



**CHINA IN THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY: THE IMPACT OF BEIJING'S
FOREIGN-POLICY FROM THE JAMAICA AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
PERSPECTIVE (2011-2016)**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is duly acknowledged; and all ethics procedures and guidelines have been adhered to.

Renee Wright

29 December 2019

DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Dedicated to God and my grandfather Uriel Wright—

You are no longer here to witness the completion of a path I have long struggled to walk, but I believe you sit with him who have always guided and inspired me to walk it.

The battle cry cannot end until the war is won. As I reminisce on my journey to this destination, I ponder upon the many battles I have fought to get here. Still, such an achievement would not have been accomplished were it not for the generosity and help of numerous persons in my life.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

• ATM:	Automated Teller Machine
• BIT:	Bilateral Investment Treaty
• BRI:	Belt and Road Initiative
• BRICS:	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
• CACM:	Central American Common Market
• CAQDAS:	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
• CARICOM:	Caribbean Community
• CARIFORUM:	Caribbean Forum
• CARIFTA:	Caribbean Free Trade Agreement
• CARSI:	Central America Regional Security Initiative
• CBERA:	Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act
• CBI:	Caribbean Basin Initiative
• CBSI:	Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
• CBTPA:	Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act
• CCBC:	China-Caribbean Business Council
• CCF:	China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum
• CCPIT:	China Council for the Promotion of International Trade
• CDB:	China Development Bank
• CELAC:	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
• CEOs:	Chief Executive Officers
• CET:	Common External Tariff
• CI:	Confucius Institutes
• CRI:	Climate Risk Index
• CRIP:	CARIFORUM Regional Indicative Programme
• CSME:	Caribbean Single Market Economy
• DFI:	Direct Foreign Investment
• DLP:	Democratic Labour Party
• ECP:	Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas
• EDF:	European Development Fund
• EIB:	European Investment Bank

• EPA:	European Partnership Agreements
• EPC:	Engineering Procurement Contractors
• ESF:	Economic Support Funds
• EU:	European Union
• EVI:	Economic Vulnerability Index
• EXIMBANK:	Export-Import Bank of China
• FDI:	Foreign Direct Investments
• FTAs:	Free Trade Agreements
• GATT:	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
• GATS:	General Agreement for Trade in Services
• GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
• GNP:	Gross National Product
• GMO:	Genetically Modified Organism
• GSP:	Generalised System of Preferences
• HDI:	Human Development Index
• IASPEN:	Inter-American Social Protection Network
• IBC:	International Business Companies
• IBD:	Investment Banking Division
• ICT:	Information and Communications Technology
• IDB:	Inter-American Development Bank
• IMF:	International Monetary Fund
• IP:	Intellectual Property
• IR:	International Relations
• JLP:	Jamaica Labour Party
• LAC:	Latin American Countries
• LAFTA:	Latin American Free Trade Area
• LDCs:	Less Developed Countries
• LNG:	Liquefied Natural Gas
• MDCs:	More Developed Countries
• MFA:	Multi-Fibre Arrangement
• MFN:	Most Favoured Nation Article
• MOFCOM:	Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China

• NAFTA:	North American Free Trade Agreement
• NAPA:	National Academy of Performing Arts
• NAR:	National Alliance for Reconstruction
• NIEO:	New International Economic Order
• NVRI:	Net Vulnerability-Resilience Index
• OAS:	Organisation of American States
• ODA:	Official Development Assistance
• OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
• OEM:	Original Equipment Manufacturer
• OFC:	Offshore Financial Centres
• OFDI:	Outward Foreign Direct Investment
• PLA:	People's Liberation Army
• PNP:	People's National Party
• PNM:	People's National Movement
• PRC:	People's Republic of China
• R&D:	Research and Development
• ROC:	Republic of China
• SAPA:	Southern Academy for the Performing Arts
• SME:	Single Market Economy
• SOEs:	State-Owned Enterprises
• TBI:	Third Border Initiative
• T&T:	Trinidad and Tobago
• TTCA:	Trinidad and Tobago Contractors Association
• UN:	United Nations
• UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
• UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
• US:	United States
• USITC:	United States International Trade Commission
• UTT:	University of Trinidad and Tobago
• UWI:	University of the West Indies
• WR:	World Risk Index
• WTO:	World Trade Organisation

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Abstract

Of all the developments in the international system since the Second World War, few have had greater impact on world affairs than the dissolution of European colonial empires and the formation of over a hundred new states today. For Latin American and Caribbean countries, this was no different, the latter being among the world's smallest independent nations. With these countries gaining independence in the 1960s, came stimulated debates in the international community about small states. Discussions such as small states 'viability and vulnerability' not only as an issue of political and economic capability, but also as a matter of foreign policy and diplomacy. While the Caribbean's foreign policy over the aforementioned period has been linked to the United States (US) and Europe, the new millennium has seen a marked shift in which the role of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has become increasingly important in the region. It is well known today that China is the most rapidly emerging economy in the world. It is a robust economy that has translated its influence into political, diplomatic and cultural domains. As such, the PRC plays a decisive role in East Asia's development and integration, influencing global economy indicators and broader international affairs.

While there is comprehensive literature dealing with China's role and involvement in Asia, US, Europe, Latin America and Africa, it is obvious that there is a significant gap concerning China's involvement in the Caribbean and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and what can be viewed as a virtual omission of CARICOM nations' elites' perspective on China. Due to the substantive absence in the literature of a comprehensive study of this subject and an increasing knowledge base on China's foreign policy for CARICOM nations, this research seeks to explore, *from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' perspective—the implications of China's emergence on the sub-region's intra-regional political and economic relations between 2011 and 2016, along with its impact on CARICOM countries' relations with traditional partners such as the US and the EU.*

The investigation begins with a comprehensive and detailed review of the topic by looking explicitly at the 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum, where all Caribbean leaders and heads of states were present for the first time when China presented its Caribbean policies in the fields of education, health, culture, agriculture and capacity development. Two case studies, namely Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, are included in the research. An overview of the views of their governmental and non-governmental elites on the

impact of China on their societies and the sub-region since the Forum was launched is also examined. The timeframe culminates in 2016, witnessing the rise of anti-Chinese sentiments in these CARICOM nations, as well as the implementation of the Trump Administration and the announcement of Brexit from the European Union (EU).

Drawing on the holistic constructivist approach that uses the analytical political theory as a methodological framework, the investigation finds that China is seen as a tool for development at a time when the region is experiencing an abandonment from the United States and Europe. While elites in both cases accept that closer ties with China and increased PRC activities in their countries could result in backlash from the US, they hold fast to the notion that their countries are too loyal to the US to accept China as a new hegemon. The underlying reason for their relationship with China, the dissertation finds, is one that emerges from need/necessity. Not only in the sense that these nations are categorised as vulnerable, but because these nations' elites have been conducting their foreign policy through the construct of a vulnerable identity.

Due to this vulnerable identity, elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago claim that while China is infringing on their nations' sovereignty (CARICOM nations that conform to the 'One China Policy' have to cut ties with Taiwan), they are small and weak and must comply. This reinforces the discovery of a vulnerable identity steeped in the ideology of 'we are seen as weak, so we must be weak'. However, despite this infringement on their sovereignty and negative impacts on their economies, China is still not seen as a neo-colonial power in the region. Concerns are instead centred on the diplomatic struggle between China and Taiwan which these nations fear will exacerbate the sub-region's struggle for deeper integration, as Taiwan's diplomatic alienation means more competition for China's coffers. As a result, elites in both countries do not see their interaction with China as a completely 'win-win' situation as sold by the PRC in the launch of the 2011 Forum. Rather, some of the challenges that China's policies have offset in these nations have garnered major concerns.

Although these nations have been experiencing a case of lopsided China-related agreements, CARICOM nations should not be seen as victims of their PRC policies and vice versa. This is because, just as China's emergence in the Community has had a number of negative impacts on the domestic and inter-regional systems of these nations, the investigation has also shown that perpetuating a foreign policy steeped in a vulnerable identity is one that stems from a historical context in which the phenomenon is repeated with any country that these nations consider to be powerful. Consequently, it is the responsibility of these CARICOM nations to

implement a more integrated and innovative foreign policy approach in dealing with China as well as other powerful countries, in order to avoid a continuous imbalance in these relations.

Introduction

If debates can be said to have ‘tipping points’ when it comes to the rapid and sudden rise of nations, such a concept reached its critical threshold with China’s ‘great leap forward’ on the international stage. Since this leap, China has not only scaled up but also outward. In so doing, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has found its prints on even the sands of the Caribbean’s shore. Sitting over 10,000 miles from Beijing, and given the contrasting yet chronicled financial and political ties between the region and China, it is evident that distance has not hindered the PRC’s interest in forging relationships with these small islands (Bernal, 2014b). Unsurprisingly, China’s involvement in the Caribbean is a dramatic change from days when Caribbean countries had no diplomatic and strategic financial relations with the PRC. In today’s context, however, the circumstance is very different, as all*¹ CARICOM nations, including those that have not formally recognised China, have broadened their political and financial contacts with the emerging East-Asian hegemon (Bernal, 2014b). The Caribbean itself, from which CARICOM grew, is a thin intercontinental area, which has added to the centrality of the Community’s flank, as well as the proximity of these islands, which has given rise to the importance of several trans-shipment routes. Hence, it is no surprise that China is making its presence felt in CARICOM, since Christopher Columbus made earlier European contacts; the region has been either a centre of interest or a noteworthy course of travel. The Caribbean Community has never been seen as a barrier.

The moment that can be said to have formally marked this deep strategic cooperation outlining China’s intention for the Caribbean was in September 2011. On the 12th and 13th of that month, the world witnessed the official launch of the 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum, where for the first time all*² Caribbean countries were invited along with two hundred (200) Caribbean officials, businessmen and women. Headed under the theme, ‘Cooperation, Development and Win-for-all’, the attendees to the Forum included Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan, Prime Ministers of Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Antigua and Barbuda,

¹ Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St Kitts, St Lucia, and St Vincent only recognise Taiwan. It is to be noted however, that since the launch of the Forum Dominican Republic switched its allegiance from Taiwan to China in May 2018.

² *Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St Kitts, St Lucia, and St Vincent did not attend as they recognise Taiwan.

Jamaica, Grenada, Suriname and the Secretary-General of the CARICOM Secretariat.³ Key arguments emerging from this 2011 Forum included: 1) Enhanced financial and investment cooperation, 2) Capacity building cooperation, 3) Strengthened collaboration in environmental protection and new energies, 4) Intensified cultural, educational and health cooperation, 5) Promotion of closer trade and tourism cooperation and 6) Boosted cooperation in agriculture and fisheries.⁴ Such a move by the PRC could easily be regarded as the genesis of incorporating the CARICOM region into what we later come to know as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The 2011 Forum concluded by noting that China, as a developing nation itself, had provided assistance to Caribbean countries without any conditions attached. China's Vice-Premier Wang Qishan further concluded that facts have proven that China was eternally a genuine companion and cooperation partner of Caribbean nations, and that the China Development Bank would provide a US\$1 billion business loan fund to finance infrastructure development (Campbell and Valette, 2014).⁵ As stated by Qishan, 'China cannot develop itself in isolation of the world, and the world needs China for its development. China will stay committed to the path of peaceful development and steadfastly follow the win-win strategy of opening up. We will, as always, support Caribbean countries in promoting economic development, improving people's livelihood, advancing regional integration and playing an active role in international affairs'.⁶ Coming out of that 2011 Forum a host of countries in the region were proposed to be likely recipients for these Chinese inspired developmental practices and policies. From 'a donation of US\$1 million to the Caribbean Development Fund' (Amineh and Guang, 2010) to steadily rebalancing the region's association with North America and Europe, that Caribbean Ministers had recommended is more in keeping politically with Caribbean thinking about the world (Caribbean Council, 2014).⁷

³ See: The 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum. Available at: <http://tt.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/3rdCNCForum/> (Accessed: May 7, 2016).

⁴ See: The 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum. Available at: <http://tt.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/3rdCNCForum/> (Accessed: May 7, 2016).

⁵ See: Campbell, Caitlin and Zoe Valette. 2014. China's Expanding and Evolving Engagement with the Caribbean. Report presented at the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. Available at https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/Staff%20Report_China-Caribbean%20Relations.pdf (Accessed: June 7, 2016).

⁶ See Vice Premier Wang Qishan's full address at the opening ceremony of the 3rd China Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum. Available at: <http://www.china-invests.net/00010101/28218.aspx?op=print> (Accessed: August 3, 2016).

⁷ See: Caribbean Council paper 2014. China and the Caribbean: A background paper for the Advisory Committee of the Caribbean Council. Available at <http://www.caribbean-council.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/China-and-the-Caribbean-Advisory-Committee-Background-article.pdf> (Accessed, August 20, 2016).

Beyond the agreement that there are indeed implications that such declarations have had on these small islands, there is a virtual omission of the nature of such entanglements from the perspective of CARICOM nation's governing and non-governing elites and none that this investigation is aware of, that uses Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago as case studies in this regard. For every suggestion that 'majority of this bilateral trade is heavily skewed in China's favour' (Campbell and Valette, 2014) there are several others like (Bernal, 2013; Montoute, 2013; Rush et al., 2013; Bernal, 2015, 2016) who looks at the potential and prospects China's Foreign Direct Investments (FDI's) can provide for the region.

Coming into 2016, five years since China's Policy Paper on the Caribbean committed the PRC to sound, steady and all-round growth in its relations with the region, only a few scholars have weighed in on the debate. As a result, the question of the implication of Beijing's foreign policy from the perspective of governing and non-governing elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago since the launch of the 2011 Forum has been duly unexplored. 'The greatest obstacle to smooth relations between China and the Caribbean lies in persistent mutual misunderstandings' (Klinger, 2013)⁸ and as such, 'there is a need for a Caribbean perspective on China' (Caribbean Council, 2014).⁹ The absence of such facts surrounding this public debate perpetuates a vacuum that is constantly filled with wild claims, inaccurate deliberations, obfuscation and disinformation (The Jamaica Observer, 2019).¹⁰

It is important to note that this call for Caribbean perspectives and facts surrounding the matter has increased in recent years. Contrary to most cases, several media outlets in these CARICOM nations have voiced concerns about what the Chinese wave has brought with it. Since the mid-2000s, media houses have released editorials with titles such as '*Bunting insists Chinese taking over Jamaica*' (Jamaica Observer, 2017)¹¹ and '*Difficult Times: Local contractors lament*

⁸ Klinger, Julie., 2013. China and Latin America: Problems or Possibilities? Berkeley University Press. Available at <https://clas.berkeley.edu/research/china-and-latin-america-problems-or-possibilities>. (Accessed, July 4, 2016).

⁹ See: Caribbean Council paper 2014. China and the Caribbean: the bigger picture. Paper presented at the Caribbean Council. Available at <http://www.caribbean-council.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/China-and-the-Caribbean-the-bigger-picture-handout-final.pdf> (Accessed, July 4, 2016).

¹⁰ Clarke, Nigel., 2019. Why the panic over Chinese loans and FDI flows? Published February 17, 2019. The Jamaica Observer. Available at <http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/editorial/why-the-panic-over-chinese-loans-and-fdi-flows-157432?profile=1100> (Accessed, February 24, 2016).

¹¹ See article: Bunting insists Chinese taking over Jamaica. Published August 11, 2017. The Jamaica Observer. Available at http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/Bunting_insists_Chinese_taking_over_Jamaica?profile=1228 (Accessed, September 4, 2017).

industry's Chinese curse' (Trinidad Express, 2009).¹² Such pronouncements can be found mostly among CARICOM nations' former policymakers¹³ but tend to be more-so the case among non-governing elites who publicly denounces these negative impacts found in this engagement with China. Former National Security Minister, Peter Bunting's assertion that there is 'a form of economic colonialism by Chinese businesses operating in Jamaica' (Jamaica Observer, 2017), is one example. Similarly is President of the Trinidad and Tobago Contractors Association (TTCA), Mickey Joseph's pronouncement, that it is 'an interesting and testing time for the construction industry in Trinidad and Tobago', while maintaining that, 'I use the term interesting in the sense of the Chinese curse' (Trinidad Express, 2009). With this marked increase in anti-Chinese demonstrations as it relates to Chinese workers, combined with growing concerns about the presence of China in the sub-region, underpinned by the emergence of the Trump administration and the announcement of Brexit, 2011-2016 offers a unique time for scholarly study.¹⁴

In the academic arena, research that looked at China's emergence and the opportunities and challenges therein were increasingly discussed and contested mostly within the case of US, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. My literature review will divulge that those writing (Devlin et al., 2006; Loser, 2006; Phillips, 2007; Jenkins et al., 2008; Lederman et al., 2009; Moreira, 2010; Arnson et al., 2011; Kuwayama et al., 2012; Peters et al., 2015, 2016), on Latin America and the Caribbean adhered to a broad world model that they have perceived to be the case of both the Caribbean and Latin American region as a whole. This meant that in most cases, the Caribbean was tacked on to its Latin American counterpart with little or no

¹² See article: Difficult times: Local contractors lament industry's Chinese curse. Published November 15, 2009. Available at https://trinidadexpress.com/news/local/difficult-times/article_9ae2a509-3c73-54df-ab2e-bfcb031e5c72.html (Accessed, October 17, 2017).

¹³ The investigation discovered that though policymakers in ruling parties are willing to voice such issues under anonymity they will not do so in the public domain for fear of the repercussions that may follow. As a result, it is more-so former parliamentarians or parliamentarians from opposing parties that are more inclined to denounce the negatives of the Chinese actions publicly.

¹⁴ It is to be noted that there are events that have since unfolded following the undertaking of this investigation. One such event is the intensification of the trade war between China and the United States. During the period wherein the project's interviews were undertaken with the latest being April, 2018, the trade-war at the time in its conceivable stages was not able to afford questions especially having to do with China's threat to the US and the implications it might have for CARICOM nations. As a result, I was unable to incorporate it here due to recent developments in the conflict. Such an event will likely have implications for areas covered by this research on which future research can be built. Undoubtedly, if this conflict continues to escalate, it may afford CARICOM nations many opportunities as well as it might present a perilous situation wherein the sun finds itself caught between the dragon and the eagle. Although the direction of this conflict remains highly uncertain and long-term implications may take a while to emerge, I remain confident in my analysis as to the perceived implication of China's emergence on CARICOM nations' traditional partners.

information disseminated about the Caribbean in particular. The Caribbean and even CARICOM as a sub-region must be separated, as developing economies of this region differs from those of Latin America in terms of both size and advancement levels (Bernal, 2014a). Consolidation of the two regions and broad-ranging generalisations should be avoided. As Lederman et al. (2008) pointed out, ‘there is significant heterogeneity across the Latin American and Caribbean regions’.

