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**US Bilateral Relations with China
and Their Effects on US-Japan and US-India Relations
Mackenzie L. Owens**

Abstract

How do US-China relations impact US relations with other Asian nations, specifically with India and Japan? US-China relations can be seen as the main driver in US relations with Japan and India following rapprochement with the United States. The inverse relationship that exists between US-China and US-Japan/US-India relations signals the importance of the US' bilateral relationship with China. While there are significant differences between the US-India and US-Japan relations, both are similarly affected by US-China relations. The critical time period explored in this paper is the Sino-Soviet Border Conflict of 1969. This time period explores the impact of US-China relations on Asian relations within the context of the US-USSR Cold War rivalry, and China's role in breaking from the Communist bloc and its disapproval of Soviet revisionism. The Nixon Administration and its foreign policy initiatives, namely, rapprochement with China has changed the course of US foreign policy.

Research Question

How do US – China relations impact US relations with other Asian nations, specifically with India and Japan?

Power Management

China has been growing, politically and economically, calling US hegemony into question. The US has attempted containment measures, but the US has not been able to contain China on its own for years. The US has been engaging many nations to assist in Sino containment; however, in this specific case Japan and India will be of the greatest significance. This has created strategic triangular relationships between the US-Japan-China and US-India-China as well as quadrilateral cooperation among the US, Japan, India, and Australia.

In the international system, balance of power, collective security, and world government are the top three approaches to power management (Claude, Jr. 1989). Balance of power theory is believed to maintain power and to be a method that prevents war with an objective of safeguarding national sovereignty which stabilizes the international order. There is a focus within balance of power on rivalrous nations and the interactions of great powers. The theory assumes that states must engage in balancing behavior if they wish to survive since in the anarchic system, survival is not guaranteed (Waltz 1967, 215). States seek allies to maintain balance of power, as aggregating the capabilities of other states can balance against the increasing power of a rival; powerful states may seek to disrupt alliances and encourage defection from a rival alliance (Waltz 1967, 218).

Since the establishment of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, balance of power theory has been maintained through the formation of alliances (Monticone 2008). Prior to the end of World War II, balance-of-power politics were characterized by flexible alignments among major powers. Balance of power theory builds off of the diplomatic foundation of a nation's ability to make, maintain, and break alliances (Waltz 1967). Monticone (2008) presents three alliance systems that safeguard the balance (499). The first of the alliance systems posits two alliances against each other; within their alliances, the states are trying to alter the balance of power. The second system posits two alliances where one is trying to maintain the status quo, and the other alliance tries to overturn the status quo. The third system posits two alliances of equal strength against a balancer. Since 1648, the balance has been through different phases which revolve around two major conflicts: World War I (WWI) and World War II (WWII). The balance since World War II became inflexible due to the reduction in major powers, the creation of a bipolar system as the US and USSR emerged as the two superpowers in the world, and the formation of a two-bloc system. As previous major powers like Britain and Japan became firmly committed members of the U.S.-led alliance, newly independent nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America became the focus of competition for allies; given that the two superpowers were so much more powerful than other states, the US and USSR did not need to bend to the will of third parties in their respective alliances (Monticone 2008, 499-504; Waltz 1967, 219). The bipolar system made for general stability insofar as neither superpower needed to worry that shifts in the alignments

of states would seriously affect its vital interests; nonetheless, the US and USSR both worked to maintain their relative power vis-à-vis the other and were “sensitive to the gains of the other” (Waltz 1967, 230).

However, once the Soviet Union fell and the Warsaw Pact ended, flexibility became even less important as the US was left as sole superpower, creating a unipolar system (Monticone 2008). Scholars debated how unipolarity would affect balance-of-power dynamics, with some arguing that other states would not balance against the United States (such as Wohlforth 1999 and Brooks and Wohlforth 2005), others predicting soft balancing (such as Paul 2018 and Walt 2005) and yet others anticipating hard balancing (such as Layne 2012 and Fortmann 2004). Analysts who emphasized soft balancing focused on the ways in which other states used international institutions, economic statecraft and diplomatic arrangements “that do not directly challenge US military preponderance but that use nonmilitary tools to delay, frustrate, and undermine aggressive unilateral US military policies” (Pape 2005, 10). Hard balancing through formal military alliances and arms build-ups were arguably avoided due to the need for continued cooperation with the United States due to economic interdependence and other shared interests. After the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, structural realists pointed to evidence of counter-hegemonic balancing against the United States on the part of Russia (Steff and Khoo 2014) and other states.

Current politics, with US hegemony challenged, speaks to the use of alliances in order to form a superior balance. Balance of power theory, however, remains elusive as there is a failure to distinguish balance of power as a system of equilibrium versus being a system of “competitive manipulation of power relationships” (Claude, Jr. 1989, 77). This failure results from ambiguities. There are no known expectations on how to balance power and how it should play out in the international system. Exact balances can be viewed as situations which invite war. This situation is summed by Winston Churchill who stated, “If you wish to bring about war, you bring about such a balance that both sides think they have a chance of winning. If you want to stop war, you gather such as aggression of force on one side that the aggressor, whoever he may be, will dare not challenge” (Claude, Jr. 1989, 79). Alliances may not work to balance when it is posited against another alliance which is equally powerful; this rather than solving a balance issue creates an insecure environment where conflict may emerge. This is why forming more powerful alliances that are visible to the aggressor are necessary. Visible alliances allow powerful states to use other ways to force their wills, such as coercion, economic bargaining, and foreign aid, rather than force (Waltz 1967). Powerful states are better able to balance power and are better able to avoid the use of force in their agendas.

The political system and ideology of a state holds weight within the balance of power. Ideological differences attribute to a state’s identity which is a factor within the balance (Nau

2003). Kenneth Waltz recognizes the effects of ideology; however, he views variations in power to be the primary factor in the balance of power (Nau 2003, 213). This implies “political ideology, economic system, [and] governmental institutions” as important secondary factors within the balance (213). Yet, constructivists view identity as the driver of balance of power which makes the political system and ideology a major factor in balance of power. The constructivists view state image as a driver of power; this view argues that the USSR failed due to its own image as a communist power which did not work within the internet and information revolution (214). Whether constructivist or realist, political systems and ideology impact the interactions and balance of power between states. In Asian relations, the combined realist and constructivist ideas on the balance of power are two important factors to recognize within Asian political “patterns” (214).

Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State, believed the US needed to be the balancer in Asia because a united Asia would possess too many resources and could cripple US national interests (Monticone 2008, 508). Kissinger furthered that the US needed to resist efforts by any nation to dominate Asia, even an Asian nation, such as China today. During the Cold War, this meant countering the threat of Soviet hegemony in Asia. After the end of the Cold War, when America was the sole superpower, the United States did not need to worry about threats to its interests in Asia, but with the rise of China as an economic and military superpower, containing China is the central focus of U.S. policy; however, with America’s relative decline, the US cannot do so alone, and it must encourage “the emergence of new power centers in Asia” (Monticone 2008, 509). The rise of China has contributed to the US’ use of a hard balancing strategy, using alliances and military to balance, while also utilizing soft balancing (Paul 2018).

A key US ally in Asia since the end of World War II has been the democratic state of Japan. Japan has been essential to US communist containment measures during the Cold War and is to this day considered the “cornerstone of peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and across the world” (US Department of State 2021). The past 60 years have witnessed the efficacy of the US-Japanese strategic security alliance. Japan and China contest territory and share a recently violent history, as imperialist Japan occupied China for years. While occupation lies in history, resentment remains. One other important nation the US has been grooming to become the next major power in Asia is India. Being a democratic nation bordering China, an authoritarian state, India is strategically located and allied to the democracies of the West (Panda & Baruah 2019). Increasingly, India has been looking to extend its own influence which it has accomplished through cooperation with nations, such as the US, Japan, and Australia. Schweller (2011) believes that the growth of India and China will cause a rethinking of how world politics

is understood, as the rise of these nations is occurring while the US is declining, and its time as the sole superpower is becoming limited. India has the resources and manpower to balance for China in the region; however, India had fallen behind for many years and social scientists now predict by 2030 India should become a major world power (Monticone 2008). India has fostered a closer relationship with the US as it perceives China as a greater threat to its national sovereignty (Kaura 2018). Additionally, Japan and India have become economically and strategically more dependent which could be considered a powerful balance in the region to China (Panda & Baruah 2019). It is believed the main purpose of the allegiance is to pressure China to keep itself in check. China remains cognizant of Sino containment efforts in the region.

