

Politicos: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan



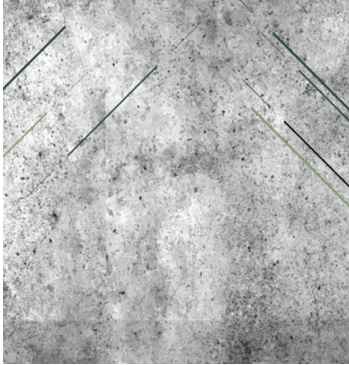
ISSN PRINT : 2776-8031
ISSN ELECTRONICS : 2776-8023

Volume 6, Number 1, 2026

ISSN: 2776-8031 (Print) | 2776-8023 (Electronic)

Publication details, Including author guidelines

Visit URL: <https://www.ejournal.warmadewa.ac.id/index.php/politicos/onlinesubmissionandauthorguideline>



Australia's Foreign Policy Shift Towards China: An Examination of Domestic Politics in the Scott Morrison Administration

Ida Ayu Bulan Utami Arti

Universitas Warmadewa, Denpasar, Indonesia.

Article History

Received : February 3, 2026

Revised : March 6, 2026

Accepted : April 10, 2026

Published : Mei 1, 2026

How to cite this article (APA)

Arti, I. A. B. U. (2026). Australia's Foreign Policy Shift Towards China: An Examination of Domestic Politics in the Scott Morrison Administration. *Politicos: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan*, 6(1), 32-46. <https://doi.org/10.22225/politicos.6.1.2026.32-46>

Universitas Warmadewa (as publisher) makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications. However, we make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors and are not the views of or endorsed by Universitas Warmadewa. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Universitas Warmadewa shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to, or arising out of the use of the content.

Politicos: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan is published by Universitas Warmadewa comply with [the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing](#) at all stages of the publication process. Politicos: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan also may contain links to web sites operated by other parties. These links are provided purely for educational purpose.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).

Australia's Foreign Policy Shift Towards China: An Examination of Domestic Politics in the Scott Morrison Administration

Ida Ayu Bulan Utami Arti

Universitas Warmadewa, Denpasar, Indonesia.

Abstract

This study examines the development in Australia-China diplomatic relations, which changed dramatically during Prime Minister Scott Morrison's term (2018-2022). Previously, the two countries had appeared to be very harmonious and bound by complementary economic relations through the Australia-China Free Trade Agreement in 2015. When Scott Morrison was successfully inaugurated as Prime Minister, Australia dared to shifts its foreign policy towards China in a confrontational and anti-China direction. Australia's confrontational and anti-China foreign policy is evaluated through three offensive decisions, including the prohibition investment and trade links with China, the restriction Chinese foreign students in Australia, and Australia's attacks on China at the multilateral level. Therefore, this study tries to analyze the elements driving changes in Australia's foreign policy towards China. This study aims to fill the analytical gap left by prior studies, focusing on domestic political considerations as a significant variable in driving changes in Australia's foreign policy towards China. This study takes a qualitative approach, with descriptive and comparative analysis methodologies used in the data processing process. By referring to and using Type III Neoclassical Realism Theory, this study found that the domestic factors influencing these changes were: 1) Scott Morrison's policy perception and leadership outlook; 2) Australia's strategic culture as a lens of policy imagination; 3) Australian public opinion and its constraining effect on policy choices; and 4) the Liberal-National Coalition party's ideology and its role in shaping policy decisions.

Keywords: Foreign Policy; Australia; Anti-China; Scott Morrison; Neoclassical Realism Theory

Introduction

In the midst of ever-changing global dynamics, every country faces significant obstacles in developing and adjusting its foreign policy. However, foreign policy should not be viewed solely as the result of immediate action-reaction. A country's foreign policy decisions are substantially shaped by domestic variables, including ideas, norms, belief, identity, and history, all of which are embedded within a state's domestic system and ultimately influence external conduct (Baylis et al., 2020). Domestic political calculations influence foreign policy on the global arena, as a country's negotiating behavior simultaneously reflect both domestic and international pressures (Putnam, 1988). This reflects a country's projections and perspectives about its allies, threats, and the values it intends to promote on a global scale. It is not surprising that a country's foreign policy might be unpredictable, given that its priorities are primarily reliant on a rapidly changing domestic political structure. In this context, Australia has a complex dilemma because its foreign policy towards China has frequently changed in response to domestic political dynamics and global pressures (He & Feng, 2025a).

Historically, Australia had consistently refused to establish diplomatic relations with Asia countries, including China. This negative mindset is fundamentally linked to British colonialism and the British Commonwealth of Nations. As a nation without its own historical history, Australia acquired and codified every British idea, including the fantasy of a white continental nation (Atkinson, 2015). This approach gave rise to the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 and the White Policy, sometimes known as the "yellow immigration ban", which resulted in the exclusion of immigrants and the Chinese minority from Australia.

When World War II broke out, Australia became more associated with the Western Bloc, particularly following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. At the time, Australia's foreign policy orientation bolstered its position by improving relations with the US. Then, during the Cold War, ties between the two countries appeared to improve with the formation of the ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, United States), collective security alliance to combat the menace of communism in the Pacific. These developments make it more difficult for Australia to build meaningful diplomatic relations with China. In view of the foregoing, the Cold War was a watershed period that explains the difficulties in diplomatic relations between Australia and China. Ideology was perceived as the primary barrier, with China as a communist country and Australia as a fervent supporter of neoliberalism (Beeson & Zeng, 2016). These ideological disagreements cemented Australia's frigid attitude toward China at the time.

However, in the international political arena, Australia-China ties cannot be regarded as static or permanent. Under Prime Minister Whitlam's leadership, bilateral relations began a new era, as evidenced by his visit to China in 1971 and the momentous decision to relocate the Australian Embassy from Taipei to Beijing (Hayden, 1984). These moves confirmed Australia's recognition of People's Republic of China as the legitimate government, a significant shift given that Australia had previously supported Taiwan since 1949. The decision also represented Whitlam's desire to develop a more independent foreign policy from the United States (Mackerras, 2014). Since then, Australia-China relations had shifted toward trade, owing to China's fast economic growth, which has created prospects for mutually beneficial cooperation. In this period, the commitment of both countries in strengthening bilateral economic-political relationship demonstrate that ideology will no longer be a barrier to future Australia-China relations.