Even so, for those who decided to focus exclusively on the Caribbean (Lai 1993, 1998, 2006; Wilson, 2004; Erikson, 2005, 2009; Horta, 2009; Sutherland et al., 2009; Ellis, 2011; Green, 2012; Hogarth, 2012; Johnson, 2013; Montoute, 2013; Rush et al., 2013; Campbell, 2014; Vlcek, 2014; Bernal 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016), the debate for the most part, has been centred on the economic opportunities and challenges that China provides for the region. These include: a) Chinese migration against the Caribbean post-slavery backdrop b) China’s motives, emergence and expansion in the Caribbean, c) the failure of these nations to ‘lesson draw’ from or ‘emulate’ the Chinese model d) moderate contrasts existing in the Caribbean’s imports and exports as well as highlights of disparities in the deficits with regard to both the products and their respective countries, and e) accounts and reasons for Caribbean nations continued lagging in global advancement and competitiveness. None of these studies provides empirical evidence garnered from elites existing in any of these CARICOM nations. Even in cases where CARICOM was separated as a sub-region in Bernal (2010), it was focused on China’s foreign policy towards these countries and had very little to do with the other way around.

This dissertation is first and foremost, an attempt to focus exclusively on the perspective of elites existing in CARICOM nations regarding the challenges and opportunities that China’s engagement with the sub-region has brought forth. As a result, CARICOM is not only severed from its Latin American counterpart as a sub-region but is also separated from the broader Caribbean region. In so doing, the study aims to provide a counter-narrative to the dominant research on the topic, which is taken from the Chinese or Washington’s perspective, and to aid in filling the gap left by those writing on Latin America and the Caribbean as one bloc. The research adds to the literature by addressing its empirical and theoretical inconsistencies. It wasn’t until recently that the literature witnessed attempts to cast the debate in theoretical terms which again largely engulfed Latin America and the Caribbean as one unit. The texts central to this area of topic not only stretches across multiple disciplines but the theoretical frameworks and the conceptual tools employed differs vastly. Some of these include China’s competitive

threat theory, new trade theory and the dependency theory. Those focusing exclusively on the Caribbean with regard to China, continue to engage in discussions around provisional policies rather than provide any form of theoretical analysis. This has resulted in several ‘lessons’ the Caribbean could learn that inevitably spans different strands of analysis. When it comes to the sub-region of CARICOM, to my knowledge, there is no theoretical analysis with regards to the topic. Richard Bernal who had separated the sub-region did so solely on the basis of discussions surrounding *ad hoc* policy. A theoretical discussion was not offered up. My investigation seeks to not only separate the sub-region, but to incorporate primary data taken from elites’ interviews while grounding the research in the holistic constructivist approach to foreign policy analysis (Adler, 1997; Reus-Smit, 2013) and casting it through the lens of the analytical political theory as the methodological framework (Johari, 1982; Dryzek et al., 2008). The disciplines that it spans are sociology, political science and international relations. To the best of my knowledge, my investigation is the first on the topic to do so explicitly.

Using the ‘funnel-down’ approach, debates and theories were harnessed from the more copious Latin American and Caribbean discourse, to specifically those that focus on the Caribbean, all the way down to the CARICOM level. After harnessing the theories to determine the direction and extent to which the elites in these two CARICOM nations view China as creating severe implications for their societies and the sub-region’s intra and inter-regional political and economic relations, I then situate the ‘uncovered perceptions’ within the evolution of Robert Young’s (2016) post-colonial paradigm. This allowed for a clearer understanding of how the held view of aid dependency borne out of need and necessity can influence the broader worldview of states’ vulnerability. The first half of the dissertation, as a result, uses the holistic constructivist approach to foreign policy analysis to understand the *foundation and origin* of these small nations’ foreign policy, the *concerns* surrounding China’s motives for engaging with them, and whether the foundation and source of their foreign policy *affects* the way they, in turn, deals with China. The second half looks at what these nations’ elites perceive to be the impact on the sub-region’s intra and inter-regional political and economic systems and whether their interaction with China can be viewed as a win-win as was promised in the 2011 Forum. Taken together, they ask whether elites from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are concerned about the implications of China’s emergence in the sub-region, and what are the reasons for their nations’ open arms policy towards China.

A sparse quantity of existing studies on the implication of China’s emergence in the Caribbean

region has utilised primary data in determining a Caribbean's perspective on the matter, and even fewer have situated the view of CARICOM nations' elites on the topic, in a large body of systematically collected empiric data. In interviewing 40 governmental and non-governmental elites from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago with an additional 3 from the regional bloc, preponderating the transcripts to systematic coding and analysis while complementing this data with knowledge already existing in the discourse, this investigation seeks to fill that gap in the literature. Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago were selected on the basis of their prominent positions in CARICOM and their place at the helm at any international discussion surrounding the region. Together, they are viewed as fundamentally important to the development of the Caribbean and CARICOM discourse. The interview methodology chosen for this investigation is based on an interpretive epistemology and a constructivist ontology that views social validity as observationally 'understandable' and yet subjected to intersubjective interpretations. As a result, and due to the challenges involved in tracing CARICOM nations' elite's perception from existing policies, my intention was to attain a Weberian *Verstehende* of elites' perspectives on the implication of China's foreign policy in the sub-region, rather than a list of specific policies derived from the Latin American and Caribbean example (although admittedly these surfaced at times).

The investigation took a number of insistent and inconsistent diversions from the original question of the dissertation. My previous interest in uncovering the much less-discussed direct or indirect impact of China's foreign policy on the Caribbean, with the intention of isolating the Caribbean model from its Latin American counterpart, had previously proven somewhat expansive and more convoluted. For this reason, my analysis encapsulates nations existing in the regional bloc that only subscribe to the 'One China' principle, which in turn lends a unique geographical scope on China. As a result, my dissertation is less about Latin America and the wider Caribbean region per se, than it is about situating the effects of the Beijing Consensus within the CARICOM model of which it is seen by Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites to be a part of. Countries such as Tuvalu are mentioned here; as a finding of the investigation is that vulnerability as these nations' identity does not extend to only large nations in terms of size but powerful countries in terms of capital.

A key finding of the dissertation is that in either case, China is not perceived as a neo-colonial power despite elites' admission that neo-colonial strands that existed in past centre-periphery relations exist in their relationship with China. Such a perspective needs to be comprehended

by looking first at the servitude of CARICOM nations under the London Consensus and then modernisation in accordance with the Washington Consensus that has influenced especially the perception of these governing-elites from the 1950s to 2000s. In many respects, China has offered something different from both the London and Washington Consensus. Partnership with the PRC provides hope, a sequenced approach to structural and economic development, a targeted approach to national development, a purposeful ‘catch-up’ in advancement, ‘equitable’ partnerships and comradery with those that are in a similar position. Such a partnership shares much with the thinking of past leaders such as Jamaica’s Michael Manley and Trinidad and Tobago’s Eric Williams.

Despite this, another key finding is that which lies in the rejection of the Chinese imperium by these CARICOM nations if it were to displace America’s hegemony. Although the Beijing Consensus offers a less exploitative partnership from that of Washington’s, the fear of being overrun by communist ideology for these nations’ elites present a much greater danger. On the one hand, the answer to why this is the case will help to provide a theoretical and empirical underpinning that will inevitably provoke an ideologically intensified debate in this regard. My discoveries include ramifications that extend far beyond that of the present research question. The persisted relevance of ideas such as vulnerability, vulnerable identity and modernisation as established here, contains theoretical underpinnings and implications for the discourse on states development.

An adopted vulnerable identity is always likely to play a critical role, not only in forging the practical ways in which Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago’s governing-elites approach economic advancement and modernisation, but potentially in how other CARICOM nations do so. The theory of modernisation and the developmental model has always laid compelling claims regarding issues surrounding small nations: the desire of the state, a preference for a capitalist system and sources of economic advancement. Although these theories and models don’t always convert precisely into policies, they epitomise the logical environment in which policy-decisions are formulated and implemented. As the waning and increasing of these models in the broader Caribbean has shown, suggestions surrounding domestic decision-making and international endeavours to garner aid have always been a huge feat.

This research comprises of eleven chapters, augmented in four sections: *Section One* presents the framework and justification wherein the topic will be discussed and later analysed. *Chapter One* offers a review on the existing discourse surrounding the debate of China in the Caribbean,

wherein a review of the literature on the broader area of Latin America and the Caribbean is undertaken, before looking at the research that surrounds the isolation of the Caribbean on the topic. The chapter moves this down to the CARICOM level, before discussing the proposed contribution of the dissertation to the field. *Chapter Two* explains the research design, methodological framework based on the analytical political theory, the underpinnings of a hermeneutic epistemology and a holistic constructivist approach to foreign policy analysis as it relates to the research problem.

Section Two presents an introduction to the empirical data and looks specifically at China in the Caribbean Community and analyses the historical and geographical context as well as the motives and the impacts therein surrounding this emergence from the perspective of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites. *Chapter Three* provides the discussion with its context by looking at the historical and geographical backdrop of the Community and the foundation on which these nations built their foreign policy. It introduces the first set of empirical data surrounding elites' perception on the continued impact of being a small nation and finds that the governing elites of these nations have adopted a vulnerable identity that is steeped in a historical legacy. *Chapter Four* assesses the concerns of these nations about the intentions of China to forge relations with countries in the sub-region and the effect the PRC's motives have on their societies. The chapter finds that concerns for these impacts runs along the grassroots and foreign policy level and ranges from effects on local industries, an outflow of capital made from Chinese businesses in these societies, a pronounced bias and polarisation as a result of Chinese migration, to a backlash from the US if China seems threatening to the hegemon. *Chapter Five* then deals specifically with the economic and political motives for Jamaica's engagement with China despite these concerns and presents empirical findings from the nation's governing and non-governing elites regarding this matter. It first sets up the backdrop by distinguishing vulnerability as a *category* as opposed to an *identity*. The chapter finds that the engagement between the PRC and Jamaica is one borne out of need/necessity which is rooted in a vulnerable identity for Jamaica's governing elites but one that is rejected by non-governing elites who contend that such an identity is perpetuated only by leaders in the society. *Chapter Six* looks exclusively at Trinidad and Tobago along the same lines and finds that a similar case to the Jamaican context as presented in the previous chapter exists here albeit to a lesser extent due to an economy that has witnessed outstanding economic performances over the years.

Section Three moves away from focusing exclusively on the national level of these two country cases and deals with the perceived effects and impacts that China has on the intra-regional relationships of these nations as well as on the ones existing between them and traditional partners such as the US and EU. It also discusses whether the partnership can be deemed from these nations' elites' perspective as a win-win situation as was promised at the launch of the 2011 Forum. *Chapter Seven* looks at China's impact on the current intra-regional aspects of CARICOM countries. The chapter finds, that on one hand, while the elites of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago called for effective integration in the region, it was found that non-integration sentiments were significantly higher in the case of Jamaica than in the case of Trinidad and Tobago. The call for non-integration on the regional level was much higher in the non-governmental sector of the Jamaican case, albeit there was only a bit under half from the governmental sector sharing the same sentiment. On the issue of an integrated approach to China, governing elites in Jamaica were willing to 'go it alone' as integration in dealing with China could potentially bring less funding. However, on the other hand, non-governing elites perceive that an integrated approach would be the best way to deal with China. Elites in both sectors in Trinidad and Tobago were more inclined to a regional and integrated approach towards China if other CARICOM nations were open to it.

Chapter Eight moves the discussion from the intra-regional level to the inter-regional arena. It analyses China's perceived impact on the relationship existing between these nations and their traditional partners, namely the US and EU. It addresses the US's foreign policy towards these nations firstly before China's rise in the Community, then looks at US's foreign policy towards these nations after China's growth in the Community to ascertain if there has been a change. Secondly, it moves into whether China is contesting the US in the region and the challenges and opportunities elites from both country cases perceive this will bring. That section closes by looking at whether Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites would be willing to accept China as the new hegemonic influencer. The chapter finds that while there are a mirage of concerns surrounding possible backlash from the US geared towards these CARICOM nations if China is deemed as a threat, there is less concern surrounding China's impact on their relationship with the EU. Elites from both sectors in both case studies contend that China has virtually no impact on their EU relationship but raised grave concerns about the impending Brexit and what that means for CARICOM nations in their standing with the EU.

Chapter Nine presents elites' perspective on the impact of China's foreign policy on the sub-region since the 3rd September 2011 Forum. It looks at whether China's activities in these nations are matching its promises made in the Forum. The investigation finds that what China is offering these nations and what they want differs vastly in some areas. As a result, in both cases, elites agree that the partnership with China is not entirely a 'win-win' relationship. They, however, maintain that it has the potential to become win-win if CARICOM nations were able to integrate and adopt more innovative foreign policy strategies at both national and regional level when it comes to their China partnership. Additionally, despite the lopsided benefits stemming from the relationship, the investigation finds that China is not viewed as neo-colonial power by elites from both sectors in the two countries. *Chapter Ten* bringing it all together explores whether China is using these CARICOM nations or vice versa and argues that China is a rational agent whereas CARICOM nations are more irrational in their foreign policy approach. It starts by looking at how the geographical and human structures in the Community led to the rise of China in the sub-region and argues that the vulnerable identity of these nations has led to the use of China's soft power to lure them away from Taiwan through a variety of investment streams. It argues that these nations have developed a pattern of aid-dependency that China is aware of and is taking advantage of in order to get to their geostrategic location. The chapter also investigates whether St. Lucia is challenging this pattern of aid-dependence in its switch from Taiwan to China, then back again, and whether elites from both countries can learn any lessons from this. It was found that St. Lucia was viewed as obtuse in its move with majority of the elites in both cases maintaining that there were several lessons to be learned from such back and forth behaviour. The chief among them was the importance of maintaining loyalty in one's foreign policy.

Section Four presents the conclusion and recommendations while summarising the findings. It also cements the three columns on which the investigation is based. *Chapter Eleven*, as a result, summarises the findings and arguments existing in the research and addresses the theoretical implications existing therein. It concludes with elites' recommendations on national and regional policy reforms that could ensure a much better 'win-win' situation with China.

PART I: INITIAL DELIBERATIONS

Chapter One: The Debate of China in Latin America and the Caribbean

Within the more recent (Bernal, 2013; Montoute, 2013; Rush et al., 2013; Bernal, 2015; Bernal, 2016) and growing body of literature on the implications of China's emergence in the Caribbean, considerable attention is being paid to China's global repositioning, the potential and prospects its foreign direct investments (FDI) can provide for the region, as well as the possible challenges and opportunities tied to it. There has been no research that this project is aware of, which addresses the virtual omission of CARICOM nation's governing and non-governing elites' perspective on China, and even more so from the Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago angle. This highly charged economic, governmental and policy debate which has increasingly made its way into academic literature, has brought with it central questions about how Latin America and the Caribbean can better maximise on the opportunities that China's emergence has provided both regions and how they can best inform their foreign policies in order to minimise existing challenges.

Due to the exploratory and very recent nature of this growing body of work, very few studies are adequately rooted in empirical data and even fewer have provided theoretical analysis of the matter. This research aims to remedy the situation by analysing, through the use of two CARICOM case studies, the perspectives of their governing and non-government elites on the implications of China's expansion on both their intra and inter-regional structures since the launch of the 2011 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum, through to 2016 which culminated in the election of the US's Trump administration and the announcement of Brexit from the European Union.

To provide a thorough understanding of the pre-existing literature, this chapter utilises the 'funnel-down approach' by first briefly engaging with the broader contours of current debates surrounding what the rise of China since the turn of the century has meant for the Latin American and Caribbean region as a whole. Second, it will attempt to analyse the section of the literature that theorises China as an exemplar, saviour and neo-imperialist to the 'The Third World'. Third, it will then extensively review the attempts made to understand what China's economic rise has come to mean to the Caribbean in isolation. The chapter closes by identifying the gaps in the literature and how this dissertation fills some of those gaps as well as contribute to a broader understanding of the topic.

1.1 The rise of China in Latin America and the Caribbean: An overview of the Literature

The 16th century can be perceived as being the era that witnessed the first wave of Chinese presence in Latin America. According to Slack (2009), this early migration due to the Manila-Acapulco trade connection saw Chinese migrants living in places such as Spanish Mexico and Peru (Slack Jr, 2009). This was the first pioneering of the Chinese diaspora existing in the region. The 19th century, however, was where a vast number of Chinese movements to the region took an unprecedented turn. Also known as the ‘indentured era’, the link between the two regions were quickly forged during this period. This ‘*coolie migration*’ of unskilled labourers, however, were different from those of the traders, skilled migrants and artisans that preceded them many centuries before (Lai, 2010). The widespread demand for labour which was powered by the explosive global growth brought about by the British and American industrial revolution stimulated a push for the replacement of the decline in new slaves in the colonies. As a result, Chinese migrants were recruited to work on sugar and cotton plantations of these Latin American countries. For example, in Cuba and Peru.

This introduction of a new labour system and a third racial element translated into intermarriage which culminated in the formation of the first Chinese Latin American communities. However, it was not until the last ten years since Latin America and the Caribbean witnessed the largest tide of Chinese involvement in the region. Since then, many attempts to provide an analysis of China’s rise along with its opportunities and challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean has increased. Against the backdrop of China being the fourth largest economy with an expected take over in the year 2050, policymakers and scholars in Latin America have taken note of the wave of the influx of foreign capital in the form of Chinese FDIs that has flooded many sectors in the region. This push for opportunities abroad witnessed the fundamentals of China’s engagement with Latin America highly steeped in its bid to secure raw materials and acquire new export markets. This has led to increasing scrutiny from Latin American scholars, policymakers and popular press.

In the early part of the decade, the mainstream literature has, for the most part, been divided into three strands of argument: a) those who see the Chinese and Latin American relation as complementary, b) those that view the relationship as a renewed form of dependency and c) those that view China’s rise as having the potential to create dire geopolitical implications for

the region as it relates to the United States. Matt Ferchen (2011) puts it best when he surmised that:

On the one side of the emerging debate are those, including most prominently the Chinese government itself, who claim that the China-Latin America economic relationship reflects fundamental *complementarities* and therefore has a positive effect for both sides. In contrast, other observers have emphasised that what boosters see as complementarity is really just a renewed form of Latin American *dependency*. They argue that while rapidly expanding trade and investment ties may have short-term benefits for both sides, the commodity-based nature of the relationship ultimately reinforces dysfunctional patterns of Latin American development that many countries in the region long ago renounced and have been attempting to move away from for well over half a century (Ferchen, 2011).

For scholars who followed along the third strand of the debate, the argument is based on the rivalry between the Washington Consensus and the Beijing Consensus and whether China will eventually emerge as the hegemonic ruler of the region. This has often been seen as a matter of ‘development versus democracy’ (Li, 2016b) with a great undermining of the Monroe Doctrine. The starting point for majority of the literature with regards to China in Latin America and the Caribbean, is based on a more balanced discussion on the increased interaction between the region and the PRC since the 1990’s and on the manner in which commercial and economic interactions between the two has secured the region as a part of China’s global strategy (Philips, 2011). This meant that during 1949 and 1979, the relationship between the PRC and Latin America was more geared towards the political.

The diplomatic conflict between China and Taiwan was brought to the fore with the PRC attempting to gather as many friends as possible from the region in an attempt to isolate its ‘rogue state’ (Deckers, 1989). The year 1971 coming on the heels of Mexican President Luis Echeverria’s call for Taiwan’s expulsion from the United Nations (UN) and an admission of the PRC in its place, resulted in a sweeping shift to lend recognition to the PRC by Peru, Chile, Brazil and Mexico (Mora, 1997). Heading towards the 2000s these same countries with the inclusion of Argentina, dominated trade with China. This saw export and import figures between these same countries and the PRC hitting numeric values of US\$1.8 billion by 1988 and US\$10.5 billion by 2000 (Wise and Chonn Ching, 2018). Even then, Washington was not alarmed by China’s partnership with its close neighbours. This unconcerned attitude spilled over into the 20th century literature, and so scholars being similarly content was much more

optimistic about this rising engagement between China and Latin America (Worden, 1983, Mora, 1997).