As the US experiences its fall from hegemony and a multipolar world comes into existence, balance of power will be essential for US foreign policy goals. Engaging with nations such as Japan and India in Asia will be the key. The US has long not been able to contain China's rise alone yet keeping China in check with the help of these two Asian democracies should help the US maintain a position of strength and national interests.

Theory

The relations between the US-China not only influence these two countries' bilateral relations but influence third parties and the international community as well. US-China relations set the tone in the international community, whether cooperative or hostile. Increasing competition between the nations can cause instability in the international order; Chinese challenges have already chipped away at U.S. hegemony and the liberal international order. If the era of U.S. supremacy comes to an end and China rises to the position of hegemon, it could signal the ineffectiveness of democracy and the rise of authoritarian leadership. I believe this could ultimately change the fabric of the international order and of democracy.

The US-China cooperation "is the most complex bilateral relationship for the United States" (Hamilton, 2003). Since China's emergence to the forefront of the international order, US-China relations have experienced varying degrees of competition, cooperation, hostility, and conflict. In these past few years under the Trump Administration, the declaration of genocide within China and the culmination of the trade war set the stage for the new decade, a decade of disagreements between the two powers. These disagreements have implications beyond the US and China. For example, Taiwan's right to self-determination is influenced by US-China relations. Taiwan is a territory claimed by China but has been increasingly cooperative with the United States in hopes of formal recognition which would undermine the One China Policy. Taiwan is not just a territory, but a very controversial topic in US-China relations. Not only economics and security are important in US-China relations, but politics.

There is uncertainty within US-China relations which requires the United States to form a regional balance should the relations between the US and China sour. Ideally, the balance would include nations which are regional rivals to China and have the ability to match its influence and power. The nations would likely have similarities with the US which allows them to better cooperate, such as economic standing, values, membership within organizations, or government systems. In Asia, two nations are very important in promoting US foreign policy and dominance in the US-China relations. India is a growing economy with a population rivaling the size of China's. Additionally, India is the world's largest democracy who has its own border (territory) conflicts with China. Within Asia, China and India have a growing rivalry as India continues to develop and looks to balance China and its regional partner, Pakistan. The other nation which has been central to US foreign policy initiatives in Asia since after the Second World War is Japan. A developed Asian nation which has hostile relations with China especially in terms of China's sea claims, Japan has been an important US ally for decades. Cooperation within the US-Japan-China trilateral relation and the US-India-China relation could prove to be a very powerful and influential.

Hostility within US-China relations affects nations around the world. Hostility occurs when a disagreement, whether economic or political, occurs between the two states. This can result in military exercises, possible cyber-attacks, or the use of harsh, critical language toward one another on the world stage. This hostility directly affects US relations with other states in Asia. Hostile relations can lead to retaliation and possibly lead to each state coming to “the brink of war” with one another. Hostile relations between the United States and China can also lead to stronger U.S. relations with third parties such as India and Japan. Increased conflict between the US and China, creates more cooperation between the US, India, and Japan.

Rivalry and competition have driven the US to form balances against China. China has been growing politically, economically, and militarily. Politically, China has been implementing expansionist policies, which have conflicted with the national interests of the United States, especially freedom of navigation of the seas in the South China Sea. Economically, these sea routes are important for international trade, thus implicating this as an issue which affects more nations than the US. However, these policies are also seen through foreign lending, such as the One Belt One Road Initiative, and most recently vaccination distribution during the Covid-19 pandemic. Militarily, China has been expanding the capacity of the People’s Liberation Army and Navy. China’s naval challenges could prove to be complicating for the US as its own Navy suffers from lack of innovation and improvements (Heritage Foundation 2020). China is and has been sowing its influence around the world, which some argue erodes the influence of the United States.

As China looks to overtake the US, US relations with Japan and India will become a tool to counter China’s rising power. I argue that US-India and US-Japan relations are influenced by how the rivalry between the US and China proceeds. US relations with India and Japan are not independent of Sino-American but rather dependent on these. A hostile China is a risk for the US and requires allies to balance. It is also a risk for India and Japan to have a hostile China within the region. Therefore, the trilateral relationship must work within a political, economic, and military framework. Political, economic, and military cooperation within the trilateral relationship could prove to be an alternative for hostility which allows the US and China to avoid the Thucydides Trap, as termed by political scientist Graham T. Allison to refer to the likelihood of war when a rising power (whether China or Athens) threatens a status quo power (whether the United States or Sparta). Avoiding this trap is essential; however, this is harder to achieve than it seems. as the historical record shows that most challenges by rising states to the current hegemon ends in war (Allison 2017).

Despite the complexity of their relations, I argue that an inverse relationship exists between US-China relations and US-Japan/US-India relations. When the relations between the US and China have been less hostile, there has been less of a need for a balance and less of a

need for the India and Japan. However, in time of hostility and conflict this relationship between the US, Japan and India could maintain peace by making the expected costs of war much higher for China as it now engages not only the US but the combined forces of the US and two of its regional rivals thus avoiding the Thucydides Trap. Raising the costs and lowering the expected utility of Chinese expansionism is essential in decreasing the likelihood of conflict. A conflict between these four nations could prove to be disastrous; an effective trilateral cooperation will make conflict too expensive for China, thus maintaining peace.

The trilateral cooperation works toward a goal of securing sovereignty. The US has experienced infringement upon its sovereignty from China through intellectual property rights theft and the hackings of government and private businesses within the US. China has infringed upon India's sovereignty through its territorial claims along the two nations' border, some of which China has taken control over. Japan has experienced infringement upon its sovereignty with Chinese territorial claims in the China Sea. These nations have a common interest of securing their national sovereignty from Chinese intervention. The trilateral relationships respond to China's accusations of the US, Japan, and India's infringements upon China's own national sovereignty. China accuses the US of infringing on China's sovereignty within the South China Sea, India of occupying Arunachal Pradesh and Galwan Valley (among many border territorial disputes), and Japan of infringing on China's sovereignty within the East China Sea.

Due to the risk of China's rising power and expansionist policies, the United States has formed a trilateral security alliance with Japan and India. This alliance responds to shocks within the relationship maintained by the US and China. Sino-American relations affect those between the US, India, and Japan in their cooperative alliance. In comparing state relations, when US-China relations are hostile, US-India and US-Japan relations improve; when US-China relations are cooperative, US-India and US-Japan relations become less important for the US' foreign policy goals. It is an inverse relationship that exists which means the US must place much emphasis on its most complicated bilateral relationship with China. As China grows and challenges the US politically, economically, and militarily, the US must strengthen relations with Asian allies in order to guarantee security and its position within the international order. The implications of the US China relationship resonate through the international community. It increasingly seems that US-China relations have soured beyond return and that the ideology that separates the nations has created an insurmountable divide. What occurs between these two powerful nations sets the stage for what will be. "What will be" affects not only economic security, but national sovereignty and security for other nations. A fallout between China and the US could alter the political landscape of the world; if the United States is unable to prevent

US Bilateral Relations with China

China from becoming a global hegemon, it could signal the failure of democracy and the rise of authoritarianism. The stakes of the trilateral relationship are high.

Hypothesis

In comparing state relations, when US-China relations are hostile, US-India and US-Japan relations improve; when US-China relations are cooperative, US-India and US-Japan relations become less important for the US' foreign policy goals. It is an inverse relationship that exists, and the US must give much attention to its most complicated bilateral relationship with China. In addition to this inverse relationship, it is important to recognize the significant differences between the US-Japan and US-India relationship due to secondary factors such as historical interaction, autonomy, presidential preferences, and presidential personality.

Research Design

To test this hypothesis, this paper uses qualitative methods, specifically case studies. I will be conducting case studies analyzing how bilateral relations between the United States and Japan are influenced by the dominant relationship between the US and China. Additionally, I will conduct a case study of US-India relations in contrast to US-China relations. I also will explore how the US, India, and Japan have formed a trilateral relationship in Asia and how this relationship is utilized in order to contain China.

Information on these cases comes from official government websites, academic articles, and news sources that analyze historical interactions between the US and China during critical time periods in the nations' histories. I utilized the memoirs of leaders and official government statements and explored the circumstances during which they occurred. I also researched agreements and treaties signed during these two time periods. Additionally, the use of alliances will be researched. After reviewing the history of foreign relations between the two nations post-World War II, the time period that will be analyzed will be March 1969 when the Sino-Soviet Border Conflict occurred, subsequent research will focus on the post-One China Policy Reagan years and the Trump Trade War. This paper is part of a larger project which will focus on three critical time periods in total that compare foreign policy and the impact of US-China relations during three Republican presidencies. During March of 1969, US and China's relations were cooperative and improving, while during Reagan's presidency and Trump's presidency, the US and China found themselves in hostile territory.