Australia-China ties gradually improved through commerce and investment. In 2007, China overtook Australia as its largest trading partner, primarily in commodity exports such as iron ore, coal, and Australian products. According to Matt Siegel (2014) study, total trade between the two countries reached an impressive USD 140 billion in 2013. Based on this overall value, Australia and China deepened their ties by signing the Australia-China Free Trade Agreement (ACHFTA) in 2015. According to data released by the (Australian Trade and Investment Commission, n.d.), the significance of this agreement stems from its highlighted elements and substance, such as the implementation of tariff-free access for 95% of Australian export commodities in the Chinese market and the relaxation of restrictions on Chinese investment in Australia. Education has become a crucial basis not only in the political and economic spheres, but also because Australia is regarded favorably by Chinese students. In 2010, China became the largest source of international students in Australia, accounting for 130,000 students, or 45.7% of all Chinese students abroad (Liu & Hao, 2014).

Thus, Chinese students in particular have shown to provide significant economic benefits to Australia, making China one of the most important contributors to the Australian education industry. This is undeniably linked to Australia's income because of the amount of money spent by Chinese students on tuition and other expenses while studying in Australia. The above explanation shows that human and social factors play an essential influence in the strength of Australia-China bilateral ties. According to an Australian Bureau of Statistics estimate from 2018, there were 1.2 million people of Chinese heritage in Australia (Kizeková, 2021). Simultaneously, this condition has fostered many "dialects" or Mandarin languages to thrive and become so popular in Australia. As a result, Mandarin has become the most widely spoken language in Australia, after English.

This is a clear indication that Chinese culture has had a significant impact on many elements of Australian public life.

Unfortunately, the idealism of Australia-China relations faded quickly. Since Scott Morrison became Prime Minister in 2018, diplomatic ties between the two countries have deteriorated to an all-time low (Okano, 2021). This remark is supported by research conducted by international relations professionals and professors at Tsinghua University, who used quantitative data to measure Australia-China ties (Pan & Korolev, 2021). The research's goal was to create a value-based rating of certain diplomatic occurrences. According to the report, relations between the two countries deteriorated between 2018 and 2020. The red part also depicts the Covid-19 epidemic as the primary accelerator. This assessment index makes it increasingly evident that Australia-China ties are at an all-time low. The whole data is shown here.

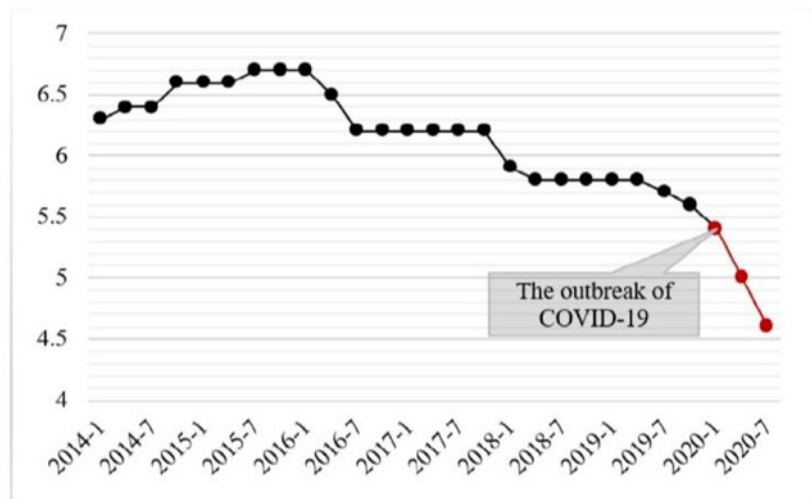


Fig. 1 Assessment of Australia-China relations (Source: Calculated by the author based on the Tsinghua University dataset 'China's Relations with Great Powers')

Figure 1: Australia-China Declining Trend Diplomatic Relations based on a Tsinghua University study conducted between 2014 and 2020
Source: Pan & Korolev, 2021

Based on the foregoing, evidence, the major developments in Australia-China diplomatic ties during Scott Morrison's administration create a conundrum that deserves more investigation. Economically, it is impossible to envision Australia taking hostile steps against its greatest trading partner. The political reality, on the other hand, is quite different. In this example, Australia's foreign policy has taken a turn that has strained relations with China. According to Mackerras (2021), the deterioration in ties was initially precipitated by two important occurrences. First, the Australian government barred Huawei and ZTE from participating in the building of the country's 5G network. Second, Scott Morrison's effort, which calls for an independent study into the origins and spread of Covid-19, implicitly blames China for the global pandemic. Following these two instances, China reacted and significantly strained its diplomatic relations with Australia. The Chinese Embassy restricted Australian wine exports and applied import duties of up to 200% in 2020 (Kizeková, 2021). Not only that, but China issued an ultimatum with 14 areas of complaint and harsh reprimands against Australia. The preceding context sheds light on the shift in Australia-China ties.

Not stopping there, Australia has taken increasingly explicit steps to demonstrate its anti-China foreign policy. This can be illustrated through three offensive choices. First, Australia has outlawed foreign investment and commerce with China. According to Agius (2021), the Australian government approved only 20 Chinese investment projects during three years of Scott Morrison's tenure. This figure is down considerably from 111 investment projects in 2020 only. The China

Investment in Australia (CHIIA) also reported in their study claiming that Chinese investment in Australia declined by more than 61% in 2020, hitting its lowest level in a decade (Karp, 2021). Furthermore, Australia's anti-China position extends beyond foreign investment and into the education system. In this situation, Australia has made an offensive judgment by prohibiting Chinese students from entering. According to data from the Australian Department of Education, Skills, and Employment (2021), 106,000 of the 189,000 Chinese students were returned home and unable to return to Australia (Ludlow, 2020). In reality, the Department of Home Affairs stated that 40 PhD applicants from China faced visa delays due to national security inspections (Ripsman et al., 2016).

Australia's aggressive foreign policy toward China has also been pursued at the multilateral level, escalating diplomatic tensions between the two countries. These problems began with Scott Morrison's decision to cancel the Australia-China Human Rights Technical Cooperation Program (HRTCP), which was created in 1998. Following this judgment, Australia strongly protested China's treatment of Uighurs in the United Nations. Even more surprise, Australia opposed China's admission to the world's largest trade deal, the Comprehensive and Progressive deal for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). As a result of this series of events, Australia and China have blocked high-level interaction at the leadership and cabinet levels. Therefore, during his administration, Scott Morrison only met with President Xi Jinping once in 2019, and there was no further meeting until 2022. In fact, state visits serve as a diplomatic negotiation tool as well as a measure of power and interests. In this context, the signs of change are becoming more obvious. Because, prior to Scott Morrison's presidency, bilateral relations at the multilateral level were stable and did not become a source of concern. During Scott Morrison's tenure, the two countries appeared to be in a clear opposition.

