Introduction

Cooperation and Coordination in a context of animosity? East Asia, Peacekeeping Operations and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

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Introduction

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Questions of when, why and how states cooperate, coordinate, or develop more enduring partnerships fill the pages of the literature on International Organisations, Institutions, and Regimes (e.g. Grieco, 1988; Keohane & Axelrod, 1993, Keohane, 1988, Abbot & Snidal, 1998, Fearon, 1998, Lipson, 1984, Fearon, 1998, Snidal, 1985). In East Asia, the exceptional nature of the region's organisations (Buzan and Zhang 2014, 7) both defy and affirm expectations of scholars found in the wider International Relations (IR) literature the region provides evidence of both cooperative practices and conflict and tensions between states. This has led to the conclusion that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its associated organs continue to challenge researchers (Ba 2010, Stubbs 2019, Emmerson cited in Martel 2017, 550, Foot 2014). These challenges have resulted in 'ASEAN boosters', and 'ASEAN bashers' (Lee Jones 2015), or as Richard Stubbs (2019, 18) has termed them 'sceptics' and 'proponents' who despite drawing on the same events and institutions draw different conclusions.

In the broader East Asia context (incorporating China, Japan and South Korea) too, there is a challenge to researchers. Instances where IR theories and theorists may expect greater cooperation (e.g., in the relationship between South Korea and Japan) and instances where they would expect greater tensions such as between China and South Korea. As a result, there is a need for new approaches to researching the contribution of practices of cooperation and coordination within this region or, as argued by Rosemary Foot and Evelyn Goh (2018), a need to develop a new research agenda which more appropriately reflects the particular and non-western relations of the component states and their peoples.

This issue is, therefore, focused on the specific issue of how we can understand the emergence and limits of regional cooperation in a context of increasing animosity and tensions between regional and extra-regional states. Consequently, it picks up the argument of Alice Ba when she stated that ASEAN's contributions to regional security have been "critical but also very specific, constrained, and far from comprehensive." (2010, 116). This issue identifies a particular and specific claim that in areas of non-traditional security cooperation between states should be considered to be 'low-hanging fruit' (Martel 2017, 556, Patalano 2015, 37).

These papers explore different aspects of the cooperation that we see, and collectively they present the conditions under which there are positive cooperation outcomes in the areas of humanitarian assistance (HA) and disaster relief (DR) and/or peacekeeping operations (PKO). Collectively, they identify that mid-range theories have great explanatory power in exploring and researching this region. Although this clearly falls short of Foot and Goh's call for a new research agenda (2018), or indeed the development of any form of 'non-western theory' of cooperation this approach breaks new ground in discussing and developing the connections between relevant factors that should be included in discussions of how the region is organised and the variety of contributing actors and processes that are important but under-recognised or siloed in the existing debates. Central to every paper is the importance of the level of analysis and the tension between first-order and second-order norms and the different actors engaged in each normative grouping – that is the realm of norms of ideas (policymakers, state leaders) and the functional norms of practice (implementers both civilian and military, government and non-government, local, national, regional and global) (Kratochwil 1984, 686).

This introduction does four things: first, it further developed the research puzzle that the papers engage with, positioning this collection within the wider literature on cooperation and East Asian regionalism; second, it provides a critical review of the cooperation literature, setting out a common framework for the use of terms of cooperation, coordination and

partnership; third, it sets out why the issue leverages the two – seemingly disparate – areas of peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; fourth and finally it presents each paper in the issue and the overall conclusions and findings.

The research puzzle

East Asia (here consisting of China, Japan, North and South Korea, and the ten states of the ASEAN) is increasingly being considered as a region which is a potential crucible for conflict. Even the most optimistic authors recognise that there is the potential for security tensions to develop into more comprehensive kinetic actions. In the context of the growing trade tensions between China and the United States, which is drawing in other regional actors, the potential for economic interdependence to mitigate these tensions is reducing. As noted by Sohn (2019:2), the nexus between economics and security may produce both positive and negative reinforcement. In this emerging political space, it would not be expected that cooperation and coordination bridging across these lines of tensions would emerge – especially in a region characterised by weak or soft regionalism where the efficacy of the regional institutions is perpetually challenged.