By the early 21st century, this optimism still persisted in aspects of the literature especially in the works of (Dumbaugh and Sullivan, 2005, Hakim, 2006, Domínguez, 2006, Devlin, 2008). Domínguez (2006) for example, cited that the decade was bearing witness to a Sino-Latin American economic and trade relation that was growing at an unprecedented level with the economic figures being nothing short of impressive. Nevertheless, this meteoric rise of China in the region not only brought concern to Washington scholars and policymakers, but the resulting implications invoked interest in Latin American academics and governing officials. At that time, the principal studies surrounding China's trade and economic partnerships in the region, poured out of international organisations such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Inter-American Development Bank (Jenkins and Dussel Peters, 2009). The proponents in the field (Cesarin and Moneta, 2005, Devlin et al., 2006, CEPAL, 2007, Santiso, 2007, Lederman et al., 2008, Roett and Paz, 2008, Ellis, 2009, Jenkins et al., 2008) all associated with these principal international organisations have, for the most part, centred their analysis on how cheap Chinese products were impacting the region's export. Even in cases where scholars have dealt with particular case studies on Latin American countries (Tramutola et al., 2005, Peters and Sun, 2005), the dominant view stemming from these scholars was identical to those previously mentioned. Their main argument was that due to the differences existing between Latin American export commodities and those products manufactured by the Chinese, then the region export structure would not be adversely affected by competition from the PRC. Devlin et al. (2006) for example, emphasising the differences, surmised that Latin America is particularly deemed as a competitive distributor of agricultural produce and remains dominant in its tourism services.

For researchers who did not subscribe to this particular conclusion (Dussel Peters, 2005, Moreira, 2007, Gallagher and Porzecanski, 2008) several doubts persisted. Their main arguments were that the export structures of Latin America would witness an incremental increase from Chinese commodities, which in the long run would prove even more pervasive for the region. The basis of this was regarding the PRC's admission to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) which resulted in an elimination of the Agreement surrounding Clothing and Textiles. Gallagher and Porzecanski (2008) noted that 'China's unprecedented economic

growth and its entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have had direct and indirect effects, on LAC's export and growth performances. Direct effects result from bi-lateral LAC-China trade. Indirect effects result from China's overall demand for LACS's top products and the extent to which that demand drove up prices for those products'.

In another area of the literature, scholars became more concerned with China as a market for Latin America's export commodities. The most notable of these are (Blázquez-Lidoy et al., 2006, Lederman et al., 2008) whose arguments rest on China's search for raw materials and primary resources. The conclusion in these studies, as a result, are emphasised on the basis that both China and Latin American economies are complimentary of each other and that China's demand for primary commodities can only result in improved trade, increased export revenues and an upsurge in government earnings. Those in opposition of such viewpoints (Lall et al., 2005, Moreira, 2007, Phillips, 2007) explores the lasting impact on the region's economic structures due to natural and raw materials being the foundation of LAC's export commodities. Their concluding argument is that a lack of diversification of products and the constant export of primary resources such as copper and iron ore will undoubtedly result in an overdependence on these resources. This, they argued, would inevitably culminate in a relationship with the PRC that resembles past core-periphery relationships that had previously existed in the region. In addition, these scholars fear that the region is approaching a period of deindustrialisation. Moreira (2007) argued that 'its [China] trade with LAC is heavily based on traditional comparative advantages, reinforcing a pattern of specialisation, which, as discussed before, might not be growth-enhancing'.

A sparse amount of contemporary studies (Freund and Ozden, 2006, Murphy et al., 2007, Jenkins, 2009) has explored a less noticeable phenomenon that has recently found its way into the literature. This is having to do with the implications surrounding an increase number of Chinese products imported into LAC markets. This rising trend has stimulated political debates surrounding the issue of China using LAC markets as a dumping ground for its cheap products along with the unfair competition it has created for local producers. While some scholars have called for the implementation of anti-dumping laws in response to this progression, other scholars such as (Toro, 2013) have trumpeted the importance of Chinese imports in boosting local manufacturing and in offering the region a competitive edge. Additionally, cheap Chinese products grant consumers an alternative option, and those existing in the poorer strata of society can enjoy a more affordable standard of living. In the words of Toro (2013), 'the increase in

imports from China has also had positive effects, including widespread access to material welfare for the low-income sectors in Latin America’.

The larger literature on China’s Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) (Zhang, 2001, Lora, 2004, Loser, 2005, Hakim, 2006, Devlin et al., 2006, Li, 2007, Lederman et al., 2008, Gallagher and Porzecanski, 2008, Jenkins et al., 2008, Lum, 2009, Gallagher, 2010, Jilberto and Hogenboom, 2010, Fornes and Butt-Philip, 2011, Peters, 2012, Ludeña, 2012, Kuwayama and Rosales, 2012, Leiteritz, 2012, Moran et al., 2012, Peters, 2013, Chen and Pérez Ludeña, 2014, Piccone, 2016b, Vianna, 2016, Dollar, 2017, Avendano et al., 2017) and the issues therein, became the most influential on the subject surrounding LAC and China’s economic relations during this era. These studies dealt mostly with the rise and fall of Chinese FDI inflows and whether China’s competition has resulted in third-party FDI being diverted from the LAC region due to its marked emergence in the region. While some scholars gravitated towards the notion that FDI has been deflected from at least some amount of Latin American countries, others found that investments into China can be linked to its increased activities in the LAC region. Still, very little information was divulged on the Caribbean region in these studies and CARICOM as a sub-region was excluded from these analyses. If anything, most of these scholars tended to focus on the lessons the LAC region could learn from China and advocacy for the emulation of the Beijing model. Accordingly, recommendations from these studies fall along the lines of LAC needing to implement drivers and policies that would induce technological advancement and longstanding developmental goals.

For other scholars, the issue of China contesting America’s hegemony in the region (Ellis, 2005, Hakim, 2006, Paz, 2012, Denoon, 2017) is where the real concern is centred. Arguments surrounding this issue are that China’s rise might present challenges for governing elites in the region and may pose a threat to development strategies that have long been implemented by Washington in the region. As Paz (2012) points out, ‘according to historical record, none of the challengers was most of the time overtly and purposefully challenging the United States hegemony; however, if they were perceived as such, they were also treated as such by Washington, and pressure was exerted over countries in the region’.

With the emergence of these debate, scholars began approaching the topic through theories, frameworks and conceptual analysis. Chief among these are China’s competitive threat theory, new trade theory, dependency theory, China-LAC complementary economic theory, south-south cooperation framework and the triangular relationship framework. The works of (Lall et

al., 2005, Blázquez-Lidoy et al., 2006, Santiso, 2006, Moreira, 2007, López-Córdova et al., 2007, Tokatlian, 2007, Stallings, 2008, Regalado Florido, 2009, Ellis, 2009, Jilberto and Hogenboom, 2010, Ferchen, 2011, Ellis, 2012, Jenkins, 2012, DeHart, 2012, Kuwayama et al., 2012, Laufer, 2013, Gallagher et al., 2013, Guilhon-Alberquerque et al., 2014, Ray et al., 2015, Harris et al., 2016, Castaneda, 2017) fall into these respective categories. Lall et al. (2005) in their study, explores China's competition against Latin American trade through the China competitive threat theory. Using trade data from 1990-2002 to support the theory, they argued that, technological advancement in China has resulted in the East-Asian country possessing technologically advanced products that place it on a more rapid growth path than its LAC counterpart (Lall et al., 2005). As a result, this rapid growth might have severe implications for LAC's technological development in exports and industrialised production. Since there exists no approved methodology for measuring 'competitive threat' with the use of trade data, Lall et al. (2005) resorted to using proportionate retail markets as a way to quantify 'competitive performance' in both China and the US, so as to garner a more definite picture of whether there is any competitive impact on LAC exports from the PRC. Consequently, there are several flaws and limitations to this study. First, a look at competition in two of the world's largest markets (China and US) fails to illustrate the direct interaction existing between China and the LAC region on a product level. Second, as much as information might be garnered through the analysis of changes occurring in combined market shares for the PRC and its neighbours, direct causes in relationships from China's entry into LAC would require more detailed fieldwork. As a result, the conclusion arising from this study which is primarily drawn from the analysis of whether or not LAC has lost market shares in the American market to China, is very limited in scope.

López-Córdova et al. (2007) similarly look at Latin America's competition with the PRC in the US market with regards to export commodities. Through the calculation of the elasticity of US import substitutes to measure adjustments in the market shares of LAC and the PRC, the authors contend that 'the removal of MFA quotas would lead to a sharp increase in Chinese sales to the United States (75 per cent), but Latin America would see its share of the US market decline by only around 10 per cent (2.5 percentage points)' (López-Córdova et al., 2007). They concluded that these market gains by the PRC would inevitably prove to be detrimental to other regions. A similar sentiment can be found in Moreira (2007) whose working paper takes a similarly dim view of China's impact on LAC's manufacturing industries. Drawing on the works of (Ricardo, 1891, Krueger, 1979, Heckscher and Ohlin, 1991), Moreira (2007)

implements the traditional and ‘new trade’ theories bolstered by the examination of trade data, to argue that LAC’s largess, scope and governments’ role has resulted in China as a formidable competitor. This the author argued, has created overcrowding in the world market by Chinese goods which has hampered the future outcome of the manufacturing process in Latin America. She points to two ways in which LAC can curtail the Chinese competition, ‘(a) improving the region’s ability to differentiate and diversify its exports away from “mundane”, labour-intensive tasks and products; (b) exploiting the region’s geographical advantages, particularly its proximity to the US market, by specialising in goods whose transport cost-to-price ratios are high and in “speed-to-market” goods, whose constant changes in demand ask for rapid delivery (e.g. fashion apparel)’ (Moreira, 2007). The limitation of this study, however, is that the degree to which China’s overall market share is produced as a detriment to LAC’s exports cannot be answered.

A more recent yet moderate body of work examines China’s potential to become a new core, thus casting LAC as a peripheral region. Jenkins (2012), for instance, approaches the topic and looks at the composition of trade flows and FDI investments between the PRC and LAC by way of the dependency theory. Here Jenkins contends that there’s evidence that a centre-periphery relationship does indeed exist between the two, based on the asymmetrical nature of their bilateral trade links. Bolstering the theory also through the use of trade data, Jenkins argues that trade remains extremely limited with China accounting for 7.1% of LAC’s total trade and LAC accounting for 11.6% of the PRC’s trade by 2010 (Jenkins, 2012). Emphasising the unevenness of this relationship, Jenkins argued that while raw materials are the basis of Latin American exports to China, Chinese exports to the region is primarily finished products. This according to Jenkins, is further magnified through the region’s export concentration where there is a lack of export diversity. Casting the findings from the Latin American angle, the author argues that although FDI from China to LAC being presented at a lower level, tends to be less asymmetrical when compared to trade, the trend in both areas suggest that China is taking on centre/core position when it comes to LAC. While Jenkins’ study showed strong evidence of a pattern that does indeed indicate central-periphery dynamics, the study was unable to show whether the existence of such a relationship could culminate in China becoming a new hegemon in the region.

Such ‘nature’ of the PRC’s relationship with LAC gained popularity and was often pondered upon with some frequency by scholars in the literature. Laufer (2013) for example, discusses

Argentina's relationship with China and cautions against the nation's dependence on the PRC's markets by arguing that the FDI process of China's investment in the region bears similar characteristics to great powers of the past. Through the examination of China's relationship with dominant sectors ruled by governing elites in Argentina, Laufer posited that the only purpose of LAC to China is to bolster the PRC's need for industrial development through the supply of raw materials and food. Falling along similar lines Volpon (2010) through the examination of trade documents, analyses LAC's economic cycles and direct trade links to China and argues that current patterns of trade between the region and the PRC indicate an increasingly asymmetrical relationship proven through LAC's reliance on the export of mediocre commodities. Volpon (2010) concluded that this relationship has taken on a 'North-South tone that is both limiting and reinforcing of some of the region's historical economic vulnerabilities'. Kuwayama and Rosales (2012) focusing on the issues surrounding trade and investment flows from the PRC to LAC, contends that productivity gaps and a failure to induce technological advancement in some LAC countries that have bolstered their natural resource sectors forecast a new centre/periphery dynamic as opposed to a South-South collaboration. Once again, China is cast as perpetuating dependency patterns of the past. According to the authors, for LAC to overcome these trends, more symbiotic trade relations geared towards economic and social development needs to be implemented in the region. Taking a similar view, Ellis (2009) approaches the topic by way of examining China's relationship with each Latin American country. The author argues that on a global level, China's exports present a steadier driver of the PRC's development than the product exports of Latin America (Ellis, 2009). The conclusion drawn is that this asymmetrical relationship existing between China and these countries run along a similar line as historical relationships that the region has tried for decades to move away from.

After this blatant disavowal of China, some scholars began to take the position that China is neither a perpetuator of dependence patterns nor competitive ones. Instead, for this group, complementary economies were what LAC and the PRC represent for each other. Blázquez-Lidoy et al. (2006), Santiso (2006) and Regalado Florido (2009) gave some of the most interesting outputs relating to this strand of the topic. According to Blázquez-Lidoy et al. (2006), the evidence garnered from an examination of the PRC's export and import structure which was conducted through a commodity database containing 620 different products, offers no clear indication that there is indeed an export competition between the PRC and LAC in the US market. Utilising two indices to analyse the impact of China's competition from 1998-2004

on 34 economies, 15 of which are present in LAC, the authors conclude that although the PRC can be deemed as a threat to all developing nations, countries that engage in only export products usually face lower competition from the PRC (Blázquez-Lidoy et al., 2006). As a result, the LAC region represents economies that are more complementary to China's need, as the PRC's drive for raw material has appointed it a net importer of these commodities and a dominant exporter of finished products. Santiso (2006) following along similar lines, deems China as a 'trade angel' to the LAC region and contends in his study that, the PRC's hunger for materials such as copper and zinc has, in turn, bolstered LAC exports over the past decade to fulfil the East-Asian powerhouse's growing demand. Looking at trade in Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Columbia, Santiso concluded that outside of being a dominant trade partner to LAC, the region is well placed to receive Chinese investment. Regalado Florido (2009) in agreement, stated in his study that if the structure of the countries of Latin American remains unchanged, the region could potentially become a dominant exporter of raw materials to the PRC. Additionally, according to Florido, China is a vehicle of unprecedented opportunities for both LAC and the Caribbean region in the areas of production, exports and manufactured goods and services. Analysing import and export documents for Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Cuba and Argentina, Regalado Florido (2009) concludes that LAC's relationship with China is one that is indicative of one wherein 'opportunities seem to prevail and provide momentum for the bilateral relations'.

Providing welcoming alternatives Ferchen (2011) and Castaneda (2017) instead examines the perceptions surrounding the complementary and dependency theories as it relates to the topic and offers a different viewpoint. Ferchen (2011), for example, undertakes an examination of the competing optimistic and pessimistic perspectives on the subject, with the complementary and dependency theory representing the two respectively. He argues that to fully comprehend both perspectives, an evaluation of their driving factors had to be undertaken. Looking at the motives behind China's increased trade and investment in LAC the author argues that the sustainability of China's ties to the region can be seen in two areas: a) the PRC's sudden demand for LAC commodities and b) the specific timing of the PRC's imports into the region. Criticising scholars on both sides of the differing perspectives, Ferchen maintains that scholars and policymakers in their respective camps are adopting more of a gold-rush mentality as opposed to a more controlled rumination. The author concludes that even if the PRC's action in the region is indicative of historical trends, an examination of 'China's domestic political

economy demonstrates the various challenges China faces in maintaining its torrid pace of growth' (Ferchen, 2011).

For Ferchen, although LAC might be tied to a definitive aspect of China's advancement, it would be a fallacy to believe that the region is somehow locked in a perpetual Chinese expedition towards development. Castaneda (2017) though taking a differing approach by focusing on China's FDI and development loans and the impact they have on LAC's economic development, maintains his argument along similar lines. He contends that, despite the thriving trade between the two, there is no indication of a dependency dynamic as both parties are equally prone to the adversity and advantages afforded by the global market cycles. Through the examination of data deducted from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce and the United Nations covering Chinese FDI and loans towards LAC, the author posits that 'Latin American economies do not substantially rely on foreign capital from Chinese multinational corporations and only few governments in the region heavily depend on Chinese development or private loans' (Castaneda, 2017). Challenging the dependency theory Castenda concludes that, the nature of Latin America national politics is an indication that the region is moving away from the authority of global powers instead of depending on them (Castaneda, 2017) .

After an almost overwhelming back and forth between the differing theories, scholars such as (Jilberto and Hogenboom, 2010, DeHart, 2012, Ray et al., 2015, Harris and Arias, 2016) sought to situate and administer a more disparate treatment of the topic through the South-South framework. Jilberto and Hogenboom (2010) for example, by applying an international political economy approach to the framework, details China as a nation positioning itself in search of southern allies. The authors contend that even though most of the PRC's trade is concentrated in East-Asia, a large number of their raw materials is derived from other regions, especially from the LAC region. This South-South cooperation framework they argued, could culminate in China opening up 'future spaces' wherein commodities from other developing countries can be exported. Sharing in this optimism, Harris and Arias (2016) argues that the wavering relationship between LAC and China will prompt the region to implement policy reforms that will grant them more opportunities through their South-South partnership with the PRC. The key concern for the authors is that the future of the region will depend on how well both parties are able to 'meet their respective development challenges and strengthen the South-South partnership they have established over the course of the last decade' (Harris and Arias, 2016).

Agreeing on the existence of a South-South partnership, DeHart (2012) disagrees to a varying degree and notes that ‘taken together and stripped of their normative differences, both the China Model and South-South cooperation highlight China’s dual identity—donor and partner—as the source of both its promise and its limits. They point to a development landscape that reproduces and also repositions the meaning and location of First World—Third World distinctions, rather than transcending them’. Utilising ethnographic research surrounding the PRC’s relationship with Costa Rica, the author concludes that the promise of brotherhood and comradery pledged by the South-South framework is unable to account for the directions in which the relationship between LAC and the PRC will unfold. For the author, it is most likely that the smokescreen that the South-South framework present, will result in the inability to carefully predict how China’s role in the global arena will challenge or complement the processes of western modernity. Sharing in this discountenance, Ray et al. (2015) perceive that investment in the primary sectors existing in Latin American countries yielded far fewer jobs than those of the manufacturing or agricultural sectors. Additionally, LAC exports to the PRC was responsible for greenhouse emission of up to 12% more when compared to other exports (Ray et al., 2015). Tackling the topic through the examination of eight (8) case studies, the author points to the lessons that LAC can learn from their engagement in this South-South partnership with China. This includes the need for LAC governments to stave off increasing pressure to ease environmental and social protections in their countries in order to make way for increasing mining demand by the PRC.