Based on the foregoing description, it is crucial to analyze current literature to determine how earlier academics described the transition in Australia-China relations, as well as to what extent their methodologies still present analytical gaps. According to the findings of the literature review, the majority of prior studies have focused on external causes, primarily China's development in the Pacific region, which is regarded as the primary cause of the worsening of diplomatic relations between the two nations. Köllner (2021) regularly emphasizes China's participation in the Belt Road Initiative (BRI) and its investment plans, which Australia views as a threat. This move is viewed as China's goal to increase its influence in the South Pacific by controlling small and weak countries, which has the potential to threaten Australia's status as a vital player in the region. Liu & Hao (2014) writing also demonstrates that China's rise, with its non-totalitarian ideology and military ambitions, has shifted the stability of the Indo-Pacific region, forcing Australia to form an alliance with the United States in 2021 through a collective security agreement known as AUKUS (Australia, UK, and US). Thus, existing research tends to explain shifts in Australia's foreign policy toward China entirely in terms of external influences, ignoring the importance of domestic variables and internal political calculations. Thus, most extant research explains shifts in Australia's foreign policy toward China primarily as a result of external influences. As a result, the research gap is the absence of study on domestic political calculations.

This study tries to address a gap in the analysis by undertaking a thorough evaluation of how domestic political dynamics influence changes in Australia's foreign policy toward China. This study is not intended to simply replicate previous structural explanations, but to provide a more integrated approach through domestic political variables in accordance with the neoclassical realism paradigm. This study intends to illustrate, using this theoretical framework, that the dynamics of home politics in foreign policy formulation, such as elite perspectives, party power configurations, and the role of domestic public opinion, cannot be ignored. The shift in Australia's stance toward China can be better understood by looking at how domestic political processes impact policy interpretation and articulation. This study does not seek to simplify the foreign policy-

making process by treating it solely as a response to international system pressures, rendering it susceptible to structural bias. Thus, the theoretical contribution of this research is to bridge the systemic and domestic levels in order to comprehend changes in Australia's foreign policy behavior toward China.

Within the Realism perspective, anarchy and polarity are frequently seen as the primary elements for explaining foreign policy action. According to Gimba & Ghali Ibrahim (2018), a country's foreign policy is influenced by eight external factors: power structure, international organization, reaction from other states, world public opinion, alliances and treaties, geographical location, multinational corporations, and liberation movements. However, this method tends to result in an overly broad understanding. This is because the international framework alone cannot explain the national features that influence each country's decision-making process (Rose, 1998). As a result, this study employs Neoclassical Realism Theory, which is thought to be more relevant because it incorporates domestic political components as intervening variables, allowing for a more accurate understanding of the interaction of external and internal forces in foreign policy creation (Rose, 1998; Taliaferro et al., 2009). Rose (1998) developed Neoclassical Realism Theory as a complete paradigm for analyzing foreign policy. According to Rose (1998), the direction and ambition of a country's foreign policy are not always decided by its position in the international system, but can also be influenced by domestic systemic factors.

In line with this, Ripsman et al. (2016) argue in Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics that foreign policy decisions are influenced by internal dynamics as well as external factors. Ripsman et al. (2016) established three types of Neoclassical Realism models, of which this study focuses on Type III. This model emphasizes that the process of foreign policy development is driven not only by systemic external impulses, but also by four intervening variables: 1) leader perception, 2) strategic culture, 3) domestic institutions, and 4) state-society relations. Figure 2 depicts a full description of the Type III Neoclassical Realism model. The figure emphasizes the development of four domestic factors that are the subject of investigation in this study since they are linked to three domestic processes: perception creation, decision making, policy implementation, and the ensuing foreign policy.

Figure 2: Type III Neoclassical Realism Model

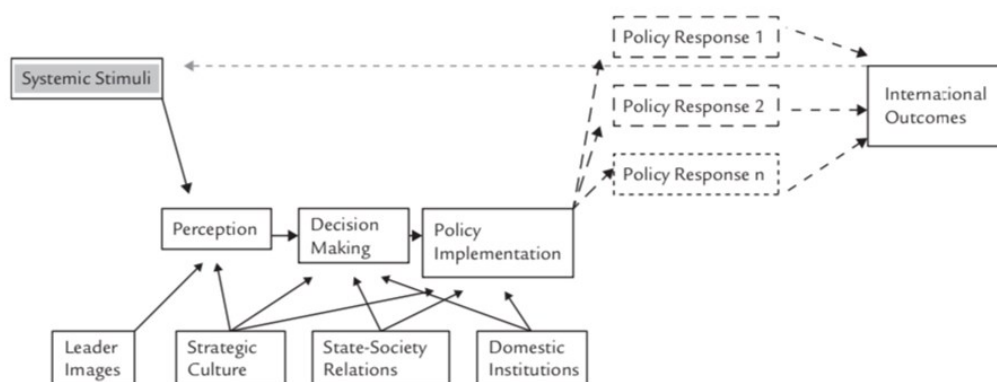


Figure 2.1
Type III Neoclassical Realist Model

Source: Ripsman et al., 2016

Method

This study takes a qualitative research approach. Lamont (2022) points out that qualitative research uses evidence in the form of texts, narrative, and interview materials to back up its claim. Using a qualitative approach, this study seeks to investigate meaning, undertake in-depth interpretation, and develop a thorough knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation by drawing on relevant literature, ideas, and concepts. This study also employs a descriptive methodology. This is consistent with Beach & Pedersen (2020), remark that the descriptive approach solely focuses on naturalistic examination, implying that it is only intended as a commitment to explore a phenomenon inside the research arena. This study employs a descriptive method with the goal of determining the nature of an event in a systematic manner and providing a coherent temporal sequence. This method enables the author to acquire a better knowledge of the dynamics of changes in Australia's foreign policy toward China during Scott Morrison's administration, while also identifying the domestic elements that drove the process of change. In keeping with the qualitative method, this study employs secondary data from the literature and archival studies. Foreign policy traces can usually be identified in official state papers, national archives, and earlier study. Data was collected online from a variety of sources, including think tanks such as the Lowy Institute and foreign media stories. In addition, Prime Minister Scott Morrison's state speeches, which are available on official platforms such as YouTube, were used for analysis. This study uses comparative analysis because it can discover variations in a country's objectives, values, decisions, and actions by examining contrasting comparisons. Using this method, the study may track patterns and trends in foreign policy over time and identify the internal elements that drive these changes. The validity of the data in this study is maintained by source triangulation, which entails comparing official policy papers, elite statement and media stories to verify consistency of results about Australia's domestic political dynamic during the Scott Morrison administration.