The 1969 Border Conflict arose between the Soviet Union and China. The dispute left the US on better footing with the Chinese government, as they moved away from the Soviet Union. China began recognizing the US as an ally during this period and the Soviet Union as an aggressor. During this time period the US had also been interacting with India and Japan. In this analysis, US-China relations will be the independent variable that affects how US-India and US-Japan relations are conducted. US-China relations determine how US relations with India and Japan move forward; US-India and US-Japan relations are reactive. The triangular relationships (US-India-China and US-Japan-China) are driven by the bilateral relation between the United States and China within this triangle. I estimate that as US-China relations become more hostile or uncooperative, US-India and US-Japan relations become more cooperative. I predict an inverse relationship.

1969 Sino-Soviet Border Conflict Introduction

To understand the progression of US-Chinese relations in the 1960's and 1970's, the context of the US-USSR balance must be acknowledged. The PRC worked within the Soviet bloc until the emergence of Soviet revisionism; the term revisionism was used by Mao to emphasize the USSR's straying from Marx and Lenin's communist ideology. This revisionism caused a rift in the USSR's relationship with the PRC. This rift led to an opportunity for the US to improve relations with China as the USSR and China experienced growing hostility. In 1969 during the Sino-Soviet Border Conflict, the US began its tilt toward China and its rapprochement with Mao Zedong's government. The US was able to normalize relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) due to the growing hostility, which broke into conflict, between the USSR and the PRC. This conflict emerged over territory and ideology as the PRC labeled the USSR as revisionist, and China believed itself to be the face of communist leadership. While China and the US improved relations, U.S. bilateral relations with Japan and India worsened. The Nixon Administration, which became focused on rapprochement with China, overlooked its fellow democracies in the region, so much so that US-India relations hit an all-time low; Japan during this period became less confident in its relations with the US. This section begins with a focus on the Sino-Soviet Border Conflict; the second subsection investigates US foreign policy toward China during the Nixon Administration; the third assesses the impact of rapprochement on US-Japan bilateral relations; the fourth assesses US-India bilateral relations as a consequence of rapprochement.

The Conflict

Despite close relations between the USSR and PRC in the 1950s, tensions between the two communist powers steadily increased, culminating in an open split by the end of the decade. On February 14, 1950, the USSR and the PRC, signed the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance against Japan (Gerson 2010). By 1957, the countries signed another treaty, New Defense Technical Accord, in which the Soviet Union agreed to assist the PRC in building an atomic bomb prototype. While relations between Mao and Stalin were better relative to those with Stalin's successors, Mao still took offense to the treatment of the PRC by Stalin. With Stalin's death in 1953, the new Premier of the USSR became Nikita Khrushchev, who believed that "conflict with China [was] "inevitable" (Gerson 2010, 7) Mao began to believe that the Soviet Union wanted to control the PRC and he marked the hostility between the two nations as beginning in 1958. The hostility stemmed from lacking communication between the USSR and PRC and ended, according to Mao, leaving China with developmental and economic issues (Schram 2020).

In 1959, Khrushchev withdrew from the New Defense Technical Accord, and by 1960, he withdrew Soviet personnel from China (Gerson 2010). In 1962, during the China-India border conflict, Khrushchev took a pro-India stance while cutting aid to the PRC (Jian 1995). As the Soviet Union became a greater threat to the Chinese, the two countries agreed to border negotiations in Beijing in 1964 which lasted five months. By October Khrushchev was removed from his position as premier and the Chinese hoped for better relations; however, under the new leadership of Leonid Brezhnev the tensions continued to rise with an increasing Soviet troop presence along the Sino-Soviet Border and the USSR signed a treaty with Mongolia against the PRC in 1966 (Jian 1995; "Mongolia" 1966). 1967 saw China's first hydrogen bomb tests, following which the USSR increased troops on the border once again (Hahn 1989; Rice 1973). Along with troop buildup, the Soviets in 1967 moved nuclear weapons, the SS-12 Tactical Nuclear System, to the border which upset China's regional balance of power in Asia (Rice 1973). Additionally, these weapons were seen as a way for the Soviet Union to balance the large population of the PRC. In 1968, a fight at the border left four Chinese citizens dead; also in 1968, the USSR invaded Czechoslovakia as a part of the Brezhnev Doctrine, which justified Soviet intervention in other communist nations based on the argument that any threat to socialist rule in any member of the Soviet bloc was a threat to them all. While the invasion took place, the

USSR flew planes into Chinese airspace. The Chinese saw the USSR as a threat to their sovereignty, especially after the Czechoslovakian invasion.

Ideological differences between the USSR and PRC created yet another source of conflict. Beginning in 1966, Mao initiated the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, also known as the Cultural Revolution, which purged Chinese society of alleged bourgeoisie who were not committed to his communist vision (Lieberthal 2020). Mao launched the Cultural Revolution in part due to fears that Soviet-style revisionism might lead to the degeneration of the party. Mao closed schools during this period and encouraged the youth in China to join the Red Guards. The Red Guards were a paramilitary organization comprised of high school and college students who followed Mao in his fight against revisionism (Editors of the Encyclopedia Britannica 2016). These students became rebels who under Mao's instruction aimed to destroy China's historical culture. The movement became violent as many intellectuals and elderly in the PRC were assaulted and/or killed (Lieberthal 2020). The Red Guards were involved in hundreds of thousands of persecutions (Editors of the Encyclopedia Britannica 2016). The revolution revived Mao's cult of personality and eliminated those in the party who had opposed Mao's leadership (Lieberthal 2020).

In the United States, the election of Richard Nixon to the presidency set the stage for a shift in foreign policy. Nixon's influential national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, criticized the previous administration for its involvement in Vietnam and sought to move away from a sole focus on the U.S.-Soviet struggle for power by encouraging allies to contribute more toward their own defense. Nixon's approach to foreign policy and the international community, prioritized the development of relations with China (Gerson 2010). Balancing Soviet influence remained a goal of the US as it had been since 1947. In 1947, President Truman issued the self-titled Truman Doctrine which promised military, economic, and political aid to democracies which were being infiltrated by communist Soviet influences. A hallmark of containment, the Truman Doctrine guided US foreign policy toward the USSR, until its fall (Adams n.d.). Truman declared, "'It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures'" (Adams n.d.). Nixon during his tenure adopted his own self-titled doctrine, the Nixon Doctrine, which would shift US foreign policy in the region. This Nixon Doctrine recognized US commitments; however, it limited its ground troop commitments; this shift in policy would not allow for the US to send troops in future

conflicts, but it guarantees the provisions of economic and military aid (Samuels 2019). The US began to disassociate the PRC from the communist bloc under Soviet influence; during this time, relations would come to materialize between the US and PRC with Soviet hostility and Pakistani assistance.

An important consequence of the growing rift between the USSR and PRC was the decision on the part of the PRC to decrease its support for the North Vietnamese, while the USSR pursued increasingly better relations with North Vietnam (Jian 1995). This followed years of close relations in the late 1950's and early 1960's between the PRC and the North Vietnamese. Whereas the PRC had previously promised, "unconditional support" to the Vietcong "by all possible and necessary means," the Sino-Soviet split led the PRC to recall all personnel from the Vietnam War by the end of March 1969; 1969 also saw Chinese provisions for the Vietcong's cause plummet (Jian 1995, 360-361). Under Mao's leadership, balance of power became central to policies and that explains Chinese openness to rapprochement following the deterioration of relations between the USSR and the PRC during the Vietnam War and the 1969 border conflict (Cheng 1998).

In 1969, territorial disputes and ideological conflict came to a head at Zhenbao Island, which the Soviets knew as Damansky Island, where the USSR had stationed between 270,000 and 290,000 men (Gerson 2010). The PRC demanded that the USSR return this territory to China and acknowledge that the 1860 Treaty of Peking, which ceding Chinese territory to czarist Russia, was an unequal treaty imposed by an imperialist power on a weak China. The Soviet Union was unwilling to offer such an acknowledgement since doing so would not only allow China, but other border countries to request territory adjustments, including Japan who lost territory to the USSR following WWII (Central Intelligence Agency 1969). The USSR could not accept the terms of the Chinese and the border conflict ensued.