Despite the context in this region we do, however, see evidence of cooperation and coordination emerging within the arena of (so-called) non-traditional security challenges. These issues are defined as challenges that are transnational in nature but present an existential threat to populations and their well-being. As such, these challenges encompass climate-related disasters, food and water security, resource scarcity, transnational crime, smuggling. As Martel notes combating these challenges are often seen as the “low-hanging fruit” of regional cooperation (2017, 556). These challenges are, therefore supposed to be the ‘doable’; the easy to achieve targets that may then move from building confidence between states towards enduring cooperation (Martel 2017). This is not only the case with the ten ASEAN states but

also draws in the wider regional states of China, Japan and South Korea in the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) grouping and through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

Based on these sets of arguments the literature would present two sets of expectations: first, in the area of hard or traditional security tensions may continue to increase increasingly less mitigated by (and perhaps exacerbated by) the ‘Asian Paradox’; second, in the area of non-traditional security (common challenges not threatening state survival), we would expect to see gradual increasing cooperation and spill-over effects from building of confidence and trust between states.

This issue then is concerned with examining this second expectation in the context of emerging animosity among the states of the region and concerned with the region regarding these issues (in particular, those states outlined at the outset but also including Australia, New Zealand, and the United States). The findings of these papers indicate that there is a policy/practice divide and whereas there are confidence-building and trust mechanisms emerging at the practice and implementation level, despite policy pronouncements there is a lack of functional spill-over to developing policy-level coordination.

Events and patterns of cooperation and coordination

In November 2013, Super Typhoon Haiyan (local name Yolanda) devastated 44 provinces of the Philippines, displacing approximately 4.4 million people and over 1 million houses destroyed and claimed over 6,300 lives (Chong and Lee 2018, IASC 2014, NDRRMC 2014). In assessments of the local, regional and global responses to this disaster it became clear that the perceived disaster response was both slow and inadequate and raised issues of coordination and cooperation although the response from the international community was relatively swift (Frago-Marasigan 2019, 134-139).

In the years preceding and subsequent to this disaster, there have been numerous attempts to develop a more concerted and coordinated regional response. As demonstrated in the responses to the earthquakes in Indonesia in 2018 and the burst dam in Laos in the same year, it is increasingly evident that the first responders from across the civil-military divide (local communities, national armed forces, non-governmental organisations [NGOs]) have developed more coordinated functional relationships and patterns of response.

According to David Mitrany's seminal work *A working peace system* (1966),¹ this type of functional cooperation in a specific sector or over a given subject may allow states to break away from the link between "authority and a definite territory" (1966, 27) to produce "authorities which would be comprehensive and solid, in selected fields of common life." (1966, 27). As such, in the areas of humanitarian assistance and especially in the provision of relief after disasters, when the most appropriate response may be transnational, this type of functional cooperation may be the most effective mechanism to build a sustainable system of management. This type of functionalism may produce more extensive cooperation, but that too must develop "as the need for joint action arises and is accepted ..." (Mitrany 1966, 73) As such coordination emerges through functional engagement rather than through a purposeful community-building endeavour. Mitrany does, however, note that the approach to this functional versus purposeful institutional creation is not necessarily mutually exclusive, they can operate in tandem (1966, 83), however, at its base, the functional cooperation should not be stymied by the political objectives sought. It is this intersection of function and project that this special issue is particularly focused on exploring in the East Asian context.

In the years subsequent to Mitrany's work, there have been numerous discussions and publications developing and critiquing the plausibility of this functional agenda. Most notable perhaps is Ernst Haas in *Uniting for Europe* (1968) who argued for a functional route to the creation of a European integrated zone. In subsequent debates, there has been discussion of

what counts as a ‘function’ (McLaren 1985, 141-142) and Morgenthau who highlighted that functionalism allowed for political division to be overcome by “transferring people’s loyalties to more useful international institutions.” (Cited in Eastby, 1985, p. 23). Therefore, at its heart, the debates on functionalism and neo-functionalism seek to address the tensions between technical and political common activities and objectives.

As noted at the outset, East Asia as a region presents researchers with a multitude of challenges in assessing the implications and the degree of integration between the constituent states. At their base regional debates have swirled around the issue of whether the regional organisations are effective or not – although this is most prevalent as a debate in relation to ASEAN, it is also present in the debates on the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the absence of trilateral cooperation in Northeast Asia. These debates have been approached from various perspectives, including framing the region as demonstrating ‘soft regionalism’, or adopting an approach of regionalisation as a bottom-up process rather than a ‘top-down’ project-driven enterprise.

