state. Yet there was clearly another quite distinct culture waiting in the wings, so to speak, to take over the state and make strategic decisions based on a very different set of assumptions and driven by a very different friend/foe calculus. In short, this would have cast an unavoidable pall of uncertainty over attempts at future-forecasting. And,
state, radically altering South Africa’s strategic culture and transforming it from a ‘pariah state’ to perhaps the ‘leading’ state in sub-Saharan Africa virtually overnight.

Yet such cases are probably relatively easy when compared to the situation in which a substantial minority exists within a state’s borders which could at least potentially significantly affect strategic decision-making, but which is also unlikely to capture the state and provide a clean break with the past. For example, the presence of Québécois in Canada, Chinese in Malaysia or Russians in Ukraine may raise at least two complicating factors when it comes to the analysis of a state’s strategic culture. First, there may be an analytically-confusing proliferation of sub-cultures in the sense that each distinct national culture within the state may have a number of sub-cultures. If there are only two such nations within a state capable of exerting significant influence on strategic policy, as is the case with Canada, these problems may be analytically manageable, but in the case of a bewilderingly-ethnically-diverse state like Nigeria they may be practically insurmountable. The second problem arises when the relationships between the nations or cultures within the borders of a state are unstable. The South African case mentioned above was one such in that there was always a question about the longevity of the apartheid state, a nagging worry (from a purely analytical perspective) that a major change would occur by which a different ethnic group came to dominate the state, ‘wiping away’ all of one’s findings, although in this particular case after the change occurred there now seems little or no prospect of it reversing. There may be other states, however, in which control or influence over the state seesaws between groups unpredictably: an extreme example is of course provided by Rwanda, where Hutus and Tutsis have at different times dominated the state. And, further, the type of relationships that predominate between groups within the state may also profoundly complicate analysis. There is always has been some underlying tension between French- and English-speaking Canadians but they have not fought violently for centuries. In Pakistan, however, the Pashtun minority in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been effectively at war with the Punjabi/Sindhi-dominated central government for several years now. In Sri Lanka the Tamils formed a virtually independent state in the north for several decades before this was crushed amid great bloodshed in 2009: it should be

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likely to hold very different attitudes towards the circumstances in
which the Sri Lankan state uses military force.

My point is a simple one: the more ethnically diverse a particular state is the more difficult it will be to apply my strategic cultural model to it. The matters discussed in this last and final section do set practical limits on efforts to do so. With respect to which particular states I feel would be the most practical to undertake similar analyses of in the near-future, I point to the various states which emerged out of the British Empire, including Britain itself. Their strategic cultures, especially those of the white-majority former-dominions so, Britain, Ireland, New Zealand and Canada, subject to the potential complications associated with the latter’s ethnic diversity are all likely to be somewhat similar too, meaning studies could borrow from and build on earlier ones. Their strategic discourse is conducted predominantly in English; they are all (very roughly speaking) in the ordinary category along with Australia; they are all open, democratic societies; and their cultures are not divided, or in Canada’s case, at least not antagonistically so. After these states perhaps other British Commonwealth states could be examined, especially those (such as India) whose strategic discourse was overwhelmingly conducted in English, subject to the practical reservations I have noted above. Obviously the US could be a candidate for strategic cultural analysis too, although I note immediately that it would be a daunting prospect to examine the voluminous American strategic discourse in the same manner as I did with Australia.

As a final word, it should be noted that scholarly interest in the concept of strategic culture continued to build toward the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, and it continued into the following decade. Some scholars were still grappling with ways to define it or explore why it made such a resurgence in the post-Cold War field of IR, others compared its utility as a predictive tool with rival theories (especially realism), while still others explored what differences in European and American strategic cultures meant for transatlantic relations and a healthy debate also arose regarding whether it is even meaningful to talk about a European strategic

101 I concede that Ireland and New Zealand are not particularly powerful, but they are still not ‘minnows,’ if only because they are both developed and quite wealthy. Britain is ‘almost-still’ a great power, but it continues to decline, relatively speaking.
102 Craig B. Greathouse, ‘Examining the Role and Methodology of Strategic Culture,’ Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy, 1:1 (2010), 57–85.
105 Asle Toje, America, the EU, and Strategic Culture: Renegotiating the Transatlantic Bargain (Oxon: Routledge, 2008).
spreading further afield, outside the traditional European-American core of the field of IR: one study has considered to what extent Iran’s bid to acquire nuclear weapons is caused by its strategic culture; a handful of articles have examined India’s strategic culture; and another study has urged that the concept be applied widely (and urgently) to many other states in the Asian region.

This study is, then, just one of many being produced at the moment, but I nevertheless present the model of strategic culture contained herein as the most rigorous and policy-relevant one offered to date. Finally, I hope that with further refinement, and after many more case studies of states have been produced, it may be possible in future to move the concept of strategic culture from the strictly-foreign-policy analysis model offered here to a more systemic-theoretical model, if only a typological model of the main categories of strategic cultures commonly found in international affairs, capable of truly challenging the dominant IR theories like realism or liberalism on their own terms.

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109 Kenneth B. Pyle, ‘Reading the New Era in Asia: The Use of History and Culture in the Making of Foreign Policy,’ *Asia Policy*, 3 (January 2007), 1–11.
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