Results

Scott Morrison's Policy Perception and Leadership Outlook

According to Neoclassical Realism's theoretical considerations, the cognitive characteristics of a leader must be carefully examined while developing a country's foreign policy (Ripsman et al., 2016). As a result, the first domestic aspect to be considered in understanding Australia's foreign policy toward China during Scott Morrison's administration is the influence of elite preferences on the formulation and implementation of Australia's foreign policy. In this context, the term 'elites' refers to the key political leaders who hold decision-making authority in foreign policy. Within the framework of Neoclassical Realism, the head of government occupies a central role as the primary foreign policy actor, as their perception and calculation directly shape a state's external behavior. (Rose, 1998) Therefore, this study focuses specifically on Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, whose administration was directly responsible for formulating and implementing Australia's foreign policy toward China. Ripsman et al. (2016) believe that understanding a leader's values, ideology, and views can have a significant impact on how they interact with and perceive the outside world. Scott Morrison has been characterized as a Prime Minister who relatively inexperienced in foreign affairs and lacked a thorough understanding diplomatic practices (Agius, 2021; Kelly, 2022). Nevertheless, Morrison demonstrated notable competency in national security matters, largely attributed to his extensive experience on the National Security Committee, which provided him with a comprehensive understanding of Australia's key national security decision (Kelly, 2022).

This competency in security affairs is concretely reflected in the defense policies pursued throughout his administration. Data released by (Australian Government Department of Defence, 2020) demonstrates Scott Morrison's involvement in security issues, as indicated by a considerable rise in Australian defense spending of up to 40% with a USD 185 billion budget allocation. The budget includes purchasing more advanced offensive weapon systems, improving cyber

capabilities, expanding high-tech undersea surveillance systems, and acquiring long-range missiles. This decision is said to be closely linked to the level of uncertainty in the Indo-Pacific. Furthermore, the numbers demonstrate that Australia has expanded the size and capabilities of the Australian Defense Force (ADF) throughout peacetime by recruiting 101,000 ADF soldiers. Of course, this chain of events demonstrates that security issues represented a serious and central concern for Scott Morrison's administration, as evidenced by the significant prioritization of defence policy and budget allocation throughout his term in office. Australia is clearly reorienting its military strategy during this time by bolstering deterrence capabilities in the Indo-Pacific area, which has long been seen as its closest strategic environment, rather than just changing its defence posture.

Alongside his defence expansion, it was Morrison's deep preoccupation with national security that came to shape his foreign policy approach and fundamentally redefine Australia's posture toward China through the principle of "Managing China on Australia's Terms" – giving rise to the Morrison Doctrine, which formalized clarity and consistency on matters deemed essential to Australia's national security (Chacko, 2023). This principle manifested in a series of confrontational policy decisions, including banning Chinese investment, restricting Chinese student access, and pushing back against China's aggressive behavior in the Pacific – all of which Chacko (2023) describes as the most hawkish transformation in Australian defence policy in two generations, while simultaneously marking an unprecedented escalation of ideological conflict in the bilateral relationship between the two nations (Abbondanza & Wilkins, 2022; He, 2025). Morrison further reinforced this posture by consistently framing China as a strategic threat across multiple high-profile speeches. At the 2022 World Economic Forum in Davos, Morrison warned 'gray zone tactics' being deployed to coerce and intimidate the Indo-Pacific through territorial claims, military modernization, and economic coercion – remarks widely understood as directed at China (Karp, 2022). This framing was similarly evident when Morrison stated that China does not operate according to the same rules as liberal, transparent democracies, in response to the China-Solomon Islands security pact (Hust & Lyons, 2022).

These security concerns were further compounded by a series of developments that heightened Australia's threat perception towards China. The unexpected decision by the Northern Territory government to grant a 99-year lease on Darwin Port to the Chinese-owned Landbridge Group in 2016 raised significant alarm among Australian security officials (Varrall, 2021). Similarly, China's expansion through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), including infrastructure financing targeting South Pacific countries, was perceived as an extension of Beijing's strategic influence into Australia's immediate neighborhood (Varrall, 2021). These cumulative developments contributed to a broader pattern of policy responses under the Morrison administration that prioritized national security considerations in shaping Australia's foreign policy posture toward China (Abbondanza & Wilkins, 2022; Chacko, 2023).

The personal connection between Scott Morrison and US President Donald Trump also played a role in shaping adjustments in Australia's foreign policy toward China. According to research published by the United States Studies Center, two key meetings summed up the peak events in the Morrison-Trump connection (Lee, 2019). First, in 2019, President Trump welcomed Scott Morrison as one of only two world leaders invited to a state dinner at the White House – a rare diplomatic honor that signaled the exceptional depth of the bilateral relationship. A few months later, Scott Morrison was welcomed back for a second state visit, during which both nations describe their relationship as an "Unbreakable Bond" (Dobell, 2019). The significance of these visits lies not merely in their frequency, but in their substance: both meetings reinforced shared strategic concern over China's growing assertiveness in Indo-Pacific and consolidated Australia's alignment with Washington's position on regional security (Lee, 2019). Following these encounters, Scott Morrison consistently echoed the phrase "Australia and the United States see the world through the same eyes" across his major addresses (Dobell, 2019). Taken together, these developments suggest that Morrison strategically leveraged his close relationship with Trump to advance Australia's security agenda in countering China's rise in the Indo-Pacific, making a

significant shift in Australia's policy towards China seem increasingly predictable.

Australia's Strategic Culture as a Lens of Policy Imagination

The second factor in understanding Australia's foreign policy toward China during Scott Morrison's administration is how strategic culture influences a country's foreign policy formation. Ripsman et al. (2016) define strategic culture as deeply rooted norms, customs, and collective expectations that limit a country's activities and freedom. Another viewpoint from Rodnhan (2015) supports this explanation by asserting that strategic culture is basically an attempt to incorporate historical memory, cultural factors, and their impact into a nation's foreign policy thinking. This strategic culture allows a country to establish which choices are acceptable and which are unacceptable. In other words, strongly ingrained norms and culture will accidentally constrain the country and its leaders' ability to choose foreign policy options that align with their needs and views. In relation to this study, strategic culture allows for an examination of how historical experiences, values, and threat perceptions create patterns in state conduct during international crises. Thus, structural pressures alone cannot explain all of a country's actions.