Much of the discussion in the literature has focused on the issue of China in the region as it relates to the United States and the likely consequences these nations will have to face regarding their geopolitical order. This concern has created debates among academics about a newly formed ‘triangle’ consisting of China, America and Latin America with China sitting at the zenith. The works of (Tokatlian, 2007, Stallings, 2008, Ellis, 2012, Gallagher and Peters, 2013, Guilhon-Albuquerque, 2014, Gallagher, 2016) was oriented to address this precise issue. Tokatlian (2007) was the first to make mention of this ‘triangular relationship’ through the examination of what he deemed as ‘trilateral security’. According to Tokatlian, the main concern for China in the region is the ‘Taiwan factor’ wherein Beijing is attempting to isolate the nation diplomatically and in so doing is forging relationships with these LAC nations. Nevertheless, all participants existing in the triangle have concerns of their own. For example, the author notes that the disquieting matter for the United States involves the PRC’s veiled military outthrust in the region surrounding the issue of Venezuela, the Panama Canal, Cuba

and Colombia. While for Latin America, the major concerns are security issues that bear direct effects on the day-to-day lives of its citizens. These would include ‘the use and abuse of illicit drugs, the expansion of organised crime, the proliferation of small arms, the degradation of the environment, and the growth of corruption’ (Tokatlian, 2007). For this reason, the author concludes that the United States does not need to see China as a threat given the unbalanced relationship existing between the three, wherein the US is the stated hegemon, China is the provincial power and Latin America, the non-undermining periphery. Additionally, Tokatlian found that the complementary importance of the Washington-Beijing partnership is, for each side, more prominent than their individual association with Latin America. Stallings (2008) being the first to expound on the concept, analyses the implications for each side existing in the triangle, Stallings argues that neither the PRC nor Latin America has any intention of disrupting US’s stance in the region. She evidenced this by pointing to the fact that the PRC views nations who wish to form an aggressive alliance with it as less attractive as opposed to those like Brazil and Peru who opt for a more peaceful alliance (Stallings, 2008). Furthermore, governments in these LAC nations have no intention of changing the status quo seeing that Beijing’s investments also include conditionalities. On this account, Stallings concluded that China has no intention of challenging the US, as the PRC not only needs the US and its allies to advance its economy but also is not able to replace the US as the primary market player in Latin America.

Ellis (2012), however, argues that this concept of a triangular framework is one that is fraught with limitations and misunderstandings surrounding the dynamic existing between LAC and the PRC. Pointing to the framework’s three main flaws, Ellis contends that a) ‘the triangle masks other important actors that must be considered in the dynamic b) it incorrectly encourages a view of Latin America as a unitary actor c) at its core, the triangle is a subtly neo-colonialist way of approaching Latin America and its external relations’ (Ellis, 2012). As such, this dynamic inevitably excludes other actors in the region such as India, Russia and Europe and a double focus on China and US as the dominant players in the triangle suggest that only decisions from these two nations can predict the outcomes for the region. He concludes that with the interdependency between the two nations and LAC, the interaction should not be viewed as a singular triangle, but instead multiple triangles intertwined.

Even so, Gallagher and Peters (2013) move their analysis from the wider region to focus on Mexico as a case study in the triangle by examining the effect that China’s relationship with

the LAC region has on the Mexico-US dynamic. Looking at the triangle from an economic and political perspective, the authors argue that China has significant impacts on the relationship existing between the Central American nation and the US. They contend that based on analysis of import and export of twenty prominent commodities, it is evident that China is not only contesting Mexico's exports in the US market but also rivalling the US in Mexico (Gallagher and Peters, 2013). Identifying 52 sectors in which this phenomenon is evident, the authors found that 'Mexico is losing market share in the United States in those same 52 sectors, which collectively represent 49 per cent of all of Mexico's exports to the U.S.' (Gallagher and Peters, 2013). Guilhon-Albuquerque (2014) uses a similar approach but replaces Mexico with the Brazilian case study. Alternatively, looking at how the partnership between the US and China in the international arena impacts Brazil's relationship with these two nations, and looking at the addresses and meetings that were underway during President Lula's visit to China in 2009, the author argues that China as Brazil's main trading partner means that Brazil will be aligned with Beijing on issues in the UN as opposed to the US. The fact that Brazil had pushed back against the US's decolonisation policies regarding Portuguese nations in the past, makes the situation no better. Additionally, the South-South cooperation happening between Brazil and China and Brazil and Africa means that new synergies are being formed outside the hegemon. The rise of China the author concludes should be viewed as a threat to an already debilitating relationship between Brazil and the United States. The author believes that the US should seek to rebalance itself in the region if it does not want to lose Brazil to the PRC and 'to achieve this rebalancing it's imperative to recover US' relevance—its primacy if possible—in global trade and investment, which has been worn down by China's global progress' (Guilhon-Albuquerque, 2014).

Gallagher (2016) offering up a different interpretation along the same lines, contextualises the 'China Boom' in Latin America with the triangular framework and maintains that Latin America is as vital to China as it is to the United States. The author points out that China's need for raw material has positioned LAC as a region of strategic importance to China while for the US, the region being so close in proximity is essential to its national security. Gallagher echoing a similar sentiment to Guilhon-Albuquerque, affirms that the United States needs to reset its stance in the region and reform its economic policies towards LAC. He contends that engagements among the trio can only reap benefits for those present in the triangle (Gallagher, 2016)

The discussions and debates referenced above offer a very insightful contribution to the varying dimensions of the issues in the discourse surrounding the LAC-China partnership. Despite the exclusion of CARICOM from these debates, they are relatively crucial to my research question. To begin with, the literature as it stands surrounding China's relationship with LAC albeit investigated to a far much lesser extent along similar lines in the Caribbean and even more-so in the CARICOM case, still offers insight into the intersection of themes existing in the literature on these different regions. The relevance, however, is limited, in that when dealing with CARICOM as a sub-region in isolation, the parameters of the investigation has to be shifted in order to fit the Community's model. Additionally, given CARICOM's omission from the Latin American-China literature and even its elimination from studies emerging out of institutions who are charged with issues surrounding Latin America and the Caribbean, means that the general conclusions drawn and applied to the CARICOM case need to be remedied.

The rise of China in the region is relatively new seeing that its relations with countries in the Community such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago didn't commence until the 1970s and wasn't deepened until 2005 with the launch of the First China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum. For Latin America on the other hand, this engagement increased in 2001 with the visit of President Hu Jintao which signals a 4-year gap between China's rapid and intensified engagement with one region in opposition to the other. This further illustrates that during this period, the Caribbean being tacked on to its Latin American counterpart would be grossly omitted from the equation.

Needless to say, it wasn't until recently that a genuinely isolated and influential Caribbean discourse on the topic emerged. The PRC's rise in the Caribbean has brought with it increasing debates and views as to what the material and ideational implications are for the region. The subsequent section presents a discussion on this debate.

1.2 The Rise of China in the Caribbean: A View of the Literature

As noted, before, there is a substantive gap on China's involvement in the Caribbean. Notable exceptions, however, include the works of (Look Lai, 1993, Lai, 1998, Lai, 2006, Wilson, 2004, Erikson, 2005, Morris, 2008, Erikson, 2009, Horta, 2009, Sutherland et al., 2010, Bernal, 2010, Ellis, 2011, Green, 2012, Hogarth, 2012, Johnson, 2013, Bernal, 2013b, Montoute, 2013, Doshi and Walter, 2013, Campbell and Valette, 2014, Vlcek, 2014, Bernal, 2014a, Bernal, 2015a, Bernal, 2016b). These researchers have focused solely on looking at China in the

Caribbean, in an attempt to interrogate some of the modalities of the neglect from a Caribbean's perspective, and have voiced concern over the omission of the region as such in the literature. What is impressive about these studies is the magnitude of empirical data existing therein. However, very few offer up a theoretical analysis on the topic.

The emergence of China's rise in the Caribbean is, as stated before, a fairly recent phenomenon. Broad unanimity on the topic emerges in two key areas with a lesser focus on a third. In one of the key areas of the literature, the topic is explored by mapping the Chinese diaspora in the Caribbean (Lai, 1993, 1998, 2006; Wilson, 2004). In the third and lesser strand of the literature, the focus on the topic involves looking at it from a philosophical approach (Hogarth, 2012). Researchers of the first key strand (Lai, 1993, 1998, 2006; Wilson, 2004) focused on Chinese migration to the Caribbean as workers in the 19th century, through examining both the push and pull factors that prompted the movement of thousands from China to the region. The aim of these studies was to create new insights into the process of conformity by these settlers and their reaction to their new environment. This was done through a close examination of the indentured labour system by comparing it across several countries in the Caribbean region, thus depicting the foreigner's life and work both on and off the sugar plantations, and their socio-cultural adjustments and advancement.

One of the things immediately noticeable by the reader in the studies mentioned above, is the unpredictability of the circumstances that brought about the various Asian diaspora's aggregate fates in their new environment. Look Lai (1993) for example, examining the period of 1859-1866 which signified the peak migration of Chinese workers from Hong Kong and Canton to these colonies, points to the misrepresentation and deceit that was involved in the recruitment process which often resulted in the sourcing of individuals who possessed no ability to conduct plantation labour. It was not until later in 1998 that Lai, addressing the issue by analysing the cases of Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, claimed that the migration of both Indians and Chinese to the West Indies was primarily due to the demand and appeal of Western industrialisation. This pull to the Caribbean was also supported by a push in the civil unrest in both countries (Lai, 1998). Utilising mostly qualitative as opposed to quantitative data in his previous study, the author maintains that the harsh treatment inflicted upon these Asian labourers led to instances of desertion of the plantation, rebellion and insurrection. Though failing to ascribe a number value to this argument, documents used by Lai supported his discussion surrounding the cruel and unusual punishments regarding these indentured servants

which often involved being flogged with a cane, burnt on the face and being starved by their employers. Pointing to such things as fixed five-year contracts by which these workers were bonded, stipulated physical motility, criminal sanctions for breaching contractual arrangements and an increased government role in their recruitment and redistribution throughout the British Caribbean, Lai contends that, it is this heavy reliance on unskilled Asian labour under such circumstances, for the remainder of the 19th century, that resulted in each group facing varied challenges in respective societies.

This resulted in a push back to the abuse from these workers, and so the 1890s witnessed the abandonment of agriculture by these labourers and their imminent move into trade. Using a more broad-based approach which involves the use of primary, secondary and contemporary data in his examination of Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica didn't prevent Lai's pitfall wherein Jamaica was examined to a far much lesser extent (though this can be attributed to the fact that majority of these migrants settled in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago). Wilson (2004) later looking at the British West Indies and the outflow of Chinese migrants from both the Guangdong and Fukien provinces after the mid-19th century, argued that the group coming in during this period quickly bypassed agriculture and became small merchants with most of them being shopkeepers. Drawing from sources such as Lai and others that span Chinese migration, diaspora and families, Wilson, extended his examination to Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Cuba and offered a more diverse account of the topic in this respect. This could be because the volume is a collection of eight essays by various scholars using methods such as ethnographic interviews, newspapers and colonial records. Nevertheless, both authors advise us not to perceive the Chinese diaspora in the West Indies as a homogeneous group, but as one in which multi-layer identities exist.

Courtney Hogarth's philosophical work occupies the lesser strand of the discourse where the author approaches the topic from a different angle by examining Jamaica and China's social value frameworks in an attempt to reposition the concept of hegemony, in order to build an advanced world in which there is interconnectedness, beneficial relationships and mutual understanding. Hogarth (2012) begins by positing the problems that the nature of hegemony possesses by arguing that the mere fact that this means leadership at a singular level implies that the surrendering of authority and the dominance of one over another will always be steeped in conflict. This, he claims, is translated to conflict within the inner self of man, which is inevitably embodied in race, religion, politics and economics. Hogarth looking specifically at

Jamaica as a grouping of the 'Third World' with China, maintains that, the assumption that many scholars adopt towards the development model is one that assumes that a developing state must be tending towards being 'developed'. This, the author posits, is 'in itself extreme, a polarity attracting its very antithesis, decay' (Hogarth, 2012). Questioning China's rise as a superpower while philosophising about the broken world in which we all live, Hogarth affirms that 'there must be conflict between the leader to the led, the rich and the poor, small nations and large nations, between one religion or ideology and another' (Hogarth, 2012). As a result, he concludes that Jamaica's response in the rise of a new hegemon must be a journey taken inward without looking to others for aid lest the nation makes available for purchase, that which money cannot buy.

The first and largest strand of the literature include the works of (Erikson, 2005, 2009; Morris, 2008; Horta, 2009; Sutherland et al., 2009; Bernal, 2010; Ellis, 2011; Green, 2012; Johnson, 2013; Bernal, 2013; Montoute, 2011, 2013; Rush et al., 2013; Campbell, 2014; Vlcek, 2014; Bernal, 2014; Bernal, 2015; Bernal, 2016), the studies of most of which are similar to the scholarship undertaken by those who studied China in Latin America. The question of China's motivations for engaging with countries in the Caribbean and the challenges and opportunities this might provide for the region is central across the discourse as well as within these studies. Firstly, the area of pressing concern for most of these scholars have to do with the response of the US and the implications thereof for the region, if China is viewed as a threat. Second, China's rise and challenges have so far exposed the development gaps in the region and called for guidance from most of these academics on how to tackle underdevelopment and non-competitiveness. Third, these scholars intersect on the consensus that Caribbean nations could potentially learn from and emulate the Chinese model of development but at the same time, cautions them to take a more measured and strategic approach when dealing with China. This relationship, which is quite different from the relationship the PRC has with Latin America, has always been the starting point for these scholars.

Many of these researchers affirm that China's contact with the region outside Cuba was almost non-existent, except for early Chinese migrants that made their way to the Caribbean during the early through to the mid-19th century. The intensification only beginning in 2005, placed the Caribbean as a tiny actor in the universe of China's global policy. Even then, this increased interaction with these Caribbean nations was condensed in a small number of countries such as Jamaica, Suriname, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana which ties in

with the PRC's own 'resource seeking' drive (Horta, 2009). There is little disagreement that the reasons for China's engagement with these Caribbean nations include the 'Taiwan factor', its superpower assertion, its drive for influence in the international arena and its search for raw materials and markets (Morris, 2008, Horta, 2009, Bernal, 2010, Montoute, 2013). Morris (2008) maintains that despite the Caribbean having a much smaller natural resource base in comparison to its Latin American counterpart, still, economics remains for the PRC one of its top motivation. Building on this, Montoute, (2013) contends that China's engagement with the Caribbean involves a bid for the PRC to attain food security and energy to fuel its economy. Bernal, (2010) in agreement points to the fact that Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have vast amount of minerals ranging from timbre, bauxite and gas. Yet, Bernal also points to the political motivations that are driving China's engagement with these Caribbean islands. He maintains that China's involvement with the Caribbean is one that mirrors 'an expression of [both] political and economic motivations, [which] is reflected in its increased development assistance, technical assistance, the continued expansion of trade, emerging foreign investment and involvement in construction projects' (Bernal, 2014). Making mention of the 'One China Policy' that is a component in this political motivation, Montoute (2013), noted that China's political engagement with these nations is to ensure that the diplomatic isolation of Taiwan is achieved. Pointing to this trend the author states that, 'both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan continue to battle in the Caribbean using aid and grants as weapons as they vie for supremacy' (Montoute, 2013). Nevertheless, others caution that these islands are being used by the PRC and point to the use of some of these islands as tax havens or a pathway for the PRC to sidestep its tax obligations (Sutherland et al., 2010, Vlcek, 2014).

While that may be the case, others are enthusiastic about China's engagement with these Caribbean nations. Richard Bernal's view is more consistent with this position. He states that China's emergence in the region can be seen as a platform for development where investment opportunities for areas such as infrastructure, forestry, real estate, construction and the health-care sectors are plentiful (Bernal, 2016a). Performing an extensive FDI analysis, he perceives that 'Caribbean countries could be attractive as production platforms for exports to the United States, Canada, and the European Union' for the PRC (Bernal, 2016b). Yet, some researchers still maintain that China's investments are not the 'saving grace' it is played up to be. The conditionalities tied to Chinese investments in these nations is enough to cause concern across the region, considering some serious effects it can have on local industries. As Montoute (2013) points out, 'the use of Chinese labour, design, and technology associated with Chinese aid and

investment [makes] engagement with them less than conditionalities free'. While others are concerned with China's FDIs regarding these islands, some are uneasy about the engagement and insists that the PRC is simply just using these Caribbean nations as a pathway to secure its policy gains. Vlcek (2014) maintains that what we should concern ourselves with is not questions surrounding FDI or even the impact of FDI on economic development but instead capital flows into these countries existing outside of FDI, which would suggest that these nations are being utilised as offshore financial centres (OFC). Vlcek asserts that, 'the use of [international business companies] IBCs registered in the Caribbean by firms and individual investors residing in [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] OECD states to convey investment capital to China serves to minimise tax obligations in their home jurisdiction, as the ultimate 'home' economy for the FDI' (Vlcek, 2014).

Echoing a similar sentiment Sutherland et al. (2010) contends that, not only is China using these nations as tax havens, but they are also 'used to augment the existing capital stock of China's private firms'. However, the tentacles of China not only pull the Caribbean's strings through the use of these private firms. Instead, the recent wave of Chinese immigrants in the region also 'constitute an accessible, situated, flesh-and-blood representation and dimension of the Chinese presence in the Caribbean' (Green, 2012). There is then no question 'that the simultaneous flows of Chinese developmental capital and aspiring Chinese merchants are mutually connected to the globalisation of China and its multifaceted "outbound" trajectory' Green (2012). Still, others maintain that the use of the Caribbean cannot always be thrown off entirely on China's shoulders. Morris (2008) argues that these Caribbean nations are actually selling their sovereignty to China in a bid to secure their chance at development. She avows that alignment with China is a hope for these countries, that as China rises, they will in turn benefit in some respect. In essence 'they are merely using some of their sovereign rights for economic gain' (Morris, 2008). Doshi and Walter (2013) echoing a similar sentiment, maintains that, these Caribbean nations are experiencing severe trade deficits and decades of economic stagnation and with US aid now declining to half its amount since the 1980s, these nations are seeking to host both China's interest and its big projects. Nevertheless, despite this constant back and forth in the discourse about who is being used, the main concern has always hinged on Caribbean nations' geostrategic location, as a pathway for China to undermine the United States in the region. The question has always been, what exactly is China doing in the Caribbean and CARICOM?

1.2.1 The Issue of Hegemony: The US as a Hegemonic Overlord in the Caribbean

The core issue for a methodology that can confidently estimate how much power is required to create hegemony remains unresolved. Concerning Western imperialism, which led to the development of 'a world space', Davies and Jardine offer three orderings of the current world framework. First, Western imperialism changed all area spaces into a possibly pliant open space for value generation. Second, appropriated space must be arranged and overseen to encourage the dissemination of products. Third, Davies and Jardine suggest that recorded space be reconsidered and experienced as a national group of equivalent and faithful residents (Davies and Jardine, 2003). The role that the Caribbean and its sub-region play in the legislative issues of the US regarding its hegemonic influence is distinctive. The US governments have routinely interceded in the legislative issues of Caribbean nations to guarantee the results that they wanted much earlier than the time of the US's worldwide authority (after the end of the Second World War) (Davies and Jardine, 2003). The Cold War was thus seen as a scene within a long history of US-Caribbean relations. The takeaway here is that the US has enthusiastically controlled the Caribbean for its own political, strategic and financial purposes as far back as the Monroe Doctrine. The Monroe Doctrine, which was issued almost two centuries ago, made it clear that the US aimed to sustain its hegemony in the Caribbean. The methods the US has used to do so have changed over time to suit the Caribbean's local political conditions and objectives. From military mediation to more unobtrusive forms, the Caribbean Basin Initiative stands out amongst the latest articulation of US's hegemony: It was an ostensible financial framework intended to address political worries within the US administration during the Cold War, and cannot be overlooked (Bakan et al., 1993). The expressed purpose of the Caribbean Basin Initiative was to support the economies of the Caribbean and Central American nations.