On the 2nd of March, the Chinese ambushed Soviet troops with the hope of deterring a Soviet attack (Gerson 2010). By the 15th, border skirmishes continued, and the USSR began the exchange of fire along the border. Celebrating the anniversary of V-E day on May 9th, the USSR labeled the US, China, and West Germany as its "major foes" (Kissinger 1979, 177). Fighting continued throughout the summer as peace negotiations stalled. On the 13th of August, Soviet troops ambushed soldiers in Xinjiang, killing 38 Chinese soldiers (Gerson 2010). During the conflict the USSR threatened nuclear retaliation, and the USSR went as far as to ask other

nations, including the US, what their response would be should the Soviet Union use its nuclear capabilities against the PRC (Gerson 2010). The US publicly disclosed the nuclear threat the USSR had inquired about; the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) became concerned. On August 28th, the CCP Central Committee called for war preparations, including the building of underground shelters (Kissinger 1979).

On the 11th of September in 1969, the USSR and the PRC came to an agreement over the border dispute (Gerson 2010). Chinese fear of a nuclear attack from the USSR led China to cultivate its relations in the US which was the best path for the PRC to take in order to safeguard its national sovereignty. This allowed China not only to rely on its own nuclear capabilities, but it gave China the opportunity to fall within the US nuclear umbrella. The conflict between the USSR and PRC allowed Nixon and Kissinger to exploit the growing division between the two communist powers to the US' advantage.

US Foreign Policy during the 1969 Sino-Soviet Border Conflict

“A key requisite to the success of the Nixon Administration-Kissinger foreign policy operation hinged on careful manipulation of the bureaucracy, the public, and Congress by resorted to secrecy and evasion.” – Asaf Siniver 2008, 149

US foreign policy under Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger was marked by secrecy and poor communication, especially surrounding the role and compliance of the bureaucracy. The Nixon Administration promoted a decision-making process which was hierarchical in nature with many decisions made during private meetings between Kissinger and Nixon who often ignored the advice of others within the US government, especially the US State Department (Siniver 2008; US Department of State n.d., “Nixon’s Foreign Policy”). Kissinger ran “interdepartmental groups” that sought to “instill the necessary discipline in the bureaucracy and ensure it operated in accordance with Nixon’s priorities” and “to involve bureaucracy in the process, as it was ultimately charged with executing the decisions made at the White House” (Siniver 2008, 180). For his part, Nixon preferred to consult separately with Kissinger; Nixon has been quoted saying, “no more goddamn meetings to decide this” (Siniver 2008, 175). The Nixon Administration undermined the process within the US, through bureaucratic controls and the ignorance of fellow governmental departments, which made Nixon and Kissinger’s foreign policy initiatives more difficult to pursue. This undermining shows how Nixon and Kissinger held their grip on power which allowed them to carry out their own foreign policy initiatives.

In 1969, Nixon issued the Guam Doctrine, which has since become known as the Nixon Doctrine, which limited US military commitment (ground troops) in Asia Pacific (Hoey 2012, 53) This doctrine, spurred by ongoing US military involvement in Vietnam, acknowledged the US could no longer commit to protect Asian nations alone; Asian nations needed to take their security into their own hands with continued US assistance limited to nuclear deterrence and naval and air commitments. For Nixon and Kissinger, Vietnam demonstrated that the US had overextended its reach in Asia, and Nixon’s conservative policy looked to “conserve American strength” (Hoey 2012, 53). This was seen for many nations reliant on US military support in Asia as an abandonment of America’s duties to its allies, even though the administration insisted that it would continue to honor its commitment to its allies.

Nixon hoped to use improved relations with the USSR and PRC to pressure North Vietnam to end the war; to this end, he and Kissinger pursued a policy of triangulation that sought to play China and the Soviet Union against each other. The Nixon Administration's further foreign policy goals looked to secure a détente between the US and the USSR, to come to an agreement on the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT), pursue rapprochement with China, and the US withdraw of troops from Vietnam (US Department of State n.d., "Nixon's Foreign Policy"). US involvement in Asia was of strategic importance due to the presence of the two dominating communist powers (Khan 1985). This importance was born of the US' relations to the USSR and PRC in 1969 as "the principal determinant of the U.S. policy towards South Asia has been the U.S. perception of the region's relevance to the pursuit of its global economic, geopolitical and strategic goals" (Khan 1985, 84) This denotes why changes in US policy in Asia occur, it has been reactionary to the current hostilities within US-Soviet and US-Chinese relations. This is especially true considering the 1969 border conflict and the period of rapprochement.

During rapprochement, Nixon looked to use China as a balance within the region to counter Soviet influence. This strategic triangle of power was seen as a route to "transform the bipolar world of the Cold War... in such a way so that Sino-American relations and US-Soviet relations would be better than Sino-Soviet relations (Cheng 1998, 254). Nixon's policy of rapprochement is recognized as historic and may have been only possible due to his conservative credentials as a fervent anti-communist politician, which gave him the political space to improve relations with Mao (Cheng 1998). Mao believed Republicans were more wary of the Soviets and their spreading communist influence than their Democratic counterparts and thus favored dealings with them regarding the Sino-Soviet split.

Nixon's hope of rapprochement seemed to be confirmed in July of 1969. On July 16, 1969, a yacht capsized off the coast of Hong Kong which had two Americans as crewmembers; the crew were taken in by the Chinese (Kissinger 1979, 180). The Nixon Administration awaited to see what would occur to the Americans as the Chinese were experiencing their Cultural Revolution. The Chinese government kept it silent and did not turn the incident into a campaign against the US. On the 21st the State Department loosened trade and travel restrictions against the PRC. Three days following this announcement, the Chinese government released the

crewmembers. Kissinger noted these two events required no reciprocity; however, “Peking had understood” (1979, 180).

Nixon was engaged in an international tour in 1969 and was leaving hints that the US was ready to engage in communication with the PRC (Kissinger 1979). Nixon spoke bluntly with Yahya Khan, leader of Pakistan, discussing his personal view, which he recognized was the minority view shared by Americans, that China could no longer remain isolated. Nixon asked Yahya to “convey his feeling to the Chinese at the highest level” as Pakistan was a close ally of the PRC (Kissinger 1979, 180-181). On August 8th, Secretary of State William P. Rogers delivered in Canberra a speech on US intentions with China stating:

We have been seeking to open up channels of communication. Just in a few days we have liberalized our policies toward purchase of their goods by American travelers and toward validating passports for travel to China. Our purpose was to remove irritants in our relations and help remind the people of mainland China of our historic friendship for them (Kissinger 1979, 182).

Rapprochement with China was not only on Nixon’s agenda, but it was advantageous for the United States due to the ongoing Vietnam War. Improved relations with China could pressure the Soviet Union to improve its own relations with the United States and easing of Cold War tensions could help to “diplomatically isolate North Vietnam” and pressure North Vietnam to end the war (US Department of State n.d., “Milestones”). Additionally, the US was looking to avoid conflict by befriending communist nations and playing them against each other, which could cause a break in the communist alliance and improve America’s geopolitical position (Rice 1973).

During the 1969 Border Conflict, the US had to decide whether to align with either the USSR or China or remain neutral. If the US supported China, relations with Moscow would deteriorate and détente would be put at risk (Gerson 2010). If the US aligned with Moscow, the US feared China’s reemergent influence on the Vietnam War. Kissinger called this conflict the “opportunity... that China might be ready to reenter the diplomatic arena and that would require it to soften its previous hostility toward the United States” (Kissinger 1979, 177). However, if the US did not proceed with caution the Chinese might reject an overture due to its ongoing Cultural Revolution or Moscow might see the overture as a reason for an attack. The US ultimately decided to remain neutral, yet the US did tilt toward China.

The tilt toward China began during the Sino-Soviet border conflict and continued to be the strategy of the Nixon Administration's foreign policy goals in securing *triangular relations* (Goh 2005). The 1969 border conflict was the opportunity for Nixon to involve the US with the PRC as both nations saw a common enemy in the USSR. While the US professed balance between its relations with the PRC and the USSR, the US "subtly tilted toward the Chinese" (Goh 2005, 478). The tilt and triangular relations would not have been possible without Pakistan's role as intermediary. The US prioritized its relations with China; however, Mao and the PRC saw this opportunity of rapprochement for détente, not for an ally.

Rapprochement ended "a generation during which [US and Chinese] relations were frozen in hostility" (Rice 1973, 805). For the Chinese, rapprochement had its advantages as it allowed the PRC to avoid a possible US attack from Vietnam, Korea, Taiwan, or Okinawa. Rapprochement formally began with Nixon's visit to China in 1972; however, the foundation for rapprochement was laid when Mao invited the US ping pong team to visit China in April of 1971 following the Table Tennis Championships in Japan (Cheng 1998; Eckstein 1993). This began a period termed as "Ping Pong Diplomacy" between the US and the PRC.