Bisley (2018) analyzes Australia's strategic culture in depth and comprehensively in his article "Australia's Strategic Culture and Asia's Changing Regional Order," highlighting that one of Australia's most distinctive strategic cultures is its deep sense of fear and insecurity. Bisley (2018) notes that these attitudes originated, grew, and took root as Australia's strategic culture because they are inextricably linked to the country's colonial history. Since the British invaded the continent in the late 18th century, Australia has suffered intense anxiety and fear. These feelings are regarded as a natural response to survival in a physically demanding setting. According to Bisley (2018), the British formed modern Australia by imposing a political structure and language, making fear an integral element of the Australian perspective. As a result, Australia is thought to have suffered deeply from expansionism. This is further supported by O'Keefe (2023), who characterizes Australia as possessing a highly militarized strategic culture built around exaggerated threat perception centered on Asia and a deep sense of geographical indefensibility. It is therefore not unexpected that during World War I and II, Australia supported Britain in its fight against countries with expansionist goals, such as Germany and Japan.

Rehman & Marshall (2011) also agree that the basis of Australia's strategic culture is a strong sense of insecurity stemming from geographical concerns. According to Rehman & Marshall (2011), Australia has a serious security issue as a result of its geographical location, which is close to the Asian continent but far from Britain. This geographical position makes it subject to "predation" and explains why it has maintained a heritage of reliance on major powers like Britain. Furthermore, Australia has a limited population relative to its huge geography. Australia feels secure because it relies on major countries. In other words, Australia's strategic culture includes a heritage of relying on a powerful and influential "friend". Gyngell (2017) captures this most powerfully, arguing that the fear of being abandoned, first by Britain and later by the United States has been a driver of Australian foreign policy since 1942. As a result, it is not unexpected that Australia has always been confident in its dependency tradition, as evidenced by the development of strong alliances with Britain and the United States, such as ANZUS and AUKUS.

Following up on the preceding point, Australia has developed a distinct strategic culture based on dread, innate insecurity, and a heritage of dependency. In regard to this study, Australia's history and geographical location contribute to the rationalization of its foreign policy shifts toward China. This is because Australia perceives China as an increasingly expansionist power in the Indo-Pacific, one that frequently engages in threatening and coercive behavior in the region. At the same time, China's aggression has reminded Australia of its dark history. Varrall (2021) describes China as a revisionist force that intends to weaken and restructure Australia's South Pacific structure through economic coercion, military alliances, and Chinese intervention in the region. This view is shared by Mearsheimer (2014), who argues from an offensive realist perspective that China's rise will inevitably lead it to pursue regional hegemony in Asia, pushing rival powers

particularly the United State. Similarly, other scholar hold that Beijing is attempting to dictate new norms and behavior to its neighbors and restore its historical dominance over the Indo Pacific (Mearsheimer, 2014; Natalizia & Termine, 2021). It is important to note, however, that this characterization remains contested particularly among Chinese scholars, who argue that Beijing's foreign policy does not fit the Western logic of revisionism and that China's actions are instead defensive in nature (Mahmud & Hossain, 2025). This circumstance has prompted Australia to acquire a protective mentality, similar to how it responded to Germany and Japan during World Wars I and II. However, Australia's reaction today is not in the form of open conflict, but rather through policy restrictions, trade barriers, and strategic distancing from China.

Australian Public Opinion and Its Constraining Effect on Policy Choices

The influence of the interaction between the state and society is a domestic aspect that will be investigated further. According to Ripsman et al. (2016) the relationship between the state and society not only reflects and depicts the interaction between the supplier of power and its recipient, but society can also behave coercively and harmfully if the state is perceived to have failed to meet domestic expectations. From a different perspective, Sances (2023) reports that public support, ambitions, perspectives, and opinions are critical for democratic societies to maintain political legitimacy. In this perspective, as a democratic country, Australia's foreign policy cannot be completely separated from public opinion dynamics. Public opinion is more than just static individual sentiments, but a dynamic collective process generated through negotiation, and compromise in the public domain. More importantly, public opinion is a political arena where threats are created and negotiated. According to this study, as the public perception of China as a security concern grows, the Australian government's political legitimacy becomes progressively limited. Thus, public opinion is positioned as a domestic component that influences Australia's foreign policy towards China.

Chubb & McAllister (2021) conducted research that successfully caught the significant changes in Australian public attitude towards China. Chubb & McAllister (2021) analyzed and evaluated the evolution of Australian public opinion toward China from the late 1990s until 2020. According to them, until the early 2000s, Australians constantly considered China as 'positive' because they believed that maintaining economic links with China was critical to Australia's future development. Furthermore, China's position as the largest export market with demand for a variety of commodities from Australia bolstered its positive image in the eyes of the Australian public, as it was seen to increase productivity and economic profits. However, between 2018 and 2022, public concern in Australia has risen considerably in response to China's growing influence and power, which is perceived as too overwhelming and threatening to Australian social and political life. According to He & Feng (2025), the reduction in Australian public perception is caused by a number of causes, including the presence of Chinese descendants and the expansion of Australia's Chinese student community. Furthermore, several Chinese investments in Australia are deemed to pose long-term security risks, such as Chinese control over critical infrastructure including ports, telecommunications networks and electricity grids, which are seen as potential vulnerabilities to espionage and sabotage. He & Feng (2025) claim that China's military expansion in the South China Sea and its authoritarian treatment of the Uyghur minority have significantly damaged China's public image in Australia.

This study is further supplemented by a survey report titled *Understanding Australian Attitudes to the World*, published by The Lowy Institute Poll. Kassam (2022), the author of the report, provides a comprehensive picture of trends in public opinion in Australia, noting that from 2018 to 2022, 63% of Australians perceived China as a threat to Australia's security. Meanwhile, only 33% of Australians perceived China as an economic partner, not a danger. Beyond threat perception, the poll also assessed which countries Australians would prefer as partners for future cooperation. The findings revealed that 57% of Australians chose New Zealand, 26% chose the United States, 13% chose the United Kingdom, and 3% chose Japan as the best partner for Australia. Notably, only 1% believe China was the ideal partner for Australia.