The Reagan administration, which was based on the terms of the Caribbean Basin Initiative, publicly appealed to the welfare of the general population of these nations and stated its preparedness to advance these nations' welfare with a more standard military guide (Bakan et al., 1993). The political character of the Caribbean Basin Initiative was, however, self-evident: it came in the wake of the Nicaraguan and Grenadian unrests, as well as the developing unease towards the US's hegemony throughout the Caribbean. Since then, the US has solidified its strength in the Caribbean. Anthony Payne argues that the US saw itself as a hegemonic force and related this validity in some measure to its ability to maintain and exhibit control over its hemispheric community. Furthermore, from that community, the Caribbean and CARICOM

emerged as the US's immediate 'backyard' (Payne, 1994b). As Sutton contends, the area's importance to the US after 1945 was 'political as confirmation of American force' (Sutton, 1988). The Caribbean and CARICOM mattered, Sutton writes, 'because of what it represents to the people of the US and the outside world... a belief that if the US cannot deal effectively with events in its sphere of influence, it will not deal effectively with events elsewhere' (Sutton, 1988). Jorge Rodriguez, however, posits a different view by pointing out that perhaps the best measure of whether the US's hegemony in the Caribbean Basin has been re-established is its failure to prevent the 'Fidelisation'¹⁵ of Cuba and to squash the Nicaraguan uprising (Beruff et al., 1991). Rodriguez's argument is that the disintegration of the US's dominion in the Caribbean Basin began in 1959 with the triumph of the Cuban revolution, and that the success and survival of another well-known insurgency in Nicaragua a quarter-century later is an indication that American hegemony in the region continues to decline (Beruff et al., 1991). In essence, for whatever length of time these two progressive governments exist and intervene in territorial legislative issues, the US's hegemony will remain challenged.

As stated before, most of the scholars on the topic have always maintained that China's recent engagement with these Caribbean nations mainly involves the 'Taiwan factor', its superpower assertion, its search for raw materials and markets and its drive for influence in the international arena. It is however the latter which has drawn the attention of many of these scholars, as China as a threat to the US would bring several challenges with it to the region. Though many of these researchers fail to identify what precisely these challenges would entail, they have sought to situate whether China intends to undermine the hegemon in its own backyard.

1.2.2 The US Hegemonic Decline and China's Contest in the Caribbean

Numerous liberal political economists approach the decline of the US's hegemonic framework through the hegemonic stability theory. The theory contends that success and stability inside the international industrialist framework are identified with elements of the hegemonic initiative. A steady framework requires a hegemon to ingest exports and provide a currency for international exchanges. On theories of hegemony, Anthony Payne observes that 'the idea has created more disarray than clarity', particularly when connected to the specific issue of the US's authority and its claimed decline (Payne, 1994b). He argues that no agreement exists over whether the US's hegemony has declined and that the hegemony's effects on the world

¹⁵ A reference to the Cuban revolution and the rise of Fidel Castro in the nation.

order and the international economy are not apparent. Payne reasons that the disagreements are to some extent derived from contradictions over how proof is assessed: They reflect contrasts on evaluation over what is implied by hegemony in any case. Lavina Lee agrees by pointing out that heated discussions in the political literature over the truth or fiction of the US's hegemonic decline were unequivocally put to rest with the end of the Cold War and the consistent development of the US's control over the following decade (Lee, 2010). She argues, however, that what began a third influx of interest in looking at the US's hegemony, especially the points of confinement or scarcity in that topic, was the increasingly unilateralist approach taken in foreign policy. Lee presumes that this unilateralism has turned consideration towards the more extensive ramifications of the development of a hegemonic state in the framework of the international order (Lee, 2010). Mark Davis quoted in (Barrett, 1997) rather contests both Payne's and Lee's arguments and claims that 'the US is in decline by conventional measures'. He marks that decline by highlighting the movements in US's economy towards the Pacific, towards an administration of commercial enterprises, and away from 'Fordist', large-scale manufacturing designs. Such changes bring about the relative shrinkage of domestically created US share of the world industrial productions and trade deficits.

John Dumbrell also quoted in (Barrett, 1997) contends that it is not clear whether monetary decay is more noteworthy than progressive manufacturing and consumption. The US's hegemony does not include the authority of one principal state, but it is a particular type of equalisation between the capitalist state framework and the world economy. In Davis's perspective, the US's hegemonic decline in this way speaks to the rebuilding of the centre of world capitalism (Barrett, 1997). China's hegemonic challenge on the US has many times been likened to that of the Cold War period. However, Julia Strauss contended that the Cold War was not so cold in the western region (Strauss and Armony, 2012). According to Gaddis (2006), 'many people saw the Cold War as a contest between good and evil, even if historians have rarely done so'. However, China's encroachment on US hegemony is not as contentious as that of the Cold War. As Gonzalo Paz posited, 'China is much more flexible than the USSR in this regard; though she is operating in the backyard of the US, she treads lightly, raising eyebrows but at the same time not endangering her relationship with the US' (Paz, 2012). Pushing her diplomatic tug-of-war with Taiwan to the fore, China, according to Sheng Ding, is combining her economic clout with soft power (Ding, 1955). Strauss points to the fact that this is evident in the way China is playing down the term 'rise' to persuade the US of its good intentions in CARICOM (Strauss and Armony, 2012).

Courtney Hogarth, whose work is philosophic in its perception, does not see the extension of China's range of authority in the Caribbean, as an essential part of a hegemonic plan. According to Hogarth, individuals are interconnected with time and humanity, and the attempt to tear away from that interconnectedness has resulted in the problem of hegemony manifesting itself in thoughts, politics etc. For this reason, this dissertation argues that it is not the philosophy of hegemony that is cause for concern but the practicality and presence of it. Any 'China-threat' is a matter of perspective, and if the US were to see it as such, then this would undoubtedly justify its behaviour. If according to Hogarth, China's threat to the US's hegemony in the Caribbean proves unseemly in the philosophical sense, then this dissertation asks, what about in the potential/capable sense? Evidence points to the fact that China's hegemonic potential is certainly multifaceted as it ranges from political, economic and military. Certainly, in the realisation of this potential, China's presence and activities in US's 'backyard' could prove to be worrisome. As Robbie Fergusson pointed out, 'the key element in the discussion of China as a threat is potential' (Fergusson, 2012). He further concluded that the concern is a matter of capability rather than intention (Fergusson, 2012). The dissertation asks, are these CARICOM nations concerned that a challenge to the US's hegemony by China could cause a severe backlash or tensions in the region? Not only that, but if China were to replace US's hegemony in the region, just what kind of China would this be, and would these nations accept its new position?

1.3 Prospective Contribution to the Discourse

The modern literature and above discussions on the topic have provided engaging and essential strides in situating the Caribbean in the literature. Nonetheless, readers may wonder why I have chosen to take the topic from such a broad level to a more microscopic one given the limited geographic range of CARICOM. There are several reasons for this decision. First, those writing on Latin America and the Caribbean region write exclusively from the point of view of Latin American countries with at times, blatant omissions of the Caribbean. Consequently, these studies cannot be regarded as having established a balanced assessment of what a Latin American *and* Caribbean-China relationship is, seeing that only a singular side is given much detail and insight. As a result, even in areas where there is mention of a Caribbean nation/s (usually Cuba), in my mind, the assessment is not only static but also restrictive. Second, for those who have explicitly looked at the Caribbean as an isolated region, the Caribbean is viewed as a singular unit. While it is easy to identify the countries that make up Latin America,

there are serious contentions as to the landmasses that fall into the Caribbean region. Benn and Hall (2000) put it best when they maintain that ‘the term “Caribbean” is used in many ways with many different meanings’. Consequently, in most of these studies, there exists no real definition as to the areas that the Caribbean encompasses and thus the reader is left unaware as to the expansiveness or restrictiveness of the term. My investigation diverts from this error by looking specifically at CARICOM nations which is more definitive and restrictive. This brings me directly to my third point which is, CARICOM as a subset is not separated in most of these analyses having to do with the Caribbean, and so it would appear that the regional bloc possesses homogenous characteristics in relation to its wider Caribbean counterpart. This is not the case. It should be noted that not all Caribbean nations are part of the regional bloc, which specifically includes 15 active members and 5 other associate-member nations. Additionally, CARICOM possesses a significant amount of the former British colonies until its later addition of Suriname which is Dutch in 1995 and Haiti which is French in 2002. As it stands today, a compelling amount of the Community is still made up of mainly the English-speaking section of the Caribbean. As a result, the interchangeable use of the term Caribbean and CARICOM in one’s analyses can be deemed erroneous and inaccurate.

Furthermore, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica are seen as the drivers behind the regional bloc. It is vital to consider not only China’s motives for engaging with them as Richard Bernal did in his study *‘The dragon in the Caribbean: China-CARICOM economic relations’*, but what their perceptions are regarding China’s engagement. That information is also supplied in this investigation. Fourth, the implications for Caribbean nations cannot be situated as universal for all nations existing in the broader regional and sub-regional space as it was made out to be in Annita Montoute’s *‘Caribbean-China Economic Relations: What are the implications?’*. The implication for each nation will be different and thus conflating them into a singular unit existing in the wider region, does not present an accurate picture. A case by case study which remains omitted in a vast majority of research on this topic, is needed to present a more accurate picture of the nature of these challenges existing in these societies.

My study provides two separate case studies so as to highlight the differences surrounding this issue on a case by case basis. Fourth, the majority of the concern surrounds China’s motives and whether there is a contest to US’s hegemony in the region. Essentially, the perspective though Caribbean in nature is not entirely Caribbean in voice. This remains my most pressing reservation as the relationship between the Caribbean and China is often examined through the

use of trade documents and other secondary sources, as opposed to conducting interviews with elites in these Caribbean countries to provide a more detailed insight into the perspective of the Caribbean. As much as the extent of the engagement and the implications on domestic sectors can be gleaned from several documents, it is not until perspectives of elites in these sectors are captured, that a more authentic view surrounding the subject can be ascertained. As David Jessop maintains, ‘there has been little public discussion about the ways in which some nations beyond the region may be coming to view the strategic importance of the Caribbean, its possible implications for national sovereignty, or how this might relate to existing functional relationships such as the Caribbean-US Security Cooperation Dialogue’ (Caribbean Council, 2015).¹⁶ Through the systematic collection of data through the interview process with both governmental and non-governmental elites, my investigation has sought to fill this gap by capturing their perspectives on Beijing’s use of the geostrategic position of their nations and the likely impact it will have on their relationship with traditional partners such as the US and the EU.

Additionally, theoretical discussions surrounding China’s emergence and influence on nations in the sub-region is left sparsely examined, and as a result, Caribbean scholars are still defied by the theoretical underpinnings surrounding economic and development change when it comes to China. I have added to this inadequacy by situating the subject in a theoretical framework which examines the topic through a holistic constructivist approach to foreign policy analysis. Furthermore, the majority of the debate existing in the literature spans the disciplines of economics, political science and policy studies. My dissertation proposes the field of developmental studies, elite studies, sociology, and international relations. In this manner, my argument attempts to move the discussion past its conventional linchpin that is often steeped in a stringent policy-oriented convocation.

Finally, there are no studies of which I am aware, that looks at the specific chronological timeline as I have sought to tether the dissertation to. There are a few studies that have mentioned the 3rd China-Caribbean Trade Economic Forum (Montoute, 2013; Bernal, 2014; Campbell, 2014) mostly in an effort to provide a background for the participation of Caribbean leaders who were present for the first time in such large numbers to hear about the policies

¹⁶ See: Jessop, D., 2015. A location of strategic importance. The Caribbean Council. Available at: <https://www.caribbean-council.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Jan4-A-location-of-strategic-importance.pdf>. (Accessed, April 1, 2017)

concerning China's plan for the region. However, none have sought to do an extensive analysis of the patterns and trends surrounding China's engagement in these nations from that time to 2016 that witnessed two significant events, the implementation of the Trump administration and the announcement of Brexit. There is certainly none that I am also aware of, that utilises the cases of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in this regard nor their elites' perspectives relating to the matter. This is necessary to note because, despite the vigour of the literature discussed in this section, it evidently remains incomplete and severely lacking in several key areas.

The objective of the dissertation is to provide a counter-narrative to the dominant research on the topic, which is taken from the Chinese or the US's perspective, and to fill the gap left by those writing on Latin America and the Caribbean as one bloc. Building on the findings of those who isolated the Caribbean, the dissertation takes a step further by separating its subset and not only uses trade documents and other secondary sources, as is typical in these studies in their application to the China-Caribbean relationship; but also utilises the perspectives of elites from two CARICOM cases to provide a more authentic perspective. Focusing on these two nations' elites' perspective through a theoretical framework will add a valuable dimension to the study of interactions between China and CARICOM nations.

The goal of the research is to understand from these two nations' elites, the successes, failures and challenges existing in the ongoing ties between China and themselves and in extension, the sub-region. By considering these CARICOM nations' elites' perspective, the research can act as a guide for developing countries existing outside Latin America and the Caribbean context, in understanding the challenges and opportunities that come from a partnership with China. Additionally, it can act as an aid to Chinese officials in understanding the needs of developing countries to correctly allocate foreign direct investments, loans and credits to these countries' developmental ventures. As (JG2) states, 'if we start talking, China must also begin to understand us'.¹⁷ This lack of mutual understanding has left policymakers in developing nations like those in CARICOM, still learning to operate in two economic environments, which are very different from each other. This project not only intends to be an addition to discussions surrounding the topic, but also a starting point towards a more 'win-win' direction for these nations and the PRC. As Julie Klinger aptly stated, 'the greatest obstacle to smooth relations between China and the Caribbean lies in persistent mutual misunderstandings. Although

¹⁷ Quote taken from interview data. See *Appendix D* for a list of respondents and how they are analysed.

university students on both sides of the Pacific are studying each other's languages, cultures, and economies, a generational lag in expertise continues to complicate political and economic relations. The costs, in the meantime, may include excessive risk-taking, missed opportunities, an oversimplification. In the face of improving research and growing empirical evidence, relying on conventional wisdom is increasingly untenable. Indeed, this is true not just for China-Caribbean relations but also for the US and Europe as they grapple with this 21st-century world order' (Klinger, 2013).¹⁸

1.4 Conclusion

China's historical involvement in the Caribbean has often been somewhat influenced by Cuba. In today's context, however, the circumstance is altogether different, as all Caribbean nations, including those that have not formally recognised China, have broadened their political and financial contacts with the emerging East-Asian giant. China's position in Asia, the US and Europe as well as its emerging presence in Latin America and Africa has been extensively analysed. The writing of the Caribbean as a homogenous counterpart to Latin America for years is what prompted a host of Caribbean scholars, media and policy personnel to question the absence of the region from the literature. Though the media and academic debates around China's emergence in the Caribbean has become vibrant, there remains a severe lack in key areas of the literature. Although scholars can agree that there are challenges and opportunities presented to the region on account of the rise of the PRC, they are yet to move away from an *ad hoc* policy approach to a more theoretical discussion surrounding the underpinnings of this interaction. Additionally, there is a failure to present the perspectives of CARICOM nations' elites on their countries' interaction with China and how they perceive these opportunities and challenges presented to them in their partnership with China.

This chapter used the 'funnel-down approach' which highlights the broader area of the topic that deals mostly with Latin American nations through the analyses that are usually presented as an extension of the Caribbean region. Despite the important strides that scholars writing on Latin America and the Caribbean has made in offering a wealthier insight into the PRC's interaction with mostly LAC nations, the Caribbean remains mostly un/undermentioned in these studies. For those who have sought to isolate the region, their important contribution in

¹⁸ See: Klinger, J., 2013. China and Latin America: Problems or Possibilities. Published in the Berkley Review of Latin American Studies. Available at: <https://clas.berkeley.edu/research/china-and-latin-america-problems-or-possibilities>. (Accessed June 11, 2016).

collectively trying to position the Caribbean in the literature bears several weaknesses in key areas. By undertaking empirical analysis of the perspectives of governmental and non-governmental elites from the CARICOM nations of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, and by also minimising the grandeur use of policy and trade documents to position the topic, my own study presents as a counter-narrative to the dominant literature which looks at LAC and the Caribbean as a single bloc. Additionally, it contributes to the present Caribbean discourse, but more so seeks to add to and fill essential areas of the less noticeable strand in the literature which is the Caribbean Community. It also situates the topic within a theoretical framework that spans multiple disciplines to move the discussion from its usual stringent policy-oriented convocation.

Chapter Two: Research Design and Methodology

To address the topic presented, the research employs qualitative techniques and design used to formulate the perspective of the two nations existing in the Caribbean Community as it relates to China's rise in the region. Semi-structured interviews with both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites from the public and private sector was also undertaken. The subsequent chapter clarifies the reasons for the methodology used. It starts by posing the overarching research question and enumerates how it advanced as the project progressed. Additionally, it explains key concepts, before providing detailed analysis on issues of ontology and epistemology that emerged amid the investigation. The chapter also clarifies the case selection, how data sources and findings were gathered, examined and analysed, as well as how the decisions made fit in the literature on methodologies. This chapter ends with a brief overview of issues surrounding ethics.

2.1 Research Objectives and Questions

In response to the recognised need for the perspectives of CARICOM nations' elites on China and contrary to previous frameworks and theoretical approaches, my dissertation explores, from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' perspective—the implications of China's emergence on the sub-region's intra-regional political and economic relations between 2011 and 2016, along with its impact on CARICOM countries' relations with traditional partners such as the US and the EU. In doing so, my research aims to fill the gap left by those writing about Latin America and the Caribbean as one bloc and offers a counter-narrative to the dominant research on the topic, which is taken from the perspective of Washington or Beijing.

An emphasis on CARICOM nations perspective would add a valuable dimension to the study on interactions between China and islands in the Community. The objective of the research is to understand the perspectives of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites regarding the successes, failures and challenges in their ongoing ties with China.

The proposed research questions came out of a broader curiosity regarding the '*Implications of China's foreign policy on the Caribbean Basin*'. As a result, the following questions emerged:

- 1) What are the impacts, whether direct or indirect, of China's foreign policy on the Caribbean region?

- 2) What are the motives for China's aggressive expansion in the Caribbean?
- 3) What are the factors that account for Caribbean nations forming economic and political relations with China?
- 4) What are the motives behind China's insistence on diplomatically isolating Taiwan in the Caribbean?
- 5) Since the US has long regarded the Caribbean as its 'third border', is China trying to render the US irrelevant in the region?