The travel of the US ping pong team to China in 1971 required government intervention as the US had travel restrictions on China in place (Eckstein 1993). On April 10, 1971 the US ping pong team entered China; just days after team USA's entrance, Premier Zhou Enlai gave a speech acknowledging a "new beginning" and "friendship" between the US and the PRC (Eckstein 1993, 328). On the 14th of April, Nixon adjusted US trade policies toward China and removed the travel ban on China. In July, Kissinger traveled to China on a secret trip which was followed by Nixon's official trip to China. The Chinese ping pong team traveled to the US and toured the nation in 1972. The Chinese team was paraded around the US and visited Nixon in the White House's Rose Garden. In the Rose Garden, Nixon called the US and the PRC "big winners" due to their engagement in a new friendship (Eckstein 1993, 336). Following these events, Zhou promised that Beijing would not abandon rapprochement with the US due to escalation in the Vietnam War. Ping Pong diplomacy was an essential maneuver in restoring relations with the PRC; the foundations laid by Ping Pong diplomacy would guide US foreign policy initiatives carried out by the Nixon Administration.

The United States' policy of rapprochement with China ended hostilities that reigned between the two nations since the founding of Red China in 1949. Despite the ongoing Cultural

US Bilateral Relations with China

Revolution, the US and PRC managed to establish diplomatic relations that were the foundation of the Nixon Administration's foreign policy. The historic summit in 1972 between President Nixon and Mao not only separated the PRC from the remaining Soviet communist bloc, but the improved relations also gave the PRC the opportunity to become a third world power supported by the US. While the US and PRC became more friendly, this initiative damaged U.S. relationships with Japan and India.

Impact on US-Japan Bilateral relations

After its defeat in World War II, Japan was under the US military occupation until 1952. To prepare for the end of occupation, the US and Japan “signed a bilateral security treaty that stationed US forces in Japan and served as the foundation for the post-occupation US-Japan security relationship” (Miller 2011, 88). This US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty allowed the United States to retain troops in Japan following the end of occupation, including in Okinawa, which became a U.S. territory with Japan accorded “residual sovereignty.” This allowed US authorities to appropriate land to build and expand military bases that were used to project American power in the region, including support for US and coalition forces during the Korean War. By 1954, Japan and the US signed the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement through which the US provided weapons and training to the Japanese. The provision of weapons and training, however, brought the controversy of rearmament in Japan to a head. In 1960, the US and Japan signed the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security which allowed the US to retain troops in Japan and establish bases (Miller 2011; Maizland & Xu 2019). Under Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution imposed by U.S. occupation authorities in 1947, Japan formally disavowed war and pledged not to maintain military forces or develop offensive capabilities that would allow for militarization (Library of Congress 2020). Although the United States later sought to encourage Japan to strengthen its military capabilities so that it could defend itself and contribute to Cold War interventions, Japanese citizens generally came to support the peace clause and was militarization was unpopular with many Japanese citizens (Miller 2011). By 1964, when Eisaku Sato came to power as the Prime Minister of Japan, China had begun its development of nuclear weapons but even though this posed a threat to Japan, Japan renounced nuclear weapons and preferred to be protected by the US nuclear umbrella (Hoey 2015). As Japan became wary of China’s growing nuclear capabilities and looked to the US’ protection, the United States placed Japan on its low priority rung as Kissinger “found it difficult to take a nation of ‘little Sony salesmen’ seriously” (Hoey 2012, 56).

Eisaku Sato, Nobel Peace Prize winner and a disciple of Yoshida, led Japan from 1964 until 1972 as Prime Minister (Ayako 2008). He was an adamant supporter of the United States, so much so, that during the 1971 *Nixon Shocks* Sato recognized the adverse impacts of Nixon’s new economic policies; however, he acknowledged “the United States remained the ‘pivot’ of Japan's foreign policy” (Reston 1971). Sato’s time in office faced the neglect of the US,

Okinawan reversion, US rapprochement with China, the *Nixon Shocks*, and Peking's accusations that Japan had military and expansionist ambitions in the region, among other issues. He was committed to peace within the new world order, a proponent of nuclear non-proliferation, and a supporter of Japan's security agreement with the US (Ayako 2008). An important issue which began before his time as Prime Minister, but would be negotiated by his government, was the Okinawan reversion. The proposal for reversion came during the Vietnam War; the Japanese feared that the alliance with the US would require Japan to assist in the US' war (Mendel, Jr. 1967).

US-Japanese relations from 1969 thru 1973 experienced many tensions in large part due to the reversion of Okinawa to Japan. Okinawa, a part of the Ryukyu Islands, after World War II fell under American influence; before the American period of rule, Okinawa was ruled by Japan and prior to Japan was a territory of China. American presence in Okinawa was well known as it was a military stronghold for the US in the Pacific (Yoshida 2001). In 1965, the US sent more than \$24 million in assistance to the Ryukyu Islands. The US took control of the island's electric, water, and developmental loan corporations; the US was also a very large employer as many locals worked on US military bases. However, the Okinawans did suffer under US occupation; despite democratic systems being put in place, the Okinawans were ruled by executive orders by US personnel:

No amount of American goodwill and generosity or importation of its "civilized" modes of life...satisfied the Okinawan people's wishes for an end to foreign military occupation or for the restoration of their political and social rights and privileges as Japanese citizens protected by the Japanese constitutions (Yoshida 2001, xiii).

US presence in Okinawa in the 1960's was fundamental to the US war effort in Vietnam, often costing the Okinawan people the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the US government and promised by President Truman in 1945 following the end of WWII. Secretary of State William Rogers would go on to say:

It was clear in 1969, it remains clear today, that a continuance of a situation in which a million Japanese are still living under United States military administration more than 25 years after the end of World War II has subjected our position in the Ryukyu Islands and our relationship with Japan to increasing strain. Such a situation is no longer tenable. It is

not keeping with our national character or our national interest. Nor is it consistent with history (US Department of State 1972, 520).

Calls for Okinawan reversion surfaced under Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda (1960-1964); however, Ikeda died only a few months after proposing this intention for reversion, his successor Prime Minister Eisaku Sato planned to pursue Okinawan reversion (Takizawa 1971).

The Chinese feared the Okinawan reversion as a possible step toward Japan's remilitarization, which China opposed due to the atrocities that imperial Japan had committed against China during the Second World War (LaFeber 1970; Johnson 1972). With ongoing US rapprochement with China and the Nixon Administration's agenda, the Okinawan reversion was timed to fuel Chinese fear and worry.

Violence became a common theme during the fight against US occupation and for Okinawan Reversion to Japan. On February 4, 1969, Okinawan workers began a strike against B-52 bombers that were sent from a base on the island to carry out missions against the North Vietnamese during the ongoing Vietnam War (Takizawa 1971). It is estimated that 55,000 workers protested on February 4th (Kim 1973). By April 23, violence erupted in what became known as Okinawan Day (Takizawa 1971). Okinawan Day violence continued and on April 28, 1969, "150,000 leftists" protested for the reversion of Okinawa and the termination of the US-Japan Security Treaty (Kim 1973, 1025). Just over a month later on June 5, 20,000 Okinawan workers went on strike at a US military base on the island during which seven socialist leaders were stabbed with bayonets (Takizawa 1971). This culminated in the Okinawan people learning that the US was storing nerve gas and chemical weapons on the island, which led to speculations about the possible use of the weapons on the Okinawan people; this became "an ominous sign of America's bad faith" (Takizawa 1971, 500). As Sato prepared for a trip to the US to discuss relations and Okinawa, 860,000 protesters demanded Okinawan reversion on October 21, 1969 (Kim 1973). A month later on November 16, 720,000 Japanese protested Sato's diplomatic trip to the US. By January 1970, 5,000 Okinawan workers came into conflict with US soldiers across the island.

The US-Japan Security Treaty was due for renewal in 1970 which was for Japan an alliance with the US targeting North Korea and the PRC; the developments in Okinawa showed that the people in Japan would not support a renewal without a change in the Okinawa situation (LaFeber 1970; Kim 1973). This and the Vietnam War left the Japanese government in tense

relations with the United States. This created a tense backdrop to negotiations over the US-Japan Security Treaty, which was due for renewal in 1970; the developments in Okinawa showed that the Japanese public would not support a renewal without a change in the Okinawa situation (LaFeber 1970; Kim 1973).