Meanwhile, the Australian Workers Union (AWU) shares the Australian public's mistrust about China (Australian Workers Union, 2020). The AWU's attitude toward China has shifted even more dramatically during the COVID-19 outbreak. Following Prime Minister Scott Morrison's decision to launch a probe into the origins of the COVID-19 outbreak, China imposed coercive economic sanctions, disrupting export activity and threatening Australian jobs. Since then, the AWU has regularly urged the Australian government to diversify its commodities offerings to other nations in order to reduce the economy's reliance on China (Australian Workers Union, 2020a). All survey results indicate that the Australian public favors a shift in foreign policy toward China. This also demonstrates that change does not happen in a vacuum, but is influenced by community dynamics.

The Liberal-National Coalition Party's Ideology and Its Role in Shaping Policy Decisions

The study will next go on to the last internal factor that determines changes in Australia's foreign policy toward China: domestic institutions, specifically political parties. According to Raunio & Wagner (2020), political parties can impact a country's foreign policy formulation by promoting specific colors and beliefs. Political parties are important to investigate since they play key roles in many democratic countries, including Australia. Their role as a bridge between the public and the government makes them even more valuable in converting public demands into political decisions. Thus, foreign policy must be acceptable at home (Day, 2020). Conditions indicate that if foreign policy is not approved domestically, it will be difficult to implement globally (Masithoh, 2018).

Bretherton (2018) notes that Australia is dominated by two major parties: the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the Liberal-National Party (LNP). In the purpose of this study, the Liberal-National Party won the 2019 election, with Scott Morrison receiving the majority of votes in the House of Representatives by securing 77 of 151 seats, or 51.5%. Meanwhile, the Labor Party won just 68 seats, the Green Party kept its single seat, and the remaining 5 seats were controlled by various minor parties. The Liberal-National Coalition's victory marked a decisive turning point in Australia's foreign policy towards China, signaling a stronger alignment with the United States. According to Edwards (2005) notes, the Liberal-National Party has a strong reputation for managing its partnerships with the United States effectively, in contrast to the Labor Party's comparatively different approach to that alliance.

As stated by Edwards (2005), the Labor Party is classed as left-wing since its political ideology is generally concerned with people's well-being. The Labor Party has long emphasized equality, fraternity, nationalism, and multilateralism. The Liberal-National Party, on the other hand, is considered right wing, traditionally emphasizing authority, hierarchy and internationalism, and frequently promoting conservative themes such as economic liberalism, security and protectionism. This ideology disposition makes the Liberal-National Party more naturally aligned with the United States, and it is precisely this orientation that has led its lawmakers to view China more as a strategic threat than an opportunity. Bishop MP (2016) further describe the Liberal-National Party as conservative, seeing international affairs through the lens of security and power., resulting in a foreign policy heavily dependent on the alliance with the United States. This historical pattern has deep historical roots. Under Prime Minister Menzies (1949–1966), the Liberal-National Party pursued the ANZUS security alliance as a calculated response to the communist threat, viewing communism with deep suspicion as a danger to Western civilization. When the party return to power under, Prime Minister Fraser (1975-1983), it continued an anti-China stance by implementing policies to contain Chinese and communist influence, maintaining strong ties with the United States and Brain (Kendall, 2008).

Against this ideological and historical backdrop, the Liberal-National's victory in the 2019 general election becomes particularly significant. Given the party's established ideological orientation, this electoral outcome signaled a continuation and reinforcement of Australia's pro-US foreign policy stance, with China increasingly framed as a strategic concern rather than a partner. This electoral outcome thus set the institutional foundation for the foreign policy shifts that will

be examined in the following sections.

Discussion

This study applies Type III Neoclassical Realism Theory to uncover domestic elements that influence changes in Australia's foreign policy toward China. As Ripsman et al. (2016) explains, this theory highlights the relevance of intervening elements at the domestic level that influence a country's conduct while developing its foreign policy. This indicates that foreign policy cannot be chosen unilaterally after capturing systemic inputs from the outside; rather, these signals must transit via domestic procedures to avoid bias (Ripsman et al., 2016). This study effectively identified four factors that influence changes in Australia's foreign policy toward China during Scott Morrison's administration, taking into account elite preferences, strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic institutions – the four intervening variables central to Type III Neoclassical Realism (Ripsman et al., 2016). These four variables constitute the primary analytical findings of this study.

As China continues to rise as a major power, scholarly interest in how states navigate their foreign policy towards Beijing remains both timely and consequential. China's rise can be viewed as either an opportunity or a threat, making critical studies of Chinese foreign policy behavior and state responses to it a particularly productive area for future research (Mearsheimer, 2014; Varrall, 2021). Methodologically, this study has strong causal depth since it identifies domestic political agents as driving variables in changes in Australia's foreign policy toward China. This study also calls into question the interpretation of Australian foreign policy, which, as argued by Korolev (2023) and K. He & Feng (2023), largely attributes Australia's stance towards China to the broader rivalry between the United States and China. While such structural explanations offer valuable insights, this study argues that domestic-level factors play an equally significant role that structural approaches alone cannot fully account for (Ripsman et al., 2016). This study shows, by investigating several aspects of domestic politics, that Australia's foreign policy is influenced by major domestic political calculations. As a result, this analysis goes beyond structural theories that simplify a country's policy orientation, acknowledging the importance of domestic agencies in determining Australia's foreign policy.

Furthermore, this work adds to the body of knowledge on middle powers. In this scenario, Australia is frequently described as a country with an ambiguous alignment (Korolev, 2023), torn between its security obligations to the United States and its economic interests in China. However, this study lends support to the arguments that middle powers do not necessarily behave passively, reactively, or normatively (Nagy & Ping, 2023). This study demonstrates that middle powers can be confrontational when domestic political processes cause changes in the orientation of certain foreign policies. Australia has demonstrated that its foreign policy toward China is not just passively following the pull of rivalries between the United States and China, but also determined by domestic considerations such as elite preferences, strategic culture, state-society relations and domestic institutions.