For the purpose of this project, however, the broader questions were narrowed down to fit the specificities of CARICOM. As a result, the study now asks the following overarching question:

From Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' perspective—what are the implications of China's emergence on the sub-region's intra-regional political and economic relations between 2011 and 2016, along with its impact on CARICOM countries' relation with traditional partners such as the US and the EU?

The overarching question, however, does find itself extending to other sub-questions that will be answered by the research. These are as follows:

- For these two nations, is their relationship with China, born out of a need or necessity?
- How does Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago differentiate the current interchanges between China and CARICOM nations from their previous unequal centre-periphery relationships?
- From these two countries points of view, what challenges or opportunities does China's fight to diplomatically isolate Taiwan provide for them and by extent other CARICOM nations?
- Does either Jamaica or Trinidad and Tobago view China as a counterweight to US's 'backyard' imperialism?
- If China were to successfully eliminate US's hegemonic rule in the region, would Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago be willing to accept China as the new hegemonic overlord?
- From these two nations' perspective, what implications does China's emergence pose for the region's system of intra-regional political and economic relations?
- How do these two countries view their relationship with China as having an impact on their relations with traditional partners like the US and Europe?
- For Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago is China in the Caribbean Community a case of

‘neo-colonialism by invitation’ as Cheru and Obi (2011) described in the case of Africa?

Although emphasis will remain on the key question, responses to it have several ramifications related to facts and hypotheses with a few investigated in this project and others surrendered to the reviewers to decipher as they see fit, whether the thematic and geographical focuses here are systematically generalisable.

2.2 Theoretical Framework and Approaches

The research utilises a holistic constructivist approach towards foreign policy analysis (FPA) while employing the analytical political theory as a methodological framework. The difficulty with FPA however, is that it is essentially a ‘free-floating enterprise’ (Houghton, 2007). This means that when it comes to the main theories of international relations (IR), FPA finds itself standing in isolation. FPA as a result, is a theory without a home. In the wider discourse of international relations, FPA is usually linked to liberalism, as indicated in the works of (Viotti et al., 2012). Viotti and Kauppi (1999) were among the first to combine foreign policy analysis with the interdependence theory. At other times FPA was rather uneasily placed in the realism school of thought. ‘Treated as a more realistic form of realism’ (Houghton, 2007), FPA was utilised as a corrective measure to the rational actor assumption existing in the realist model. The problem, however, was that FPA in this regard became an anomaly that undermined the economic assumptions of the ‘rational actor’ existing in realism. The discrepancy was that such economic assumptions could not be associated with FPA’s more empirically psychological observations. As a result, it later became clear to IR scholars that not only was there ‘no necessary connection’ between realism and FPA (White, 1999) but also that in both its classical and structural form it runs against the core of realism. That is why it quickly became apparent to me, that the relationship between FPA and the realist and liberal paradigm would be a difficult one. As a result, I could use neither the realist nor liberalist approach as the basis of the thesis if the intentions of my research were to be fully realised. Based on this discovery, I decided instead to employ a holistic constructivist approach to FPA, that is situated in and informed by the analytical political theory as a methodological framework. However, in some areas of the thesis, the constructivist approach is also complemented by the core assumptions of realism.

2.2.1 Concepts of Realism as Complementary Elements to the Constructivist Approach

Constructivism has always been portrayed in the IR literature as an approbate to the prevailing discourse of realism. However, Barkin (2003) reminds us that the core principles of realism can provide a complementary basis for the constructivist approach. Referring to this as ‘realist constructivism’ Barkin (2003) contends that acting as secondary elements to the constructivist theory, realist constructivism ‘study the relationship between normative structures, the carriers of political morality, and uses of powers’ (Barkin, 2003). While there are exceptions to the rules, the realist theory generally focuses on the impact of material forces and the reality of power politics (Kaminski, 2019). Constructivism on the other hand, perceive ideal forces and social construction as pivotal to the development of international foreign policy (Jaafar, 2018). The two, however, converge on the basis of national interest and institutional construction. This means identities are exchanged and created between actors which result in the emergence of various ‘ideational factors’ that continuously mould and reshape these identities (Kaminski, 2019). For the constructivists, ‘not only are [the] identities and interests of actors socially constructed, but they also must share the stage with a whole host of ideational factors that emanate from the human capacity’ (Ruggie, 1998). Ideational indicators therefore involve, but are not limited to, identities, dangers, fears, general expectations as well as other fundamentals of perceived truth (Kaminski, 2019). Similarly, the issue of human nature, which has always been relevant to the realist theory and ultimately linked to identities, serves as a junction for both realism and constructivism. Bennett (2013) puts it best when he contends that ‘realism is open to theories on the kind of mechanisms that constructivists emphasise, including theories of persuasion, intersubjective meanings, discursive communication, learning, framing, naming and shaming, legitimacy, and norms of appropriateness’ (Bennett, 2013). Within the wider international framework, the activities of these components inevitably affect both state and non-state actors. These intersections between the theory and the approach will become evident from time to time as the reader progresses throughout the thesis.

2.2.2 Engaging with the Constructivist Approach

Finding its footing in contesting the central premises of the classical frameworks of liberalism, realism and Marxism, constructivism became the approach that insisted that social reality is the product of interpretations. Emerging in the works of proponents such as (Ashley, 1984,

Nicholas, 1989, Finnemore, 1996, Blyth, 1997, Wendt, 1999), constructivism emphasises that agency is responsible 'for both structural continuities and processes of change' (Klotz and Lynch, 2014). Agency is influenced by the societal, historical and structural context. From the constructivist perspective, neither structure nor agency holds any prominence over each other. Instead, they are both mutually constituted and dependent upon one another. As a result, the constructivist agenda rejects the rational choice theory which omits the attributes of a state's individuality and interest. Challenging the realist assertion that very little can be done as a way of altering the world, constructivism accounts for monumental shifts in the international system by providing alternate interpretations of its implication on foreign policy. The main argument for the constructivist is that the pillars of international politics are social as opposed to material, and that these components are the stimulus responsible for the articulation of both the identity and interest of actors in the global system.

Constructivism and neorealism both rest on the premise that interests are the by-products of choices. However, neorealism extends on the assumption that states share identical 'a priori interest'. Such a standardised assumption is only possible if social practices resulting from interests made from both actors and structures are denied (Keohane, 1988). Since interests are derived from identity formulation, that is, a state adopting an identity of 'great power'; this would imply that its interests are different from those who identify as let's say, a 'CARICOM nation member'. This means that a state interacts with another country based on the identity it ascribes them while also utilising daily social practices to replicate its own identity. Identity is the construct that tells a state who they are, while simultaneously highlighting their intentions, interests or desires. These translate into choices or actions that may emerge depending on the context and particular type of actor. When identities become permanent, then the way in which a state conducts itself creates a pattern of predictability (Keohane, 1988). Similarly, in chapters 5 and 6 of my research, the construct of vulnerability as a form of 'identity' by Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago is examined in order to highlight the choices/reasons made to align with China by each country case. A global system with actors that have no basis of identity would pose uncertainty, chaos and a system far more perverse than anarchy. Tajfel (1981) accurately points out that identity performs three principal functions: it tells the story of you to you, you to others and others to you (Tajfel, 1981). In the case of neorealism, self-interest means that the identification of 'self' is already known. This is to say that the state, in relation to time and space has a singular and infinite definition. Constructivism, however, opposes this on the basis

that the identity of a state or its definition of ‘self’ are variables that are influenced by its polity, societal, cultural and historical context (Hopf, 1998).

The idea of ‘power’ can also be found in the theoretical aspect of constructivism. The difference is that it is conceptualised in a much different way as opposed to neorealism. While neorealism and neoliberalism both propagate that power is materialistic, such as military power, economic prowess, or both, they are seen primarily as the main influencer and authority in international politics (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993). Constructivism insists that both material and excursive power are fundamental to the comprehension of FPA. This means constructivists disagree on the basis that the effects of power are constituted primarily by material forces as claimed by the realists. Neither pessimistic nor optimistic, constructivism offers different interpretations of such concepts as anarchy, power balance, state identity, interests and the prospects of change (Hopf, 1998). In creating a renaissance in historical studies in relation to international relations and world politics, constructivism also takes into account the peculiarities of culture, identity and interests and argues that if concepts, norms and practises are important and vary from context to context; then the historical record is as equally important and needs to be taken into account (Burchill et al., 2013). This is significant to my investigation as my main argument is that Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago’s historical record strongly influences how they pursue their approach to foreign policy in relation to powerful nations such as China. I argue that the interests of CARICOM nations are also influenced not only by how other countries view them, but also by how they view themselves.

While it would be accurate to say that constructivism as laid out here in its broader sense, holds considerable potential to be used as a framework to FPA, the holistic strand of constructivism offers a more clarified analysis to FPA in the context of my research.

2.2.3 A closer look at Holistic Constructivism

An approach to identity at both systemic and domestic level, holistic constructivism indicates how states will act against each other in their response to international pressures. The holistic constructivist approach challenges the division between the intrinsic and local frameworks and creates a platform that merges both the identity and interest of the state (Nia, 2011). Koslowski and Kratochwil (1995), two leading scholars in the strand of holistic constructivism, consider how domestic and international structures are simply elements of a single social and political order. Offering a unified perspective on the matter, these two holistic constructivists, ‘focus on

how domestic and international social phenomenon interact to shape the state's behaviour in international relations' (Koslowski et al., 1995). According to this approach, any change that occurs at the domestic level will ultimately affect the identity at the systemic level. As per this account, the holistic constructivism mechanism bridges the gap between policies, international systems, domestic actors and institutions. In turn, this has created two complementary analysis of how changes can occur in the global order. One accounting for the grand change in the global system and the other interprets the changes in the modern international system. Additionally, holistic constructivism is also able to identify a state's individuality, its varied interests, and how this has shaped their foreign policy practices (Behraves, 2011). It is the only strand that can explain both the ideational and normative structures present in the international system as well as the social identities they encompass (Burchill et al., 2013).

On this ground, I concluded that as it relates to my project's overarching question, the holistic constructivist approach stood as the most feasible strand applicable to my investigation. Firstly, the approach was able to offer an alternative view as to how elites in the two country cases: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, perceives China's engagement with their nation and how they, in turn, view their nation's responses to the PRC. The holistic constructivist approach was able to position the perspectives of these elites and their nations' foreign policy behaviour towards China, into the developmental behaviour of these countries' geopolitics and post-colonial period. Considering the fact that a state's corporate and social way of life as a unified exhibitor shows that both the domestic and systemic levels can influence the interest, behaviour and perspective of a state (Reus-Smit, 2013); meant that the holistic constructivist approach can adequately explain how the identity of these two nations was formed, both nationally and internationally. Additionally, it was the only strand of the approach that could offer an insight into the continuous process of how these two countries' domestic and social identities interact with each other, to attain or duplicate how any new definition of 'self' and 'other' is viewed.

On this basis, chapters 5 and 6 were able to provide an analysis of the concept of vulnerability and vulnerability as a construct of the identity of these two nations, which, in turn, led to their reasons for alignment with China, even in instances which were not advantageous to them. Additionally, on this basis, how China as 'other' is viewed by elites in these two nations outside their traditional partners (US and Europe), provided space for various opinions on China. It is for this same reason that majority of the participants existing in the two case studies agree on the consensus that China will a) never be able to replace their connections with the US and b)

never be accepted as the new hegemonic overlord. Secondly, holistic constructivism gives the project room for arguments in this dissertation to reflect on how China's foreign policies ties in with their domestic policies and how elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago believe their respective nations fit into that. A prime example of this is chapter 8 which undertakes the examination of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and what it means for CARICOM nations such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

2.3 Defining a key concept: 'Perspective'

The term 'perspective' in the IR discourse is an elusive concept. There is no agreed definition of what the concept denotes when dealing with international relations or international politics. At its most fundamental, the idea of perspective in international relations is based on a chain of interpretations that is reflected in how different choices are made (Van Asselt, 2000). In simpler terms, perspective is the representation of objects or events as they are presented, which is in direct agreement to their correct forms and dimension (Hayter, 1845). Although there is no clear definition of the concept in the FPA discourse, these definitions contribute to such discussions. Puka (1994), emphasises that one's perspective is based on moral judgements which translate to ethical actions. The evolution of interpretation and reasoning forms the guidelines for effective choices and actions (Puka, 1994). For Asselt (2000), perspective is viewed as a systematic and rational description of a 'perceptual screen' that a person or group of people uses to decipher and understand the financial, social, political and cultural dimension of their world around them, which in turn guides their actions (Van Asselt, 2000). This means that perspective is made up of two functional elements: how people view the world and the subsequent actions they undertake as a result. In the context of my investigation, participants inclusive of policymakers from both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago perceives China as a significant power to be reckoned with but fits this perception into a broader set of explanations, which lends reason to their foreign policy actions or inactions. Perspective by extension, is a re-evaluation of the identity or relationship that exists between participants or the members in a societal space (Okulska and Cap, 2010). Given that the term is central to the research question a clear and working definition had to be reached.

The term 'perspective' is crucial here for my research, because I made no attempt to adhere to a strict economic or political world model to provide an analysis of either trends or cycles that other researchers (Devlin et al., 2006, Lederman et al., 2007, Jenkins et al., 2008, Lai and Tan,

2010, Kuwayama and Rosales, 2012, Chen and Pérez Ludeña, 2014), over the decade have perceived to be the case of both the Caribbean and Latin American region. Instead, my project focuses on how elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago perceives the external emergence, influences and desired control of the sub-region by China. To refrain from engaging in debates as to what a 'viable' perspective is, Metzger's (2007) definition of 'perspective' was employed. It is this definition that has guided my understanding of the concept of 'perspective' throughout this investigation. According to Metzger, it is a concept that is located in the broader matrix of interacting perceptions, past experiences or practices, that may translate into intentions, visions and actions (Metzger, 2007). This allows for the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of perspective. In this sense, perspective is not seen entirely above practices, instead, it is seen as a product of practices, which is reflected in my research methodology. Enrique Peters quoted in (Jenkins et al., 2006) notes that 'perspectives shape actions and studies of varied perspectives often draw on the political discourse found among the elite...'.

The answers to what elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago perceive to be the implications that result from China's foreign policy in the region is bound within the concept of perspective held by those who are task with implementing foreign policy themselves. If China's foreign policies are creating severe difficulties in different sectors of these societies, then why are these nations not opposing such influence? While perspective and the nature of it can account for the broader explanation of these reasons, it can also lead to what Metzger et al. (2013) later calls, judgements that are based on traditional/historical information as a guide to credible decisions (Metzger and Flanagan, 2013).

The perspectives of developing nations are generally acknowledged as being partly shaped by the legacy of its colonial-era (Havinden and Meredith, 2002). Even with the decolonisation period, it is a widely held viewpoint among post-colonial theorists that the residual effect of colonialism continues to plague the decision-making process of numerous developing nations. The dependency, modernisation, bargaining model and the 'Washington Consensus' emerged along these lines of division stemming from such paradigm shifts in these nations. My research proposes that vulnerability not as a category but as a construct of identity, can be viewed as an alternative explanation to these models. Chapter 5 of this dissertation examines the literature and has found that expression of vulnerability as an identity, becomes a state of victimisation where the belief of weakness permeates these countries' foreign policy. My argument is not that vulnerability as a construct of identity is here to replace either of the previously mentioned

models, but it should instead be taken into account because of their mere existence. The concept of vulnerability as an identity stems from the mantra of ‘we are seen as weak, so we must be weak’. This ultimately translates into weak approaches in foreign policy relations with more powerful countries. For these nations, this ‘vulnerable identity’ has contributed to economic and political relations, that has for decades remain lopsided, always favouring the powerful and further victimising the powerless. With that in mind, it is clear that perspective in this context cannot be considered in a vacuum; especially when discussing how these small countries view more powerful nations. My point is that perspective is steeped in a certain amount of traditional information and is rooted in the cognitive framework of those who adhere to it.

2.4 Epistemological and Ontological Framework

My decision to undertake the study of constructs such as the theories and approaches to FPA required a broad consideration of the different epistemological and ontological frameworks that underpinned such examination. The study of FPA is inherently multidisciplinary and borrows from, sociology, international politics, economics and international relations. The premise on which many of these disciplines and sub-disciplines are based is of the notion that ideas matter. Proponents of the others take the viewpoint of rationalism or a more materialistic foundation. In line with the project’s emphasis on the implication of China’s foreign policy from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago’s elites’ perspective, the project utilised the analytical political theory articulated by John Dryzek et al. (2008) as a methodological framework for this study. Dryzek et al. propose that the theory can critique, conceive and diagnose not only the practices but also the norms and organisation of political practices of both the past and the present (Dryzek et al., 2008). This holistic nature of the theory, which has the flexibility to draw upon critical, post-colonial, popular and political, mass media and economic theories, is sufficient to explore the complexities that facilitate the construction of the sought-after perspective of my dissertation. Also acknowledging the connection between the researcher and the investigation, the theory is committed to providing conceptual clarity and argumentative rigour. The ideal is for the theory to present a series of deductive steps from premise to conclusion (Ball and Bellamy, 2003). This section covers my comprehension of ‘knowing’ and how such ‘knowability’ fits into social knowledge. It offers an explanation on my decision to focus on ideas and how the investigation intends to do so.

2.4.1 The Analytical Political Theory as a framework for the project's methods

The analytical political theory provided the lens for this investigation in terms of methods as it relates to Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' perspectives—primarily as it relates to the term perspective, as a powerful concept that orders perception. Contextualising the perspective of these elites from these two CARICOM nations proved intricate, but the methods I used were harmonious and sat comfortably in both the holistic constructivist approach and the analytical political theoretical framework. There are two conceptual frameworks relating to the political theory: the normative and the analytical. My research adopted the analytical political theory as opposed to the normative, although it is to be noted that even the analytical theory does contain, as John Dryzek et al. puts it, 'a normative component' (Dryzek et al., 2008). Normative political theory is more concerned with what is justified, legitimate or ought to be the case, which was never the aim of my research. The analytical political theory, however, is able to detach itself from these profound metaphysical concerns and, as a result, is more inclined to reconstruct or conceive the origin of political associations or moral principles that aided in answering all the proposed research questions about Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' perspectives as it relates to China. As Johari (1982) posited, the analytical political theory possesses the ability to 'weld together the insights, data and understandings' of a country's political life in a coherent manner that explains its political behaviour. This in turn is capable of generating different predictions about the state. Describing it as 'a science of the state', (Johari, 1982) concluded that the analytical political theory deals exclusively with 'governments, organisations and the practice of states'. He further posited that the theory is also concerned with all state activities that have their bearing on the 'struggle for power' (Johari, 1982). As a result, I concluded that this strand of the political theory was the better of the two to encompass the analysis of China's relationship with these two CARICOM nations.

2.4.2 Holistic Constructivism as an Ontology

Marsh and Stoker argue that there are only two ontological and epistemological approaches existing in the international relations discourse:

- Foundationalism/objectivism/realism or
- Anti-foundationalism/constructivism/relativism (Marsh and Stoker, 2010).

The former is concerned with the world that exists outside our knowledge base, wherein the objective is to establish absolute and unconditional truths. On the other hand, the latter argues that realities are local, specific and differs between groups, states, individuals and governments. The claim here is that the real world is not independent of our knowledge of it.