The US finally settled the Okinawan Reversion with the signing of the Okinawa Reversion Agreement on June 17, 1971 (Kim 1973). The Agreement turned Okinawa back over to Japanese control with many stipulations over the US continual presence in the region:

Terms of reversion: (1) The U.S. would retain 88 major military facilities and installations after reversion, while returning 46 minor ones to Japan; (2) Japan would pay \$320 million over a 5-year period for the civilian and military facilities to be turned over to Japan at the time of reversion; (3) the Voice of America (V.O.A) would be allowed to operate for five years after reversion; (4) the Okinawans would renounce their claims against the U.S. except in specific areas already agreed upon by the U.S.; (5) American enterprises and businessmen in Okinawa would not be discriminated against after reversion; and (6) Japan was to assume major responsibilities for local defense by dispatching 6,800 troops to Okinawa by July 1, 1973 (Kim 1973, 1028-1029).

The US would remain a military presence in Japan, as the US retained control of the majority of US bases on the island and guaranteed American interests in this agreement. Retaining US presence was not the goal of Okinawan reversion; however, US presence remained after the signing of the agreement due to the Mutual Security Treaty. In accordance with the treaty, Sato allowed the US to place nuclear weapons on Okinawa following reversion, and Sato agreed to impose an export quota on textiles to the US (Hoey 2012). The US also received concessions from the Japanese on its own military buildup and the provision of defense, as called for under the Nixon Doctrine. After years of US military control, Okinawa was distinct from the rest of Japan; the US' departure from Okinawa left the economically underdeveloped island in the hands of the Japanese to industrialize.

With reversion negotiated, US and Japanese relations could have improved, but with the Nixon Administration's overriding concern for rapprochement with China, relations remained strained. On July 15, 1971 Nixon announced his trip to China (Richard Nixon Foundation 2014). This announcement came as a surprise not only to the American public but to U.S. allies as well, since top U.S. and Chinese officials had kept negotiations secret; this announcement also took

the Sato government by surprise and created serious anger and embarrassment over the lack of prior consultation (Kim 1973). The U.S. government ultimately put rapprochement with China first and caused a sense of betrayal on the part of the Japanese government since “three weeks before the announcement of the China trip the Prime Minister ... was told that the U.S. would make no move toward recognition of China without previous consultation” (Overholt 1973, 714). Following the trip announcement embarrassment, Nixon imposed taxes on Japanese goods, enacted quotas on Japanese textiles, and forced a yen revaluation (Kim 1973). While these impositions by the Nixon Administration were unexpected, they were not exactly surprising as the US and Sato’s government had its disagreements. These disagreements stemmed from, “Japan's slow trade liberalization, its slow revaluation of the yen, its inability to keep secrets, and Prime Minister Sato's failure to honor promises regarding textile concessions” (Overholt 1973, 714). These issues intensified during Nixon’s presidency “exacerbated by some personal animosities between American and Japanese officials” (Overholt 1973, 714).

These acts have been termed the *Nixon Shocks*, after which Sato’s opponents called for the renegotiation of the reversion agreement (Kim 1973). Renegotiation was called for as a result of the changed circumstances between the US and China. The agreement was formulated during the “Nixon-Sato Joint Communique... which assumed the continuation of Sino-American confrontation” which no longer held true after Nixon’s surprise visit to the PRC (Kim 1973, 1029-1030). Following the *Nixon Shocks*, Sato’s popularity suffered; The New York Times in 1971 noted, Sato “has clearly been hurt politically by seeming to be treated rather casually by an American Government that he has usually tried to support” (Reston 1971). Okinawan Reversion became an important issue in US-Japanese relations once again pressuring Sato, following the *Nixon Shocks*.

Prior to the unexpected announcement of Nixon’s visit to China, Japanese foreign policy toward China had been guided by the U.S. policy of non-recognition of the PRC and support for the Republic of China (ROC) in Taiwan. Despite the Yoshida government’s early interest in pursuing normal relations with the PRC, the United States successfully pressured Japan to subordinate Japanese policy to America’s anti-communist containment strategy in return for U.S. commitment to defend Japan, as formalized in the 1951 U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty (Sato 1975; Hoey 2015). Beginning in 1961 until 1970, the United States and Japan cosponsored annual resolutions in the General Assembly calling for a two-thirds majority in order for the PRC

to be seated in the United Nations, thus removing the ROC. 1970 saw the Albanian Resolution, which called for PRC representation within the UN, reach a majority, but not the needed two-thirds. Kissinger saw the PRC becoming a member of the UN with possible benefits to the US; however, he called for dual representation which allowed for both the PRC and ROC to have seats. Therefore, in 1970 the ROC, Japan, and the US coordinated their policies so as to save the ROC's seat. Japan in the spring of 1971 awaited policy direction regarding the seat from the US; however, the U.S. State Department, estranged from the White House, never informed the Japanese about the impending shift in U.S. strategy. It was said that "such a delay, inexplicable to the press and to friendly states (especially Japan) was felt to effectively throw away any chance of saving the ROC seat" (Hoey 2015, 146). The reasoning for the delay was soon revealed as just weeks later Nixon announced his official trip to China. As Japan and the United States worked to retain Taiwan's seat in the UN against the PRC's bid, the United States was making secret agreements with the PRC for better relations, undercutting the Japanese government.

The United States ultimately left Sato to the wolves; he was forced into retirement in 1972 following these events which transpired without his knowledge. Another nail in the coffin came with Nixon's New Economic Policy which unpegged the US dollar from the gold standard and placed a 10 percent tariff on imports to the United States (Sato 1975). These economic changes greatly affected the Japanese so much so that they "reduced America's credibility in the eyes of most Japanese" (Sato 1975, 157). Trade between the two nations became more frictional with the quotas and tariffs in place and worsened as the United States began experiencing a trade deficit with Japan in the 1970's (Burton-Christie and Cheng 1983). The trade imbalance received attention as the US government called on the Japanese to purchase more American goods, while at the same time imposing quotas on soybean exports to Japan (Sato 1975). The US economic relationship with Japan became an important signal of deteriorating relations between the two nations.

As the United States became more estranged from Japan and closer with China, the Middle East was experiencing a crisis of its own which culminated in the Arab-Israel Conflict of 1973, also known as the Yom Kippur War. On October 6, 1973, the combined forces of Egypt and Syria attacked Israel; the attack inundated Israeli forces at first (Harms & Ferry 2017). The USSR had provided equipment and weapons to the Egyptians and Israel requested US military

aid. Kissinger, still leading US foreign policy, worried about the repercussions of supplying Israel, such as the détente with the USSR and an Arab oil embargo. When the USSR resupplied Egypt, the United States became involved with “unprecedented airlifts to Israel” and a \$2.2 billion in aid (Harms & Ferry 2017, 125). The backlash from the Arab nations resulted in OPEC placing an oil embargo on the United States and its supporters. As an ally of the US, Japan was severely affected by this oil embargo, experiencing an economic recession as it was almost exclusively dependent on oil imports (Sato 1975).

These events precipitated an economic recession driven by an oil shortage and large price increases (Sato 1975). Japan, at the time the third largest economy in the world, was highly reliant on foreign fuel for its industry and production; Japan suffered more devastating consequences than the US and Western Europe did as a consequence of being an ally to the US. This left Japan to engage in *resource diplomacy* – a way of managing relations which prioritizes the acquisition resources and energy sources – which proved to go against US interests. As the Yom Kippur War came to an end, negotiations were being made between the US and USSR, but Kissinger also made agreements with Middle Eastern leaders (Harms & Ferry 2017). Israel had gained land from both Syria, in Golan Heights, and from Egypt, in Sinai. Japan suffering from the embargo called on Israel to withdraw from the land it had captured in this conflict and the 1967 Six-Day War and recognized the Palestinian cause (Harms & Ferry 2017; Naramoto 1991). The United States resented Japan’s call for Israel’s withdrawal and this disagreement increased tensions in US-Japanese relations once more.

The Yom Kippur War saw Japan make a foreign policy decision that was not influenced by US policy in the Middle East; Japan “broke ranks with the United States on Middle East policy” (Naramoto 1991, 79). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) drove Japanese policy and it was certainly concerned about oil and trade; Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party approved of the policies made by the MOFA and executed the policies as MOFA designed. Japan threatened in its new policy implemented by MOFA to “reconsider its policy toward Israel” (Naramoto 1991, 80). “Reconsider” was a polarizing word in this context; however, the Saudi government urged the Japanese government to use “reconsider” in order to be free of the oil embargo. Economic conditions in Japan prevailed and the US- Japanese relations were sullied as Japan abandoned a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy in supporting Israel. In response to

Japan's official statements on the Arab-Israel Conflict, the oil embargo was lifted on oil exports to Japan.