This final point indicates the number of the tensions between the functional cooperation and the political objectives in East Asia. The tension point arises in that contrary to Mitrany’s expectations; the political does ‘get in the way’ of the function. As early as 1975, Michael Leifer noted that “The needs of the state in South-east Asia as perceived by the various governments do not suggest much prospect of the extensive adoption of functional techniques of cooperation.” (1975, 283). In his chapter, the “needs of the state” Leifer discusses are the political and historical problems in cooperation. In expanding on the puzzle outlined above, the questions over when cooperation happens and why are emphasised in East Asia.

As Shaun Breslin and Jeffrey Wilson have noted in approaching this debate and understanding the challenges of this region’s plethora of different regional institutions and functional cooperative frameworks (2015) a Mitranian approach may be useful. However, they

also argued that a critical limit to the progress of the region – even in the area of confidence-building measures – was the bottom line of ‘sovereignty conscious states’. As they argue later “Asian governments *are* sovereignty-conscious when it comes to regional cooperation, and functional initiatives which can be designed in ways sensitive to these concerns stand a far better chance of being seen as legitimate and consistent with state interests than top-down federal style alternatives.” (Breslin and Wilson, 2014:21) However, the misnomer in this logic has consistently been to see Disaster relief and humanitarian assistance as being the appropriate areas in which to develop this functional approach.

In addition, to this sovereignty question, this collection indicates a significant number of limitations in the debates and discussions around the issues of cooperation. The first conceptual departure for these papers is the terminology of what counts as cooperation. This issue identifies three distinct types of interaction between states: coordination, cooperation and partnership. In the logic of Mitrany cooperation and coordination at functional levels may lead to political partnership, or the politics of partnering may run in parallel to these functions. However, as demonstrated in the papers herein, coordination may be the process through which states transfer or ‘export’ the politically thorny issues (see Jones 2015) and as a result, this coordinated action may not lead to further functional cooperation.

Centring on these conceptual terms, the papers in this collection present several further approaches to exploring this issue. Two papers (Hirono and Mulloy) in this collection note, the presence or absence of internal coordination in the state political structure that enables the functional action prevents the emergence of the more robust and comprehensive relationships that Mitrany describes. In Newby’s paper, the presence of common political goals and objectives which should ensure that the politics do not interfere actually seems to present a significant problem to cooperation. In Cook’s paper, we have the expansion of the problem of too many processes and too many types of functional engagements with too many competing

partners. Finally, in Jones's paper, we have the reoccurring problem of what gets counted as being an entity to be cooperated with.

These papers conclude that in addition and perhaps more significantly, the types of activity and whether they are determined to be 'strategic' or 'political' play a role in determining whether the functional cooperation emerges. As noted above, areas of disaster relief, or humanitarian assistance, often grouped as being non-traditional security issues, are seen as 'low-hanging fruit' for cooperation (particularly in Southeast Asia), however, as these responses require, engagement with host communities, rebuilding of communities, provision of basic subsistence materials for a group, and - in the context of decolonised states - these are inherently political activities.² In contrast, the deployment of peacekeepers (fulfilling the same roles or functions) outside the region in the context in which authority for deployment is exported to an extra-regional body (in the form of the UN) reduces the political tensions for coordination and regional specialisation.

Cooperation, coordination leading to partnership?

Cooperation, coordination, and partnership

Whilst IR theories, including those mentioned above, have focused on a polarised view of cooperation and non-cooperation, in 2015, the UN highlighted a focus on partnerships rather than cooperation in seeking to improve the organisation's peacekeeping performance.³ Although it seems to be assumed, within the UN mile in New York, what a partnership is and who it is between, but to the broader world the use of this term requires some greater exposition. Not, least as the term has been used by the UN; it appears to suggest that partners are formalised institution to institutional structures (see Jones, this collection). As such, in the context of the Asia-Pacific, this appears to exclude some of the institutions, organisations, or patterns of engagement that we see in the region, irrespective of their expertise or potential (see Cook and

Jones this issue). However, a conclusion could be the result of a misalignment of the academic debate on the region and the functional pragmatism of the UN. It is, therefore, useful to consider how these three terms – cooperation, coordination, and partnership – can be more usefully and explicitly used by other academics and policymakers alike.