Despite its strengths, this study still has potential for development. As a study that focuses on a particular country, there is obviously potential for larger-scale comparative investigations. Future research might compare Australia's foreign policy stance toward China to that of other middle powers like Japan, Canada, and South Korea. This would contribute to a better understanding of the middle power issue while developing foreign policy in response to China's growth. Furthermore, this study can reveal a gap in the expansion of actors beyond the political elite. Further research should widen their approach by considering the role of non-state actors such as the media, business groups, and the diaspora in defining the narrative of China's challenges in Australia. With this method, it is believed that there would be a better understanding of how domestic politics functions outside of formal institutions, as it can act in a broader societal context. Finally, this study provides an opportunity to examine the robustness and consistency of its findings in the post-Morrison period. It will be particularly interesting to assess whether Australia's anti-China stance during the Morrison era represented a short-term political phenomenon or a long-term

foreign policy trend. This research will contribute to a more thorough and challenging understanding of Australia's foreign policy.

Conclusion

This study delves deeply into developments in Australia's foreign policy with China, notably during the Scott Morrison administration. In fact, prior to being elected and taking office as Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison's foreign policy toward China shown a good trend through different breakthroughs in collaboration. Ironically, this was reversed and did not appear during Scott Morrison's government. The most noticeable sign was a decline in diplomatic contacts, which became a new aspect of Australia-China relations. Furthermore, this report shows the shifts that have happened, describing Australia's foreign policy as trending toward anti-China. This shift in conduct is explored through three offensive decisions made by Scott Morrison. The first was the restriction on Chinese foreign investment. Then, Australia established limits on Chinese international students while diversifying its foreign student base to include India, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. In addition, Scott Morrison vigorously criticized China multilaterally on the Uighur problem and opposed China's participation to the CPTPP. With the reasons provided above, this divergent trend demonstrates a shift in Australia's foreign policy toward China under Scott Morrison. This study applies Type III Neoclassical Realism Theory to investigate the domestic elements that drive changes in Australia's foreign policy toward China.

This study suggests that four elements influence this change: leader's perceptions, strategic culture, public opinion, and political parties. *First*, consider Scott Morrison's effect as Australia's decision-maker. According to his background as a security specialist, China's development and assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region pose a significant challenge to Australia's regional security posture. The preferences of the country's leader are one of the reasons driving changes in Australia's foreign policy towards China. In addition, Scott Morrison's personal closeness to Donald Trump influences these adjustments. *Second*, the study concludes that Australia's strategic culture influences changes in its foreign policy toward China. The shadow of British colonialism and World Wars I and II caused Australia to create a tradition of relying on powerful countries (the United States) to combat expansionist powers such as Germany and Japan. Australia's physical remoteness from its Western friends has made it feel more apprehensive and vulnerable to "predation". The advent of an expansionist China in the Indo-Pacific has reminded Australia of past tragic occurrences, prompting it to create a desire to rethink its policy toward China. The third component is the effect of Australian public opinion on China, which also influences the development of anti-China foreign policy. As a democratic country, Australia takes public opinion seriously in its foreign policymaking process. The final factor is the influence of the ruling Liberal-National Coalition Party. As conservatives, the Liberal-National Party's philosophy prioritizes close relations with the United States due to shared objectives in security, economic liberalism, and protectionism. In fact, this determinant plays a vital role in driving the current changes.

References

- Abbondanza, G., & Wilkins, T. S. (2022). Issues in Australian Foreign Policy July to December 2021. *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 68(2), 264–278. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajph.12842>
- Agius, C. (2021). Issues in Australian Foreign Policy July to December 2020. *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, 67(2), 331–348. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajph.12768>
- Atkinson, D. C. (2015). The White Australia Policy, the British Empire, and the World. *Britain and the World*, 8(2), 204–224. <https://doi.org/10.3366/bw.2015.0191>
- Australian Government Department of Defence. (2020). *2020 Defence Strategic Update*.
- Australian Trade and Investment Commission. (n.d.). *China–Australia Free Trade Agreement*. Retrieved February 2, 2026, from <https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/in-force/chafta/australia-china-fta>

- Australian Workers Union. (2020, May 14). We won't be bullied by China. *Australian Workers Union*. <https://awu.net.au/news/2020/05/11898/awu-leads-call-to-stand-up-to-china/>
- Baylis, J., Smith, S., & Owens, P. (2020). *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* (8th Edition). Oxford University Press. <https://www.abs.edu.gh/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Main-textbook-The-Globalization-of-World-Politics.pdf>
- Beach, Derek., & Pedersen, R. Brun. (2020). *Analyzing foreign policy*. Macmillan International Higher Education : Red Globe Press.
- Beeson, M., & Zeng, J. (2016). Chinese views of Australian foreign policy: Not a flattering picture. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 70(3), 293–310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2015.1117569>
- Bishop MP, T. Hon. J. (2016). Australian foreign policy: the Coalition approach. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 70(5), 453–459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2016.1199658>
- Bisley, N. (2018). Australia's engagement with China: From fear to greed and back again. *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis*, 73(3), 379–398. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702018792918>
- Bretherton, H. (2018). The Evolution of Malcolm Fraser's China Policy. *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, 64(1), 65–80. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajph.12421>
- Chacko, P. (2023). Racial capitalism and spheres of influence: Australian assertions of white possession in the Pacific. *Political Geography*, 105, 102923. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2023.102923>
- Chubb, D., & McAllister, I. (2021). Fear and Greed: Australian Public Opinion Towards China's Rise*. *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, 67(3–4), 439–453. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajph.12783>
- Day, B. (2020). Issues in Australian Foreign Policy July to December 2019. *Australian Journal of Politics & History*, 66(2), 305–321. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajph.12666>
- Dobell, G. (2019). Scott Morrison, Donald Trump and The Indo-Pacific. *Comparative Connection*, 2, 123–134. https://cc.pacforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/14_1902_AustraliaUS-EA.pdf
- Edwards, P. (2005). The Liberals as Managers of the Australian-American Alliance. *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 51(3), 451–458. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8497.2005.0386a.x>
- Gimba, Z., & Ghali Ibrahim, S. (2018). A Review of External Factors That Determine Foreign Policy Formulation. *Indo-Iranian Journal of Scientific Research*, 2(1).
- Gyngell, A. (2017). *Fear of Abandonment: Australia in the World since 1942*. Black Inc. <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/from-the-bookshelf-fear-of-abandonment-australia-in-the-world-since-1942/>
- Hayden, B. (1984). Australia's China Policy Under Labor. *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, 11, 83–97. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2158688>
- He, B. (2025). Confrontation versus Coexistence: The Dynamics of Australia-China Ideological Relations 1996–2022. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 34(154), 577–591. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2024.2365248>
- He, K., & Feng, H. (2023). After Hedging. In *After Hedging*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009420570>
- He, K., & Feng, H. (2023). After Hedging. In *After Hedging*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009420570>
- He, K., & Feng, H. (2025). IR Theory and Australia's Policy Change Towards China, 2017–2022: An Introductory Essay. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 34(154), 547–563. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2024.2365246>
- Hust, D., & Lyons, K. (2022, April 22). China is exerting 'enormous pressure' on Pacific island nations, Scott Morrison says. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/apr/22/china-is-exerting-enormous-pressure-on-pacific-island-nations-scott-morrison-says#:~:text=Morrison%20said%20he%20had%20spoken%20with%20the%20prime%20minister%20of,leaked%20online%20on%2024%20March.>