Tenuous" has been the word often used to describe US-Japanese relations between 1969 and 1973 (Sato 1975, 157). As the United States turned toward the Chinese government, its commitments to Japan were neglected and domestic actors within Japan bristled against the US-Japanese alliance. Okinawa was a major contributor to complications between the United States and Japan during the period stretching from the mid-1960's until its reversion in 1972. The occupying U.S. forces in Okinawa were a reminder of the Japanese loss of WWII and raised concerns that Japan could be pulled into one of America's wars against communism, especially the Vietnam War as U.S. military bases in Okinawa were essential to the U.S. war effort. The U.S. push for Japan's remilitarization disregarded Japan's peace clause and insulted many Japanese. Many more insults ensued as Nixon shocked the world with his visit to China which showed his blatant disregard for Sato by keeping him in the dark about the secret talks with China. On top of the Nixon administration's absence of consultation with Japan over China policy, U.S.-Japan relations were also fraught due to economic competition, with calls in the United States to get tough with Japan and Japanese resentment over US pressures. However, the importance of the US-Japan security relationship was never a calculation in guaranteeing economic concessions from the Japanese (Curtis 2000). As Japan's economy grew, the Nixon Administration imposed tariffs and quotas on Japanese imports and pressured Japan to revalue the yen. When Japan's close alliance with the United States created an immediate economic threat due to the oil embargo placed on U.S. allies during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Japan began forging a policy which would serve its own interests, and the United States took offense. The United States neglected Japan while the United States was an influential piece in the puzzle of Japanese foreign policy; Japan's initiative to form policy in response to its immediate threats took pertinence over US-Japanese relations after being left behind and left out of many decisions with such an important ally. As US-China relations improved, US-Japanese relations suffered. This is evidenced by the divergent evolution of policy between the United States and Japan during rapprochement with the PRC.

Impact on US-India Bilateral Relations

Within the trilateral relationship of US-India-China, Pakistan plays such an important role that India's relations with China and with the United States cannot be understood without analyzing the relationship that each of these countries has with Pakistan. China and Pakistan, which both have territorial disputes with India, share a strategic interest in restraining India's growth. Although Pakistan joined a US-led military alliance in the 1950s in an effort to improve its security situation vis-à-vis India, it also cultivated close relations with the People's Republic of China (Mahdi 1986, 61). In contrast, territorial disputes between India and the PRC ensured a bitter rivalry between these two countries. After the Kennedy administration sided with India in the 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict, Sino-Pakistan relations steadily improved and China began to use Pakistan as a mechanism to contain India by providing significant economic and military assistance (Mahdi 1986, 63-65). China's attempts to use Pakistan to balance Indian influence in the region included support for Pakistan in the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war, the second violent conflict over the state of Jammu and Kashmir which was claimed by both Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan.

Since independence from Britain in 1947, India pursued a policy of nonalignment, including a very prominent role at the Bandung Conference of 1955, where representatives from various newly Asian and African nations called for economic and cultural cooperation among third world countries to avoid having to take sides in the Cold War. The Non-aligned Movement (NAM) began in the bipolar Cold War world; the objective of this movement was to allow nations to be independent of both the United States and USSR's influence (NTI 2021). NAM's motto is to "create an independent path in world politics that would not result in member States becoming pawns in the struggles between the major powers" (NTI 2021). The movement had four summits between 1961 and 1973. India, a member of NAM, conducted foreign policy in accordance with nonalignment and maintaining independence from the US-USSR rivalry. India has historically held a policy of nonalignment. The Non-aligned Movement (NAM) began in the bipolar 1961 Cold War world; the objective of this movement was to allow nations to be independent of the US' and USSR's influence (NTI 2021). NAM's motto is to "create an independent path in world politics that would not result in member States becoming pawns in the struggles between the major powers" (NTI 2021). The movement had four summits between

1961 and 1973. India, a member of NAM, conducted foreign policy in accordance with nonalignment and maintaining independence from the US-USSR rivalry.

The United States was initially wary of NAM, fearing that it signaled a leftist turn in the ideological orientation of newly independent nations (“Bandung Conference”) and this translated into an ambivalent stance toward India. However, in 1962, India and China engaged in a war along their border and China’s victory worried the United States, prompting the Kennedy administration to provide military support to India (Agarwal 2014-2015). US military support for India in this war represented a monumental shift since the US had held a long standing pro-Pakistani stance. Pakistan, whose greatest threat was India, found President Kennedy’s aid to be a signal of souring relations. This left Pakistan to utilize its relationship with the PRC to balance the new-found US-India friendship; Pakistan and China formed their own alliance in response to the combined power of India and the US. After years of ruffled relations and with the change of administrations in both Pakistan and the US, the US and Pakistan began to cooperate once again and coordinate foreign policy. With improved US relations with Pakistan, India would experience hostile relations with the US.

Not only was nonalignment an issue for Nixon but so was his relationship with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Gandhi and Nixon, according to Kissinger (1979), “were not intended by fate to be personally congenial” as she “brought out all of Nixon’s latent insecurities” (848). Despite Nixon’s attitudes, India remained a recipient of \$4.2 billion in aid between 1965 and 1971 (Kissinger 1979). However, Pakistan enjoyed presidential preference during the Nixon years, as Nixon felt respected by the Pakistani government, a contrast to his relations with India’s government. The Nixon Administration not only preferred Pakistan due to its role in rapprochement, but the level of respect Nixon received from its leaders.

By 1969, Pakistan had been a US ally for over a decade and had engaged in four alliance agreements since 1954 (Khan 1985). The US Pakistan Alliance allowed the US to contain communism while Pakistan used the alliance to contain India, but following the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965, US-Pakistan relations faltered; accordingly, Pakistan was not mentioned in the 1969-1970 Senate hearings on US security commitments. The decline in US-Pakistan cooperation coincided with Pakistan becoming an ally of the PRC which was despised by Kennedy and Johnson, yet proved useful for Nixon. Following the improvement in relations with the PRC, the US tilted toward Pakistan in 1971 during the conflict between Pakistan and India

(Goh 2005). Kissinger said, “We can’t allow a friend of ours and China’s to get screwed in a conflict with a friend of Russia’s [India]” (Goh 2005, 481).

The first contact made between the PRC and US occurred in August of 1969 through the Pakistani channel (Agarwal 2014-2015). By October of 1970, President Khan officially met with Nixon in Washington, D.C and began discussing possible US-PRC relations. Two months later in December 1970, the Chinese messaged the US through the Pakistani channel and expressed approval for rapprochement with the United States. Nixon worried about possible rapprochement with China as tensions intensified between Pakistan and India, as India began supplying support for successionist East Pakistan in April of 1971. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, saw the genocide and political repression in East Pakistan as causing instability in Southeast Asia. The USSR became involved with India in response to the “bloodshed and repression” and the formation of a US-Pakistan-China relationship (Agarwal 2014-2015, 28). The USSR assisted India, and this culminated in Nixon and Kissinger viewing India as a dependent of the USSR. This reaffirmed views that India’s nonalignment policies were inherently anti-American.

Kissinger believed that India had worked “tenaciously and skillfully to undermine the military relationship between Pakistan and the United States” and in doing so had become reliant on Soviet arms and aid (Kissinger 1979, 864). In 1970, India was spending \$350 million on military supplies; that same year the United States, in return for its role in rapprochement, gifted Pakistan \$40-\$50 million in military machinery but did not provide tanks or artillery. India retaliated against this gift with claims that the US was violating India’s sovereignty. This complication was one of many in US-India relations which soured future prospects. This would be one event which helps to explain why in 1971, Kissinger (1979) describes relations with India as “exasperatedly strained cordiality” (849). In addition to tension within relations, Kissinger had two other issues in dealing with India: (1) the impact of public opinion on Pakistan and (2) the “indiscipline of [the US] bureaucracy” (Kissinger 1979, 856).

As the United States had in place an arms embargo on Pakistan for a few years following the 1965 Indo-Pakistani War, supplies were funneled to Pakistan through Iran and Jordan with the knowledge of the Nixon Administration (Agarwal 2014-2015). US’ defiance of its own arms embargo against Pakistan shows the importance of Pakistan to Nixon; Pakistan was the emissary through which rapprochement with the Chinese would be possible.

July of 1971 saw Kissinger's secret visit to China during the emergence of the India-Pakistani Conflict. The secret trip also included stops to India and Pakistan, which covered the true motives of Kissinger's travels to Asia (Agarwal 2014-2015). While in India, the leaders of India pushed for the cutting of aid to Pakistan; Kissinger refused to cut aid to Pakistan. Rather the US would come to cut aid to India. In August 1971, following Kissinger's *secret* trip, the USSR and India signed the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation. This was in response to the relationships complicating the situation in Southeast Asia.