My project steered clear of the positivist approach, which contends that the world is not socially constructed, and that research should be objective and not valuable. This approach is an explicit reaction to the analytical political theory on which this project posits its methods. The positivist approach criticises the analytical political theory with respect to normative questions lacking in theoretical and methodological rigour. However, positivism itself fails to realise that any knowledge derived from any of the five senses is mediated by the very concepts used to analyse it and as a result, it is impossible to classify, describe or even experience anything without first interpreting it (Marsh and Stoker, 2002). This means that experiment and theory cannot be separated, since the latter affects how we understand the facts we focus on. The realist is similar to the positivist and differs only on the ground that it is impossible to directly observe all social phenomena and their relationships. In spite of this, realism is fraught with methodological implications as it has to take note of both qualitative and quantitative data (Johari, 1982). The holistic constructivist approach that this research adopts argues that objectivity in the analysis is unattainable, and knowledge is both theoretically laden and discursive. My research as a result, agrees with the conclusion of Marsh and Stoker, that this is the only approach that acknowledges the double hermeneutic.

Having said that, an important manner wherein my research is limited is by its association to cognitive frameworks such as the concept of perspective and the development model. This concentration is established in a more extensive outlook on perspectives that are not limited by beliefs, precepts and global outlooks but instead constitutes social ‘reality’ to the same degree as resources, investments and material interests. In international relations, this approach is called ‘holistic constructivism’ (Reus-Smit, 2002). Although constructivism itself is seen by many scholars as an epistemology due to its considerable effect on extending the degree of the research design for non-positivist investigations, my research utilises it here, by combining the approach of Friedrich Kratochwil and John Rawls. In combining these two approaches, the investigation is based in a legitimate account of international relations. Therefore, as far as the existence of institutions, structural, practical and normative elements in international relations is concerned, a strict philosophical lens would not have sufficed for my thesis. For this reason,

Rawls' approach to constructivism is employed in a much broader sense with the addition of Kratochwil's approach, which would offer a more comprehensive picture of practical reasoning in international relations. With regard to the same topic, Rawls' account of public reason and Kratochwil's claim on practicality maintain that constructivism is capable of explaining the intricacies present in normative reasoning and how it interacts with, and is bound by, a cohesive justificatory framework (O'Loughlin, 2014). Alexander Wendt's approach to constructivism, which is usually pursued by international relations scholars, was not employed in my research. The justification for this is that his approach seeks to combine the holistic ontology with the requirements of the scientific methodology. Wendt's challenge of international relations and its conventional strands were taken from inside its own methodological and epistemological framework. This meant that Wendt's approach falls short of fully overcoming the challenges of post-structuralism (O'Loughlin, 2014). Conversely, the combination of Kratochwil and Rawls offers a more genuine approach to constructivism which entails a more critical outlook that can surpass the methods highlighted by the criticism of post-constructivism (O'Loughlin, 2014).

For Rawls, the emphasis on holistic constructivism is that the proper arrangement of political standards can be established on the basis of appropriately framed consultations. These thoughts amass basic components such as attitudes, concepts, goals, convictions, qualities and precepts, in conjunction to their application to specific issues or settings. It is here that normative deliberations emerge as an arrangement of the reasons for forming standards. In fact, Rawls' approach to holistic constructivism presents a methodological background that allows for the realisation of a plausible historical component (Cheneval, 2011). In simpler terms, Rawls' theory can be considered as one steeped in history where not just the current situation is taken into consideration, but also the historical duration (Audard, 2014). Applicable to my research question, it clarified how the ideas of development and concept of perspective played out, in influencing the formulation of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's foreign policies and their outcomes. They create channels to streamline decision-making and may even rearrange the entire foundation on which the decision-making rests. What this means is that political elites approach new choices with prior convictions, philosophies, or perspectives and lean intensely on those pre-existing structures in judging particular circumstances and settling on particular decisions (Jacobs, 2009). The impact of perspectives on strategy and material results does not refute the presence of other contending requests on the choices of, for example, policymakers in either Jamaica or Trinidad and Tobago. These incorporate but are not constrained to donor conditions, natural resource endowment and global monetary/political institutional structures.

The perspective of these elites on other players in the region may even rival other domestic elements not completely investigated in my thesis.

Rawls' approach to public reason promotes examination of the kind of reasons that citizens in a democratic society might invoke when deciding on political issues (Mandle and Reidy, 2013). This was essential to my investigation. This part of Rawls' theory helps to offer comprehensive analysis for chapters 5 and 6, which accounts for the reasons given by elites in both country cases regarding their nation's alignment with China. My research data indicate that the reasons given by Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites, stems from a well-established mindset conditioned by their history. Rawls consider public reason as a tool of accountability for judges or elected officials as it formulates what he terms as the 'public political forum' (Rawls, 2009). This 'forum' sits on three principles: 1) the pontification of judges 2) that of government officials and 3) that of campaign managers interested in holding public office (Mandle and Reidy, 2013). Offering a duty of civility to the populace of the society, public reason can be extended as a tool used to hold government officials accountable. This forms the basis of chapters 3 through to 6 which illustrates various instances where the perspectives of the elites from the governing sector on the Chinese matter and that of the perspectives of elites from the non-governing sector differs vastly. As a result, non-governing elites blame governing elites for perpetuating a vulnerable identity. Another example of this is present in chapter 4 where a majority of the non-governing elites call for government officials to be held accountable in their dealings with China. These non-governing elites are convinced that the issue of corruption forms an underlying thread in transactions between the local government, Chinese officials and Chinese migrants. Public sector elites, on the other hand, contends that China is a friend present at a time of need and stands in a gap long abandoned by the US. For these governing elites, any attempt to avoid the Chinese influence is one steeped in futility especially in an atmosphere rife with hunger for development.

Background knowledge and culture and how both has evolved into identity formation are more-so Kratochwil's approach to holistic constructivism (Guzzini, 2013). This again adds to the issue of vulnerability, as discussed in chapter 5. For most developing nations including Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, their focus is on development and their foreign policy decisions is conducted in a bid to achieve just that. This under-development which stems from their colonial past (as discussed in chapter 3) which continues to plague them even after decolonisation, is responsible for how these countries identify themselves. The narrative of a state about itself,

how it perceives others and what it offers as justification for its goals and behaviour, accounts for something (Zehfuss and Maja, 2002). This represents an inter-subjectivity between agent and structure which means that agents are not merely the result of materials, structures or ideas that are at work in the background. An agent's practices may unfold at both the domestic and international level but must reflect the relationship existing between that which is observed, the existence of the social reality as well as the comprehension of the agent (Keating and Della Porta, 2010).

The opposition to both approaches usually stems from the materialism of the rational choice theory. The study of concepts that have no physical appearance whether involving values, perspectives or perceptions is deemed as difficult or impossible, as neither their impact nor influence on policy cannot be ascertained (Moravcsik, 1999). Nevertheless, I argue that how the elites of other countries view the impact of another nation's policies on them would mean that the existence of those views would make them no less 'real' than the policies themselves. As a matter of fact, in the context of my research, it is not only the perception of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago vis-à-vis China, but also how these two nations perceive themselves, that translates into how policymakers respond to Beijing's foreign policy in both cases. According to constructivist ontology, although both perceptions and reasons are hard to quantify when measured against actions, their existence is as real as policies or agreements which are merely words and symbols printed on a piece of paper. Policies, agreements and even resources surpass tangible manifestations and are instead based in impalpable norms that afford them meaning and power. If perceptions translate to reasons, which in turn culminate in actions and reactions, then I argue that tangibility in this sense is accounted for. If policies can also not be measured as having any real and lasting impact on the lives of citizens in a society, then the argument concerning the inability to ascertain the impact of perceptions and reasons, is also a fallible one. As Reis and Moore (2005) points out, 'we all know of political reforms that had no impact, policy changes that were ineffective and laws that remained fiction—because they were in no way grounded in prevailing values and beliefs' (Reis and Moore, 2005). Perceptions, reasons and values, as a result, should not be comprehended as limited but as an interceding variable.

My research, as a result, may in some areas predict but does not offer any conclusion as to the outcome of a policy. Where I might discuss a specific policy that seems to reflect the influence of perception or reason for Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's engagement with China and vice versa, this mainly follows the intricate thinking of elites in connecting the two.

2.4.3 Hermeneutic/Interpretive as Epistemology

Constructivism in the discipline of international relations tend at times to be loosely associated with the elements mentioned above. That means they utilise a wide array of epistemologies. A few, such as (Comte, 1975) embraces the scientific methods used in the positivist approach. Critical constructivists, who are more radical in their approach, denounce those they consider to be ‘mainstream’ constructivists for their inability to keep an appropriate distance from logic and assumptions (Weber, 1974) and (Simmel, 1950). These scholars such as (Habermas, 2015) for example, employ non-positivist approaches as well as discourse analysis to reveal and question the power of inequality existing at the core of sociology and politics. For my research, interpretive epistemology was a third arena existing between these divides. The ability to comprehend detailed texts whether in printed or verbal form sits at the core of hermeneutics (Neuman, 2013). Furthermore, human behaviour is derived from their held values, ideas or motives (Bevir and Rhodes, 2002).

While natural science boasts the ability to transcend discussions on methodologies by creating shared paradigms that offer an explanation for both problems and procedures (Rabinow and Sullivan, 1987), hermeneutics sets itself apart by utilising epistemologies that are not reliant on the positivists methods to establish broad generalisations nor does it engages in deductive reasoning in relation to theories (Fourie, 2013). Instead, it is based on a more standardised examination of events in reality, thus causing them to be more empirically grounded (Guzzini, 2000).

Several hermeneutic scholars maintain a defence on the importance of empiricism while at the same time rejecting the positivist approach (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Hirschman, 1986, Hudson and Ozanne, 1988, Neuman, 2000, Schmidt et al., 2002, Adler, 2002). Meaning, knowledge and rationality are still possible but knowledge itself often extends beyond physical and measurable variables of social life. The middle ground, contends that not all assumptions have a uniformed value-driven epistemology (Schmidt et al., 2002) and accepts that convictions, principles, motives and meanings, all of which can be associated to human behaviour possesses some hierarchy of objectivity (Nakkeeran, 2010). It is within this school that my investigation sits.

Constructivism proponents argue that its interchangeable design allows it to exist in harmony with a hermeneutic understanding of science that helps it to avoid the pitfalls that the positivist

and critical approaches are so prone to (Guzzini, 2000, Adler, 2005). The differences in the debates surrounding the matter as previously indicated have to do with epistemologies. Those who identify as constructivists approach the equation of interpretivism as one that is winding and not so straightforward. Take for example, Richardson's (2005) statement on the diversity existing in constructivism. He maintains that there is a need to carve out a specific hermeneutic epistemology (Richardson, 2005). As a result, my investigation combines the ontological stance that social knowledge can be understood through the empirical interpretation of the printed and verbal word.

In finalising remarks on this issue, the possibility of determining the validity of interpretation and perspective is necessary here. Many scholars, even those who agree on a widely accepted hermeneutic epistemology, often find themselves at odds on this matter. On one hand, the argument is that the validity of interpretation and perspective in the natural sciences can be verified based on the construction of a hypothesis that is tested through experiments (Rasmussen, 2012). On the other hand, Floistad (2004) describes the validity of interpretation and perspective as truth, not as a propositional truth but rather a property of experience. That is to say, that experience which is borne out of an interpretation or perspective that reaches perfection, (that is a complete understanding of all parts such as motives etc.) may be called true (Floistad, 2004). Since reality is constructed by human cognition, insights or rather perspectives offer enough guidance in the interpretation of actions and causation. Much like Weber, who stated that the social sciences aim to interpret behaviour so as to explain its origin, development and impacts (Coser, 1971), my dissertation takes the same approach, allowing for limited but valid understanding of perspective and interpretation of causality. This is bounded in two distinct ways. First, it offers no concrete validity of a mono-perception or interpretation. As Fourie (2013) pointed out 'due to the reflexivity of social actors and the complexity of social life, social scientists can only hope to isolate those social forces they believe—through observation and interpretation—to be most important and to express the impact of these forces in probabilistic terms' (Fourie, 2013). As a result, the perspectives of public and private sector elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago reflect the influence of both theoretical and tangible factors. For example, foreign direct investments (FDI), infrastructure, credits etc. and the response stemming from it. Governmental participants, in particular, are agents who interpret and formulate their perspective on the influence of external foreign policy on their nation and in turn make decisions based on 'reasons that make sense to them' (Bevir and Rhodes, 2002).

It is also important to note that perspectives cannot be expressed as general doctrines, but instead should only be deduced based on the specific context under which it is discussed. Based on the interpretivist approach, universal perspectives nor interpretations have no existence in social sciences, but contextual links can be examined and entrenched through accounts (Bevir and Rhodes, 2002). As a result, the need to understand the perspectives of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites on China's rise, is positioned on the assumption that process and the need to develop is grounded in the cognitive framework of those affected by, and entrusted with, defining and implementing development policies. These findings were used, not in an attempt to challenge developmental theories, but instead to illuminate the comprehension of the specific cases on which my thesis focuses. This is in no way the main ontological and epistemological approach used by researchers looking at perspectives concerning China. Nevertheless, for this project, this approach was more in line with the overall research question.

2.5 Case Studies

As previously mentioned, the isolation of CARICOM and its nations therein when it comes to the topic of China, is due to its scarce existence in the present literature. The preference of looking at Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago as case studies within this sub-region, however, calls for additional explanation.

The case study approach is a linear but repetitive process. A case study looks at a particular thing while taking a detailed point of view without trying to declare it a universal law. In a case study investigation, interest resides in the investigated context as a whole (Taylor and Thomas-Gregory, 2015). The study of a case or cases provides the investigator with varied perspectives that afford a comprehensive and balanced image of that experience (Taylor, 2013). The case study is the principal vehicle through which a researcher can collect data utilising a wide range of sources, such as documents, memoirs, insights, stories and behavioural observation. This empirical data can be used in a qualitative or quantitative sense using inductive or deductive reasoning. Yin (1989) provides a detailed definition as such:

A case study can be defined as an empirical enquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1989).

Defined in a much simpler term, a case study is the examination of a distinct unit which takes its individuality and its intricacies into consideration while coming to terms with its activity in

meaningful circumstances (Stake, 1995). The method, however, is fraught with controversy. One of the most significant concerns among numerous scholars when it comes to this approach is its perceived lack of rigour. The critique is that it is impractical to use minor cases to produce information about a vast population and that researchers in this instance frequently fails to follow systematic procedures (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Nevertheless, a much larger body of literature can attest to the fact that, under peculiar circumstances, cases can be used to attain resolution for issues of a descriptive nature existing on the micro-level that are often embedded in social science theories (Swanborn, 2010). These cases can be used for testing or generating a theory. Studies on the use of cases for theoretical generation and testing often admit that case study investigators to a certain degree have to sacrifice providence and breadth in the transposition of profundity and copiousness to a certain degree (George et al., 2005). This is usually treated by investigators as an alternative as opposed to a division.

My investigation is akin to such an approach. As a result, my thesis seeks to arbitrate these unavoidable constrictions between being specific and possessing universal application. The decision of a case study approach is principled by its aim to explore the uniqueness of a context-specific phenomenon, which is frequently referred to as a ‘bounded system’ (Simons, 2009a). Similarly, my investigation sought to achieve validity and rigour through the depiction of particular instances secured in time and condition. Its use of the constructivist ontology and interpretivism epistemology calls for a thorough understanding of elites, their perceptions, actions and motives within their own unique social, economic and political context. Doubt abounds as to whether a more comprehensive inquiry of participants in Latin America and the Caribbean region could have achieved this. As Stake (1995) contends, ‘sometimes a “typical” case works well, but often an unusual case helps illustrate matters we overlook in typical cases’.

In her analysis of case selection and focus, Simons (2009b) differentiates between a case that is more intrinsic as opposed to one that is more instrumental. One ‘plays a supportive role’ while the other ‘facilitates our understanding of something else’ according to Stake quoted in (Charmaz et al., 2003). In my study, the cases selected do possess components of intrinsic value. Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are both seen as the ‘giants’ of CARICOM. Both also hold historical importance to countries existing in the Caribbean Community and often, both stand at the helm of any political or economic role having to do with the sub-region. The perspective, actions and response to China’s rise in the sub-region are therefore essential in illuminating the perceived implications that Beijing’s foreign policy is having on countries in

the Community that adheres to the ‘One China Policy’. Also having to do with the challenges and opportunities this relationship has brought to the economic and political aspects of their intra and inter-regional relations. As Remenyi (2013) points out, when a particular study is carried out in a pluralistic form, then the researcher will have more data to compare and contrast which might lead to the emergence of new knowledge.

On the other hand, the focus of this investigation is not only to ask what the motives for China’s engagement with these CARICOM countries are? But instead in light of current discourse on the topic, does it accurately describe and explain from the perspective of elites in these two countries, the challenges and opportunities China’s rise in the sub-region has presented since the launch of the September 2011 Forum? As a result, it was critical that the two CARICOM nations chosen offered data that by the very least can be applied beyond their borders. Both cases have done this through what Mills et al. (2010) describes as ‘paradigmatic cases’. These are cases that form a unique way of acquiring knowledge through correlation and duplication (Mills et al., 2010). In simpler terms, an exemplar is extracted and placed parallel to a phenomenon which helps to highlight key components of said phenomenon. Given their colonial history, both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have commanded a central role in western international relations and political discourse on what the Caribbean in particular, is imagined to be. Jamaica with its significant problems of severe aid dependency, trade openness, vulnerable economy, fluctuations in exchange rates, increased government expenditures, slow GDP growth and stagnant export and rising imports—are often termed as the most troubling in an overall analysis of nations in the sub-region.

However, if Jamaica is the yardstick used to measure most countries in the sub-region, then Trinidad and Tobago can ultimately be viewed as the anomaly due to its status as the only oil-exporting nation in CARICOM. With its steady GDP growth rate, decreasing unemployment rates, constant exports and improved domestic markets, Trinidad and Tobago, as one of the wealthiest nations of CARICOM and the Community’s ‘founding father’, makes it important to the analysis of the perception of China’s rise in the sub-region. Where Jamaica has typified features that frequently plague small countries in the Community, Trinidad and Tobago have exemplified problems of governance despite having one of the strongest economies therein. On that ground, several assessments as to how elites from both countries view the implication of China’s foreign policy in their nation as well as their intra and inter-regional relationships along with how they have responded since, can be used to compare other countries in similar contexts.

A combination of multiple logics in selecting a case yields a greater advantage in research (Flyvbjerg, 2006). In their unique way, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are paradigmatic. In conjunction, they also employ what Creswell (1998) refers to as ‘maximum variation’ which ‘display multiple perspectives about the cases’ (Creswell, 1998). This ensures that cases that might fall on either side of the spectrum between these two cases are represented, even if in a broader sense (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). Since my investigation’s primary concern is the implications of China’s foreign policy on CARICOM countries from the Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago perspective, the dimensions on which they differ is not only with regards to their elites’ views on China, but also their policymakers’ response to the effects of the PRC’s foreign policy. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, while Jamaica is much more blasé about China’s FDIs on the island with little to no checks or balances in place to curb the negative impact that Chinese policies have on its domestic industries; Trinidad and Tobago have taken a more stringent approach to ensure that its local industries are not entirely overwhelmed by the influence of China. Both countries have converged on the grounds that their colonial past still dominates the decision-making processes and mentality of their ruling elites. Additionally, it is evident that within both cases, the tenets of dependency with regard to development is still being adhered to. However, Jamaica’s view on China as a catalyst to advance its development model indicates that its elites have retained many of the patterns of economic advancement and political clout that were previously put in place during the independence era. In this regard, Jamaica’s construct of a vulnerable identity proves stronger than that of Trinidad and Tobago.