- Karp, P. (2021, February 28). Chinese investment in Australia plunged by 61% last year, new data shows. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/mar/01/chinese-investment-in-australia-plunged-by-61-last-year-new-data-shows>
- Karp, P. (2022, January 21). Morrison speaks out against China's 'economic coercion' at Davos. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jan/21/morrison-speaks-out-against-chinas-economic-coercion-at-davos#:~:text=In%20a%20speech%20at%20the%20Davos%20World,No%20%E2%80%9Cgreat%20resignation%E2%80%9D%20*%20A%20business%20died%20recovery
- Kassam, N. (2022). *Understanding Australian Attitudes to the World. The Lowy Institute Poll*.
- Kelly, Paul. (2022). *Morrison's Mission: how a beginner reshaped Australian foreign policy*. Penguin Books.
- Kendall, T. David. (2008). *Within China's orbit?: China through the eyes of the Australian Parliament*. Department of Parliamentary Services. <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2008-08/apo-nid2694.pdf>
- Kizeková, A. (2021). Taking stock of Australia's asymmetrical relations with China: interdependence, tensions, and new dimensions. *Journal of Contemporary Eastern Asia*, 20(2), 197–209. <https://doi.org/10.17477/jcea.2021.20.2.197>
- Köllner, P. (2021). Australia and New Zealand recalibrate their China policies: convergence and divergence. *The Pacific Review*, 34(3), 405–436. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2019.1683598>
- Korolev, A. (2023). Transition from hedging to balancing in Australia's China policy: theoretical and empirical explorations. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 77(5), 548–568. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2023.2274446>
- Lamont, C. (2022). *Research Methods in International Relations*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781036231811>
- Lee, J. (2019, September 24). Morrison makes a bold stand with Trump on China. *United States Studies Center*. <https://www.ussc.edu.au/morrison-makes-a-bold-stand-with-trump-on-china>
- Liu, W., & Hao, Y. (2014). Australia in China's Grand Strategy. *Asian Survey*, 54(2), 367–394. <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2014.54.2.367>
- Ludlow, E. (2020, February 8). *Australian coronavirus travel ban blocks thousands of Chinese students*. World Socialist Web Site. <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2020/02/08/trav-f08.html>
- Mackerras, C. (2014). China and the Australia-U.S. Relationship. *Asian Survey*, 54(2), 223–246. <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2014.54.2.223>
- Mackerras, C. (2021). Australia-China Relations in Decline: An alternative viewpoint. *Social Alternatives*, 40(1), 2021.
- Mahmud, K. U., & Hossain, S. (2025). Book Review: Suisheng Zhao, The Dragon Roars Back: Transformational Leaders and Dynamics of Chinese Foreign Policy. *Journal of Governance, Security & Development*, 6.
- Masithoh, N. (2018). *Pengaruh Politik Domestik terhadap Kebijakan Luar Negeri: Kasus Kebijakan Moratorium Tenaga Kerja Indonesia Penata Laksana Rumah Tangga (TKI PLRT) ke 19 Negara di Kawasan Timur Tengah*.
- Matt Siegel. (2014, November 17). *China just signed what may be its best ever trade deal with a Western country*. Business Insider. <https://www.businessinsider.com/china-just-signed-what-may-be-its-best-ever-trade-deal-with-a-western-country-2014-11>
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2014). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (Updated). W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Nagy, S., & Ping, J. (2023, March 14). *The End of the Normative Middle Power Ship*. Australian Institute of International Affairs. <https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/the-end-of-the-normative-middle-power-ship/>

- Natalizia, G., & Termine, L. (2021). Tracing the modes of China's revisionism in the Indo-Pacific: A comparison with pre-1941 Shōwa Japan. *Rivista Italiana Di Scienza Politica*, 51(1), 83–99. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ipo.2020.28>
- Okano, Y. (2021). Deepening Conflict Between Australia And China-A Transition Period To A New Equilibrium Point. *Mistui & Co. Global Strategic Studies Intitute*
- O'Keefe, M. (2023). *Australian Foreign Policy: Relationships, Issues, and Strategic Culture*. Bloomsbury.
- Pan, G., & Korolev, A. (2021). The Struggle for Certainty: Ontological Security, the Rise of Nationalism, and Australia-China Tensions after COVID-19. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 26(1), 115–138. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-020-09710-7>
- Putnam, R. D. (1988). Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games. *International Organization*, 43, 427–460.
- Raunio, T., & Wagner, W. (2020). The party politics of foreign and security policy. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 16(4), 515–531. <https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/oraa018>
- Rehman, I., & Marshall, G. (2011). *German Marshall Fund of the United States Report Part Title: The Evolution of Australia's Strategic Culture Report Title: From Down Under to Top Center Report Subtitle: Australia, the United States, and this Century's Special Relationship*.
- Ripsman, N. M. ., Taliaferro, J. W. ., & Lobell, S. E. . (2016). *Neoclassical realist theory of international politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Rose, G. (1998). Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy. *World Politics*, 51(1), 144–172. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887100007814>
- Rostami, B., & Köllner, P. (2018). From Honeymoon to Hangover: Resetting Australia's Relations with China. *German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA)*. www.giga-hamburg.de/giga-focus
- Sances, M. W. (2023). Legitimate questions: Public perceptions of the legitimacy of US presidential election outcomes. *Research and Politics*, 10(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20531680231206987>
- Taliaferro, J. W. ., Lobell, S. E. ., & Ripsman, N. M. . (2009). *Neoclassical realism, the state, and foreign policy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Varrall, M. (2021). Australia's Response to China in the Pacific: From Alert to Alarmed. In *The China Alternative: Changing Regional Order in the Pacific Islands* (pp. 107–141). ANU Press. <https://doi.org/10.22459/CA.2021.03>