In evaluating the UN-African Union (AU) partnership, Williams and Boutellis (2014, 265) note: “These UN-AU partnerships were driven by particular political and security circumstances that motivated the organisations to develop pragmatic solutions, and they did not result from a joint assessment of the situations or a shared vision of how to address them.” They discuss these as ‘pragmatic partnerships’ and point to the points of coordination in the activities of the AU and the UN. Although their article is a clear and useful stocktake and critical evaluation of this relationship, their conceptual development and use of the terms ‘partnership’ and ‘coordination’ tend to conflate rather than clarify their use.

This is not only a problem with the academic use but also with the fact that the use of the term partnership at the UN level has been its vague application. In the most notable document ‘Partnerships in Peacekeeping,’ the focus of the discussion is on developing bilateral partnership with other codified and institutionalised organisations, most notably the AU and the European Union (EU): “The need to put in place a global-regional framework to manage today’s peace and security challenges – which should start with a reinforced partnership between the United Nations and the African Union.” (HIPPO 2015). This focus has then been reflected in the academic discussions of UN Partnerships (Boutellis and Williams 2014, Mohr and Spekman 1994). However, from the focus of the department of peacekeeping operations (DPKO) / subsequently the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the focus of ASEAN, there has been gradual work towards developing partnerships with other regional organisations and states, progressing at the speed of the region rather than being determined by the UN (see Jones, this issue). For example, although ASEAN has stated that “ASEAN Member States are

encouraged to actively participate in peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, in accordance with the capacity of respective ASEAN Member States” (ASEAN 2015, 42-43). As noted above, the focus is on states contributing and developing their own capacity rather than a collective endeavour. Hence, the form of ASEAN’s partnership is different from that of the EU and the AU. Instead of engaging as a partner block, the collective states develop individual specialisations and bilaterally engage with the DPKO. In this collection, we consider this to be coordination rather than partnership – see papers by Jones, Mulloy and Hirono in this issue.

In separating these terms, it is possible to refine their use in academic (and potentially policy) arenas to make them more analytically useful and policy specific. According to existing research by Yamashita (2012, 170), which sought to disentangle these concepts, “Partnering’ implies a more horizontal relationship wherein regional peacekeeping bodies form a network of peacekeeping partners interconnected capabilities. The UN should partner with regional organisations to create such global network of capabilities.” This, Yamashita (2012, 170) argues, can then be contrasted with cooperation which was clarified by the then chief of the DPKO, Jean-Marie Guehenno in “Peace Operations 2010’, an influential memorandum on peacekeeping reform ... proposed cooperation not just with regional organisations also with the other UN organs and the World Bank group.” Yamashita (2012) contrasts these two approaches to sub-contracting, which is a hierarchical and temporal relationship.

This categorisation is inherently useful to this collection; however, in the case of the patterns of relationships that we see emerging, there is a need to develop a more encompassing conceptual toolkit. For example, as in Cook (this issue), coordination and cooperation are not only between regional organisations and the UN but may also be between civilian and military contributors. In Jones (this issue), it is clear that partnerships need to be more inclusive of different organisational structures. As a result, the definition of partnership needs to focus more

exclusively on its essential characteristics whereas the term cooperation is not only a function of partnership and does not only emerge in the context of a partnership (Paul 2019, 81-82). As a result, we draw on interdisciplinary literature from politics, international relations, business management, and medicine, to develop the definition that a partnership is (Lasker, Weiss and Miller 2001, Mohr and Spekman 1994, Nielsen 2004, Yamashita 2012, Paul 2019).

A purpose driven and strategic relationship between independent entities or groupings in a non-hierarchical relationship, which has mutual and individual benefits for each partner. They must be between entities that are themselves able to commit to the undertaking over a long period of time, encompassing a range of specific activities, but are more than the sum of those activities. Partnerships require the development of mutual expectations each should have of the other and has a basis of trust.

As a result, coordination may result or lead to partnership, as instances of cooperation can lead to the realisation of collective strategic visions and mutual support to achieve those goals. However, not all – indeed very few – cooperative moments will be in themselves partnerships as they will lack the sense of trust, and shared strategic endpoint that extends beyond the immediate short-term goal. Hence, all partnerships should include cooperation; however, not all cooperation will be a partnership.

Finally, cooperation is the most ad-hoc and potentially limited engagement between entities as they may function to achieve a common goal in the most efficient form (see Cook, this issue); however, this may be through a hierarchical or overseeing structure determining how the participants interact. As a result, trust may not be present, and equality between participants may be entirely absent. In this form, coordination can include cooperation, and may eventually lead to partnership; however, the nature of interactions is fundamentally different. See Figure 1 for how these elements may fit together in a visual form:

Figure 1. synthesises the work of the conceptual papers of this issue. In making these distinctions useable, this figure outlines the different types of activities present in each form of engagement.