India relied on the US prior to this conflict for support against China; however, during the 1971 war the USSR became India's new lifeline. From 1965 to 1974, the USSR was India's primary arms supplier, sending \$1375 million (in 1978 USD) worth of arms in comparison to the US' arms transfer total of \$41 million (Menon 1978, 740). In addition to arms, India was the largest recipient of the USSR's economic aid for over twenty years, 1954-1975. The US, on the other hand, became less engaged in India. In 1970, the US accounted for 48 percent of India's exports; meanwhile, in 1975, the US accounted for solely 12 percent of India's exports (Menon 1978, 746). India also experienced a decrease in US imports, receiving 68 percent of its import from the US in 1970, yet only 22 percent by 1975 (Menon 1978, 747). Disengagement with India was a result of US rapprochement which the Nixon Administration gave little mind to. So much so that Kissinger said, "hell if we could reestablish relations with Communist China, we can always get the Indians back whenever we want to later..." (Agarwal 2014-2015, 32-33).

As the conflict became inevitable between India and Pakistan the US began to interfere in war by urging China to engage on behalf of Pakistan against India (Agarwal 2014-2015). In urging China to intervene, the Nixon and Kissinger "agreed to transfer military planes to the Chinese" (Agarwal 2014-2015, 34). China in response to US requests agreed to support Pakistan should India attack Pakistan. Accordingly, tensions rose between China and India during the Sino-Soviet clash (Menon 1978).

Rapprochement was so important to Nixon that the genocide in East Pakistan was ignored and the administration worked to hush criticism of Yahya. Ultimately, Congress stepped in and blocked US aid for Pakistan. Additionally, the overlooked State Department also worked against the Pakistani government by developing a new arms embargo and ending military and economic aid to the Pakistanis, without White House input (Kissinger 1979). Despite the White

House's efforts, condemnation came to a head from within which came to become known as the Blood Telegram on April 6, 1971.

The Blood Telegram was the result of the chaos in East Pakistan due to the on-going genocide. As many were not within the Nixon-Kissinger loop, the State Department and those serving in foreign service were uninformed as to the reason for US continued support of Pakistan. Archer Blood's "Blood Telegram" is known as "one of the strongest worded Dissent Channels written by a Foreign Service Officer to the department" (Agarwal 2014-2015, 31-32). The Telegram is a critique of the US government and its neglect of the growing humanitarian crisis:

...Our government has failed to denounce the suppression of democracy. Our government has failed to denounce atrocities. Our government has failed to take forceful measures to protect its citizens while at the same time bending over backwards to placate the West [Pakistan] dominated government and to lessen likely and deservedly negative international public relations impact against them. Our government has evidenced what many will consider moral bankruptcy, ironically at a time when the USSR sent President Yahya a message² defending democracy, [condemning] arrest of leader of democratically elected majority party (incidentally pro-West) and calling for end to repressive measures and bloodshed. In our most recent policy paper for Pakistan,³ our interests in Pakistan were defined as primarily humanitarian, rather than strategic. But we have chosen not to intervene, even morally, on the grounds that the Awami conflict, in which unfortunately the overworked term genocide is applicable, is purely internal matter of a sovereign state. Private Americans have expressed disgust. We, as professional public servants express our dissent with current policy and fervently hope that our true and lasting interests here can be defined and our policies redirected in order to salvage our nation's position as a moral leader of the free world. (US Department of State n.d., "Telegram").

The lack of communication between departments caused additional complications for the Nixon Administration, in addition to the already looming complications Nixon and Kissinger were facing with India, Pakistan, China, and the USSR. Archer Blood was recalled and his career as a foreign service officer was terminated. The US within this context made foreign policy initiatives more difficult, the secrecy not only caused issues within, but with relations with India (this same situation also applies toward Japan).

As conflict emerged between India and Pakistan, and approximately eight to ten million refugees flooded into India due to the West Pakistani genocide being carried out in East Pakistan, the US sided with West Pakistan as it was essential to rapprochement which forced India into an alliance with the USSR (Agarwal 2014-2015). The United States prioritized its relationship with

Pakistan as Yahya Khan, President of Pakistan, was key to US foreign policy initiatives under Nixon and Kissinger's leadership. Khan, the architect of US official trips to China, was threatened by Indian intervention which led the US to side with Pakistan as any threat to Pakistan translated to a threat to US-China rapprochement. Nixon in 1971 wrote, "To all hands. Don't squeeze Yahya at this time. RN" (Kissinger 1979, 856) Thus, Nixon supported Yahya and chose to tilt toward Pakistan in the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, even in the face of condemnation over America's lack of action during the ongoing genocide.

The emerging conflict had varying interpretations. The United States saw this as a proxy conflict with the USSR, while India saw the conflict as a regional problem creating instability within Asia. The United States viewed the effects of the war in terms of its relations with the PRC and the Pakistani channel; however, India was worrying about the effects of East Pakistan succession (including the flow of refugees to India).

In May 1971, Nixon threatened India's economic aid should it attack Pakistan (Agarwal 2014-2015). On December 6, 1971, the US cut off economic, military, and all other forms of aid; however, Pakistan did attack first on December 3. The conflict lasted just days (December 3, 1971-December 16, 1971) as India quickly was victorious against the Pakistani military. With the Indian victory, East Pakistan declared its independence as the new nation of Bangladesh.

Fearing bad press and its effects on rapprochement following Pakistan's defeat, the Nixon Administration authorized Task Force 74, which sent a naval force including the USS Enterprise into the Bay of Bengal (Madan 2020). In the UN Security Council, the US initiative to blame India for the emerging conflict with India backfired as France and England backed the Soviet stance instead. After Bangladesh gained its independence, the United States would not recognize its statehood in accordance with its policy to please Pakistan and the PRC; not recognizing Bangladesh was an affront to the Indian government who made it a policy priority (Madan 2020, 251). Continued U.S. support of Pakistan greatly damaged US-India bilateral relations.

"Rapprochement with China considerably diminished India's importance in the US strategic framework" (Madan 2020, 222). Leaders in India viewed rapprochement with China as the United States working in collaboration with both China and Pakistan against the interests of India. This was an issue of importance for India as it had relied on U.S. assistance against China. "One unquestionable result of the war was that US-India relations had reached their lowest

point” (Madan 2020, 248). While the United States thought relations would resume with India following the conflict, they did not. The United States made China their clear priority and did not engage India until after Nixon’s 1972 trip to China. As the United States arranged a new order in Asia, it neglected India’s role in this new order. Gandhi refused to accept this new American narrative that left India out of Asian affairs (Madan 2020). The US-India relationship remained complicated.

Conclusions and Implications

The relationship between the US and China has been tumultuous at best over the past decade as competition between the two nations has increased. Not only has competition been economic but it has been security and technologically based. The Chinese military and navy (PLA – People’s Liberation Army and PLAN - People’s Liberation Army Navy) have seen growth at unprecedented rates in the past decade. This should raise concern. If the US and its allies (India and Japan) cannot work toward an effective containment policy, US national interests could be at stake. A world where China reigns supreme will threaten democratic principles worldwide. Already in our world, democracy has been threatened by authoritarian governments around the world (i.e., Myanmar Coup and Prime Minister Orbán in Hungary). The presence of a world leader such as China should be enough to motivate democracies around the world to action.

Because of the possible threats the US faces, understanding US-India and US-Japan relations is essential. The US cannot work alone in Asia Pacific any longer. Understanding the stimulus that drives US bilateral relations in Asia with India and Japan will become an important talking point as China continues to grow. The evidence has shown there is a relationship that exists between US-China relations and the direct, inverse effect it has on US-Japan and US-India relations.

US-China relations are ever-evolving, and right now it is clear that hostility reigns within their interactions, but hostility has not always existed. US-China interactions are key in determining the future of US foreign policy initiatives and US security. India and Japan are quintessential in the response the US gives to China’s signals. Bilateral relations and the trilateral relations between all three nations (US, India, Japan) signal strength and resistance to hostile actions. These relationships are/will be the foundation of US foreign policy and security for years to come.

Research to Come:

The Reagan Administration

- The Reagan Administration
- Reagan's Foreign Policy and Reagan's New Conservatism
- US-Japan Relations During the Ronald Reagan Administration
- US-India Relations During the Ronald Reagan Administration

The Trump Administration

- The Trump Administration
- Trump on Foreign Policy
- US-Japan Relations During the Trump Administration
- US-India Relations During the Trump Administration

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