Who responds and therefore, who is coordinating, cooperating and becoming a partner?⁴

In considering this topic, a crucial area for debate must be highlighted. Above, it is noted that debates of regional integration have engaged with regionalism and regionalisation, in the

practice turn in IR and the importance of praxis a fundamental issue is who are the parties to coordination, cooperation and partnership. It is evident that at these different points of interaction, different personnel or groups are involved. As in regionalism, a top-down process more government officials are involved, in regionalisation bottom-up business-driven approaches to functional interactions, small, medium and large enterprises are the central driving forces of regional integration. Similarly, in considering the relationship between responders and therefore who functional cooperation, coordination and partnership might arise between is vitally important.

To take one example, the first responders in responding to a natural or climate-induced disaster, are usually the local community – those not immediately affected by the disaster. Subsequently, there will be the local emergency responders, local NGOs, religious groups, and those in nearby or proximate areas. Only after these groups have provided initial assistance, will states or larger entities provide further assistance. However, at this point, the provision of logistical support will make this sector of responders more visible and recognisable, also because of the ability and training of militaries the use of their processes and terminology are more likely to dominate the response from this point.

In this collection, there is, therefore, a focus on government, regional, NGO and militaries as the functionaries of these activities. This is not intended to minimise the contribution or value of the other responders but rather to demonstrate the challenges of building functional region-wide coordinated actions even with the supporting structures of larger organisations. However, in seeking to identify how longer-term processes of cooperation and coordination may occur, there are sound reasons for adopting this approach. First, the basis of functional engagement is a consistent engagement in an area over time, as a disaster rarely occurs repeatedly in the same town or to the same citizens, these first local responders are likely to be different in each disaster, the same is true of the local NGOs and emergency teams.

Second, functional engagements are by their nature, not ad hoc; as a result, there is a need for a structure or process or pattern for participants to engage with. Third, as noted by David Capie (2015), the military through its provision of crisis response structures and training are more likely to offer a focal point to function around – they also provide the logistical support to facilitate the response of other actors.

Why look at Humanitarian Assistance, Disaster Relief, and Peacekeeping?

In examining the scope and limits of cooperation, this paper explores the argument that non-traditional security issues, including, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief are the ‘low hanging fruit’ of regional cooperation. In examining this claim, we take the cases of humanitarian assistance (HA), disaster relief (DR), and contributions to peacekeeping operations (PKO). Although seemingly disparate concerns these three elements share common functional tasks and expertise, therefore the guiding and fundamental reason for exploring these areas is that peace operations and relief and assistance are fundamentally related – climate-induced disasters when insufficiently responded to or prevented can be a cause of conflict, similarly, a key task of the expanded framework for UN PKO is that peacekeepers now need to adopt a human-face, in addition to keeping conflict parties separate they need to engage with local communities, build resilience, respond to disasters and as so ably seen in the Ebola crisis in West Africa they have become essential tools in responding to non-traditional security challenges especially in fragile, and conflict-affected societies and among the civilian population of a host state (Davies and Rushton 2016). In addition to overlapping in terms of activities, they often share common responders.

However, they also differ in interesting and important ways that can be used to illuminate the limiting factors of regional cooperation and coordination: PKO tends to deploy outside the region, whereas HA and DR activities remain internal; in HA and DR activities

civilian actors are more central, and coordination between militaries and civilians can be more problematic; across different regional states the internal institutional decision-making structures of HA and DR responses and PKO are varied; and finally the involvement of broader international bodies (chiefly the UN) are different.

Overview and findings of the papers

In the first article, Alistair Cook and Sangeetha Yogendran argue that civil-military relations in disaster preparedness and response needs to look beyond the traditional understandings of civil and military engagement to include non-state actors, which they argue include but are not limited to international NGOs, faith-based organisations, local civil society groups, spontaneous volunteer groups and the private sector. Further, they identify humanitarian civil-military partnerships in the Asia-Pacific as a site for different ‘orders’ of engagement. They do this through advancing the 4Cs of disaster partnering – (1) Coexistence / Communication, (2) Cooperation, (3) Coordination, (4) Collaboration building - earlier work by Martin, Nolte and Vitolo (2016) focused on the 2010 Haiti earthquake response and applying them to humanitarian civil-military partnerships in the Asia-Pacific. Through this multi-layered approach to a broad understanding of cooperation, we can now illuminate the complexities found in the field of humanitarian civil-military affairs. While there are many detractors who see the humanitarian space as necessarily civilian only, the case of disaster preparedness and response force us to reconsider the conditions under which humanitarian organisations engage with government agencies – civilian or military – and offers us another way to construct civil-military relations in humanitarian affairs. This provides an important insight into the workings of the Asia-Pacific as a region with multiple disasters and the dominant reference point for actors within the region to engage in humanitarian affairs. It further highlights a marked different historical trajectory for the region in this arena and offers some insight into why

states/actors from the region engage the way they do in humanitarian affairs – whether it be in peace operations or disaster response. This will further offer insights into what partnerships are possible and what lessons can be drawn from the experience in natural disasters and inform engagement in humanitarian affairs in conflict settings.

In Catherine Jones's paper, the focus is on understanding the potential for ASEAN states through their peacekeeping and HA and DR expertise to move beyond coordination and cooperation with the UN, towards a strategic level partnership based on common goals and objectives. Within this paper she sets out the conceptual framework for understanding both the role of regions in peacekeeping and how this would relate to the emergence of partnerships. Utilising this frame and connecting back to the work in Cook's paper and this introduction she concludes that despite the potential for this relationship to bear fruits of Mitranian functionalism, instead the divergence in ASEAN's implementation in peacekeeping and the strategic direction of travel of the UN a partnership is unlikely to emerge at present. However, there is scope to further debate whether there is a collective 'ASEAN approach to peacekeeping' and whether this would promote partnerships between the peacekeepers and host state and population rather than a partnership with the UN.

The third paper from Miwa Hirono explores the case of China's internal decision-making processes on PKO, HA and DR. Starting from the premise that in the case of all three activities it is the People's Liberation Army conducting responses. She adopts a foreign policy analysis framework by Herman to analyse why there is policy fragmentation in the engagement of China with the region in these areas despite the potential harmonious, cooperative opportunities. She argues that the holisticsity-fragmentation continuum of the decision-making process corresponds with the extent to which China makes international cooperation. As China's internal processes are fragmented so too are its external relations in these aspects.

Garren Mulloy's paper contributes to the literature by examining Japanese unity of Overseas Despatch Operation (ODO) actors, laws, and operational aspects, and interaction with other state and institutional actors, functional regional engagement (the "4Cs") and concepts of partnership, and Japan's UNPO-HADRO nexus. Japanese functional cooperation for dual international peace and realist security goals within the increasing regional strategic competition and nationalist antipathy are examined amid threadbare "East Asian Identity" and institutions in Japan's "poor neighbourhood". The paper questions why, despite undoubted expertise, Japan has not emerged as a regional UNPO-HADRO nexus development leader, and whether Japanese UNPO-HADRO and "pro-active pacifism" approaches are utilising UNPO-HADRO for Asia-regional strategic competition purposes?

Japanese UNPO-HADRO has played important functional engagement, value sharing, and institutional socialisation roles, with integrated legal-civil-military holistic approaches providing models for others and foundations for partnerships. However, despite specialist capacity-building knowledge transfer efforts Asian disquiet remains concerning cooperation and partnership as Japan remains risk-averse, raising questions regarding its dependability. Japan as "HADRO-CIMIC superpower-aspirant", becoming a bridging-actor between Indo-Pacific and "Northern-Developed" practitioners, can be unfortunately measured by its modest 2019 UNPO actor status. Japanese leadership and initiative are limited by its neighbourhood and attendant institutions, but also by its self-perceived identity shaped by historical, alliance, and leadership challenges to manage relative decline. (Foot 2014)

Vanessa Newby's article starts from the position of states that already have strategic alignment in goals and objectives: Australia, New Zealand, the United States. The paper then explores how these states are seeking to use HA and DR as an arena through which they can more comprehensively engage with the region in East Asia. However, she notes some distinctions in how these three states approach the provision of HADR in relation to their more

traditional security activities. Most significantly as a challenge for the Mitranian logic set out here is that despite the common strategic objectives, these do not appear to have led to a functional broadening or deepening of the existing alliance structures between these three states.

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³ UN participant observation, UN HQ, March 2016.

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