The early 1970s also provides another line of convergence for these two CARICOM nations. Both countries had vowed the recognition of a ‘One China’, with Jamaica forming diplomatic ties with the PRC in 1972 and Trinidad in 1974. Likewise, during this period, aid dependence made way for the Washington Consensus, with both nations adopting the capitalist regime of the United States. Not only do they have a similar historical legacy in terms of the Washington Consensus, but both countries have been swept up in the Beijing Consensus since the last decade, even more so than others in CARICOM. In both cases, the similarity of these two very distinct influences has a similar thread and where there is a difference in influence, perception and response, this can be attributed to either nations’ economic prowess, identity, and attitude towards development.

As stated earlier, since this investigation avoided the positivist epistemology, the discrepancies in these cases were not treated as independent variables but were instead viewed as symbolic,

as it pertains to the challenges and opportunities posed by the rise of China in both cases. It does highlight, however, how they may differ vastly in their outlook as well as their response to the Beijing Consensus. Generalisation should not be perceived to be theory-building nor is it a standardised level of statistical sampling. It instead is as Kvale (1996) points out, ‘a reasoned judgement about the extent to which the findings of one study can be used as a guide to what might occur in another situation’ (Kvale, 1996). Generalisability is inherently dependent on unstated claims about what is analogous and what is divergent (Firestone, 1993). As a result, different readers may interpret the findings presented herein by varying degrees.

With regards to practicality, the elements of feasibility and convenience played significant roles in my case selection process. According to Venner (2004), cases need to be evaluated for practicality before a comprehensive research design can be constructed (Venner, 2004). Not only that, but the issue of funding, time constraints and accessibility have to be considered in the process (Miles et al., 1994). As a result, I found that it was better to select countries that were relatively close to each other. However, the pitfall of this choice is that generalisation so as to include CARICOM nations that only recognise Taiwan, remains at a severe disadvantage. This drawback is still diminished as there is a consensus in the literature that even nations that do not adhere to the ‘One China’ policy still have economic ties with China (Bernal, 2015a). The difference in recognising Taiwan usually lies along political lines, principled stance on foreign policy or regards to agreements and treaties. Additionally, the factor that distinguishes most CARICOM members from the rest of the Caribbean is the fact that they were former British colonies. Both nations presented as my case studies are former British colonies. This will allow for greater transferability as it relates to context.

2.6 Orienting the Chronological Framework

The study is based on China’s relationship with CARICOM nations and is aimed at exploring this trend for the past five (5) years from two of these nations’ elites’ perspective. The moment that can be said to have formally marked this deep strategic cooperation outlining China’s intention for the Caribbean was in September 2011. On the 12th and 13th of that month the world witnessed the official launch of the 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Forum, where for the first time all*¹⁹ Caribbean nations’ heads of state were present, along with some

¹⁹ *Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St Kitts, St Lucia, and St Vincent did not attend as they recognise Taiwan.

200 Caribbean officials, businessmen and women. Headed under the theme, '*Cooperation, Development and Win-for-all*', the attendees included Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan, Prime Ministers of Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Grenada, Suriname and the Secretary-General of the CARICOM Secretariat. Key arguments emerging from this forum included 1) Enhanced financial and investment cooperation, 2) Capacity building cooperation, 3) Strengthened collaboration in environmental protection and new energies, 4) Intensified cultural, educational and health cooperation, 5) Promotion of closer trade and tourism cooperation and 6) Boosted cooperation in agriculture and fisheries.²⁰ The Forum ended on the note that China, being a developing nation itself, had provided assistance to the Caribbean nations without attaching any conditions. China's Vice Premier Wang Qishan (2011) concluded by stating, that facts have shown that China is forever a genuine partner of Caribbean nations, and that to help achieve this, the China Development Bank will set up a US\$1 billion Business Loan to finance these nations' infrastructure development (Campbell and Valette, 2014).

A host of countries in the region were proposed to be likely recipients of these Chinese inspired developmental practices and policies which were promised in the Forum. From a donation of US\$1 million to the Caribbean Development Fund (Amineh and Guang, 2010) to a steady rebalance of the region's association with North America and Europe, that Caribbean ministers suggest was more in keeping politically with Caribbean thinking about the world (Caribbean Council, 2014); there remains very little agreement on the implications such pronouncements have had on CARICOM nations since. For every suggestion that 'majority of this bilateral trade is heavily skewed in China's favour' (Campbell and Valette, 2014), there are several others like (Bernal, 2013; Montoute, 2013; Rush et al., 2013; Bernal, 2015, 2016) who looks at the potential and prospects China's FDIs have since provided for the region. However, since 2016, five years since the 2011 China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum, most Caribbean leaders have called for a more thorough evaluation of the Beijing Consensus and assessments of the impact on their nations stemming from the increased migration of Chinese. Additionally, 2016 was the year that witnessed the release of what is to date, the last White Paper on the China-LAC relations. The policy paper which again reiterated strengthened collaboration on the grounds of 'equality and mutual benefit' had an additional key feature to it, this time, contending that China will 'actively carry out military exchanges with Latin

²⁰ See: The **3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum**. Available at <http://tt.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/3rdCNCForum/>. (Accessed, September10, 2016).

American and Caribbean countries’ (Sullivan and Lum, 2019).²¹ Additionally, from 2011-2016, there has been an increase in anti-Chinese sentiments with a push back from local industries within Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago with regards to the ‘Chinese rush’. Additionally, with the rise of the Trump administration in the US and the impending Brexit from the EU, 2016 became a year marked by extreme unpredictability for CARICOM nations.

2.7 Data Sources and Method of Data Collection/Analysis

2.7.1 *The Use of Interview as a Methodology*

The interview model has a long tradition of being used to inform social research (Gubrium and Holstein, 2012). For this research, the primary source of data was semi-structured interviews with a total of 43 governmental and non-governmental participants recorded in *Appendix D*. Twelve (12) of the interviews were conducted in Trinidad and Barbados from August to September 2017 and another thirteen (13) in Jamaica from October to December 2017. On my return, the remaining eighteen (18) were conducted over the phone and Skype from February to March 2019 due to distance. This includes three (3) interviews which were carried out with members of the CARICOM Secretariat and whose respondents exist outside (Barbados and Guyana) the scope of the two case studies. Meetings length for the interviews ranged between 25 minutes to 2 hours with the average length being 45 minutes.

Participants were recruited by submitting applications to the various government departments for interviews with senior ministry officials, state commissions, councils/committees; based on their website guidelines. The application incorporated the name, position, institution of the researcher and which minister or head of department the researcher wished to interview. A summary of the questions to be raised was also included as well as an information sheet and consent form. A similar guideline was adopted for those in the private sector, although it is important to note that most respondents in this sector were obtained through the process of snowballing. While participants from the private sector can be considered non-governmental elites, the study needed to treat the participants as an equivalent component of the focus population. Every individual has a voice, and it is essential for any research that each voice be given a platform (Gubrium and Holstein, 2012). The aim in this manner was to accomplish a

²¹ See: Congressional Research Service 2019. China’s Engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean. Available at <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/IF10982.pdf>. (Accessed, April 1, 2019).

broad cross-section of both governmental and non-governmental participants in both cases which would represent various inputs in the perspective process.

The hermeneutic tradition is one which involves the interviewing process as a common approach to research enquiry. The interview process and the society under investigation are inherently linked to the procedure which gives verbose shape to the social form and the social frame thus inciting us to display who and what we are (Gubrium and Holstein, 2012). The process itself is an important tool in bringing clarity to a political phenomenon and offers insights into different ways of assessing the root of an individual's behaviour or attitude (Mosley, 2013). The decision to place data taken from interviews as a focal point and supplement of my investigation is often found in policy-oriented research and mirrors these convictions. Nevertheless, a qualitative interview approach usually entails certain inherent difficulties. Proponents of positivism, in particular, have raised concerns about the relationship between the reliability and objectivity as well as the validity and thoroughness of the interview technique (Watzlawik and Born, 2007). On the other hand, these criteria are rejected by scholars like (Weber, 1978 and Simmel, 1950) who criticises positivism and subscribe to the unmistakable partition between objectivity and subjectivity as a preferred design to address post-positivist research design.

For this study, the basis on which the soundness of the findings on which this research is judged is the least important. Instead, my study aims to be completely rigorous and empirical. Using Trochim's concept of *construct validity* discussed in (Drost, 2011), whereby a study is validated on surface validity, volume validity, simultaneous and prescient validity as well as focalised and discriminant validity, my aim in the investigation design was to make it true, measurable, conceptually defined, predictive and self-critical.

A key feature in the use of the interview method, is that although respondents may maintain sentiments that are attached to a deeper meaning of self and whose narrative may entail truths of the subject matter (Gubrium et al., 2012); it is wise for a researcher to exercise caution in using such authenticity as an ultimate claim to truth (Atkinson and Silverman, 1997). For this reason, the information divulged by respondents in both the public and private sectors needed to be cross reference with the existing literature. This was primarily in cases surrounding China's motives and the opportunities and challenges it brought about particularly in the area of trade. In other cases, the perception of the processes surrounding small state development, dependency and ideas with regards to modernisation was also cross-checked in the literature.

This was done because while the main objective of the investigation was a subjectivity-based interpretation, there were times when it was important to contextualise these understandings by exploring the perceptions of other elites around the impact of China's emergence on Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

Of grave importance to note, is that there are instances wherein the interview method can be met with a very dismissive attitude or what Riesman and Glazer (1948) also refer to as outright perfunctory. In other cases, it would be unrealistic for the researcher to dismiss the fact that respondents will often as Remenyi (2012) contends, omit, refrain from disclosing certain information or if not in cases where they deliberately lie, might harbour personal agendas. However, several important studies on this have proven that such flaws like these existing in the method can be neutralised by the use of the triangulation method (Hussein, 2009, Olsen, 2004, Duffy, 1987). As a result, triangulating the data was paramount to my investigation. Additionally, from my standpoint, an interest in respondents' perspectives provided more so a wealth of data as opposed to posing an obstacle. Even where respondents refrained from disclosing information outright, constructivist ontology, which argues that interests and ideas are synergistically composed suggests that whatever respondents choose to share—in terms of how they want the implications of China's foreign policy on their nation and region to be viewed—is arguably indivisible from what the implications are as it relates to the same context. Such intersubjective elements are typically expressed and shaped through debates, exchanges and interactions not only with other participants of their respective groups, but also with other members such as Chinese investors and officials from the West.

During the investigation, dissembling was found to be a colossal problem, especially in gauging public sector participants' perspectives on issues related to corruption, lack of transparency, as well as in areas having to do with certain policy papers around their nations' partnership with China. In cases where the information was divulged, it was deemed too sensitive for me to be permitted to document it in written or recorded form. This was an issue I found to be existing in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. To bridge this gap, I conducted examination of the existing literature regarding this particular matter and supplemented it with existing narratives, which has resulted in my arrival to certain conclusions. The fact that both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are so small, wherein governmental organisations are profoundly intertwined, the fear of losing one's position has dramatically affected the discourse in this particular area.

However, through the triangulation of other governmental elites' discourse on this subject, validity in this area was tremendously aided.

Besides the issue of truthfulness, dissembling and respondents' personal agendas; interviewers are prone to a mirage of other pitfalls which may affect data quality. These range from different ends of the spectrum, depending on the target group. Governmental respondents, in particular, are often inaccessible and in cases where they are not, might offer a slanted account of events or minimise or inflate their role in the decision-making process (Tansey, 2007). This, of course, depends on whether there is a political advantage to be gained or lost in associating with the subject at hand (Tansey, 2007). Being aware of the existence of these issues was my first step in minimising their impact in the field. As a result, it was important for me to become acquainted before undertaking data collection, with the works of (Aberbach et al., 1975, Beamer, 2002, Hochschild, 2009, Neal and McLaughlin, 2009) all of whom focused at some level on the practical aspect of conducting interviews with elites. This resulted in an improved questionnaire design, interview conduct and the subsequent transcription and data analysis that followed. For example, Beamer (2002) talked about the importance of developing a systematic research questionnaire, the importance of sampling and the form the research analysis should take later when dealing with elite interviewees. On this ground I was able to incorporate many of these techniques into my interview method.

2.7.2 The Sampling of Interviewees

Though the end goal was a top to bottom examination, the investigation is still limited in a few vital ways. Right from the start, it centres solely on those in the public and private sectors who admitted to being knowledgeable of China's activities in their nation. To a substantial degree, this is an offshoot from the research question, and so the investigation seeks to provide empirical data to quell concerns and debates surrounding CARICOM countries' perspective on China in this regard. As Parry (2005) points out, governing-elites in their societies are such powerful people that they have the ability to set the political agenda that the rest of society has to respond to. The vast majority of what foreign policy and decision-making entail, maintains this focus. This is done either through showcasing how governing-elites existing in different political systems can affect these systems through choices and the implementation of policy alternatives, e.g. (Vogel et al., 2018); or by theorising how cognition and institution can direct decision-makers in how they perceive an external nation (Axelrod, 2015).

This is not to say that decision-making is solely driven by governing-elites. In the long term, it can be found that non-governing elites also influence the political and economic administration. As a result, a broader consensus of both governing and non-governing elites has to be combined to account for any political or economic changes. As Young (1993) points out, non-governing elites and their importance to the economy could guarantee their access to key decision-makers. As a result, the likelihood that they are able to influence policy and get what they want could be increased. With that in mind, my argument is that the governing elites in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are not the only agents of society that can examine the impact of a foreign nation on their society. This would mean that there would undoubtedly be a difference between the viewpoints of governing elites and non-governing elites as to the effect of a foreign nation on their society's political and economic sphere. This investigation offers a limited view on both sides of such a complex equation.

Of grave importance is the question of who falls into the stratum of an elite. The term itself is abstract and ambiguous. According to Bull and Aguilar-Stoen (2014), the elites' discourse has always been centred more so on the concept of elites which presents a divide from that of class. Additionally, elitism is not a hereditary trait as persons existing in a society can theoretically move from being an elite to a non-elite (Kakabadse, 2011). This means that there is no scientific approach that can effectively measure what separates 'elites' from the rest of us. In the political science discourse, however, governing-elites are often considered to be individuals existing in a society and are so powerful, that they are able to play a considerable role in government and the decision-making process surrounding the nation (Etzioni-Halevy, 1997). They occupy such salient positions that failure to act in the decision-making process, is an act within itself bearing grave consequences more so than those acts that brought about the implementation of certain decisions (Mills, 1956). However, as stated before, governing elites are not the only solitary actors in this process, as non-governing elites also has an increasing influence on the decision-making process existing in the society (Vogel et al., 2018). These non-governing elites are usually consultants, advisors, scientists, journalists, engineers, managers and intellectuals (Bottomore, 2006). As a result, the investigation is on this account concerned only with elites to the degree that they are seen as people who have direct input into the policy-making process or occupies a position that enables them to have a powerful influence on the political power of their society. Therefore, the extent to which governing and non-governing-elites are aware of their own status and the methods they are willing to employ to maintain such status involves questions that falls outside the scope of this my research. Instead, my project is more focused

on the perspective of these elites in relation to the economic and political implications China has on their respective nations and how that in turn affect their relationship with traditional partners.

Instead of adopting an ordered sampling approach, the investigation focused on elites existing in different institutions within the two sectors. In doing this, the aim was to obtain a broader cross-section of elites in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago who could represent various sections of the policy-making process and their influence on it. Previous works with a similar range inspired the methodology of my investigation in this regard. Particularly the work of Novotny (2010) whose work is an analysis of Indonesian elites' perception on being caught between China and America. My investigation adopts his definition of elites as 'officials at all levels [from] the lower ranks up to the top ranks of the government bureaucracy...prominent businessmen...with the most influential journalists and intellectuals who maintain close ties with the political establishment' (Novotny, 2010). This approach to the definition of 'elites' is quite uncommon. The usual viewpoint taken to looking at elites in the political discourse is one wherein they are viewed as individuals or a group with an enormous amount of power to affect the national and international political outcomes of their nation on a day to day basis (Best and Higley, 2018). This unusual approach of defining elites as Novotny (2010) has done, is feasible to my research as it allows for understanding and differentiating the perspectives of the public sector elites from those of the private sector.

As a result, my study's interview subjects consist mainly of *members from both public and private sector organisations and institutions that directly contribute to or influence Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's policy-making processes*. In terms of sampling respondents within this population, the investigation drew on the directives of (Tongco, 2007) as it relates to the method of purposive sampling. Also known as 'judgement sampling', it involves the deliberate selection of a respondent on the basis of the qualities they possess. It is especially most effective when it is being used to study a particular case wherein knowledgeable experts exist (Tongco, 2007). Unlike parallel statistics or probability which is often used in quantitative research, purposeful sampling, used in qualitative studies, is usually used to enrich data by concentrating on respondents who may have specific knowledge of a phenomenon (Macnee and McCabe, 2008). Application to other cases especially existing in CARICOM was a research design of this investigation. However, its disposition adheres to a more in-depth comprehension relating to the uniqueness and complexity regarding individual cases.

There are a multitude of factors that promote purposive sampling, which ensure that the two objectives of diversity and relevance to the subject matter are met (Ritchie et al., 2013). On this basis I employed two logics which were deemed relevant to the study and was supplemented by another which emerged during the investigative process:

- I. ‘Stratified Case Sampling’ (Patton, 2002): The investigation took great care in selecting individuals and organisations that might have differing views as it relates to China’s rise and impact on their nations. Since these respondents and their organisation exists within the same national border, homogeneity is still maintained. However, effects from China would be perceived differently. In this section, the political, business, academic, media and civil servants were all included. Within each sector, the investigation ensured that elites were taken from different branches. For the political sector, this meant various political parties, different branches of the regional body, different departments in academic institutions, different media outlets and different areas of civil society. This was carried out in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. This revealed a strand of the discourse that often fall outside the scope of discussion surrounding China in the sub-region.
- II. ‘Critical Case Sampling’ (Patton, 2002): A method focused on cases depicting a position crucial to the process under investigation. This translated to individuals and institutions occupying both a conventional and unconventional area wherein they were able to implement or influence national policy. This information was extracted from mostly the interview process as the investigation progressed. Respondents in this section are primarily leaders who possesses an influence over the dissemination and implementation of policies at the national, international and regional level. However, some organisations exist, such as academic institutions, major media outlets and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), all of which play a role in influencing policy outcomes, thereby validating their inclusion here. Since there were instances wherein the perspectives of some of these elites opposed or differed from those of the governing-elites, the investigation deemed them valuable in demonstrating which disparate views on China were still permitted within the already established political realm.
- III. Having not been an initial part of the research plan, sampling through the snowball or sequential method emerged. Its emergence led to the implementation of purposive

sampling in this regard. This led to the emergence of elites who stemmed from the recommendations of those already interviewed. Adherence to the two logics mentioned above remained a strict guideline in this regard and interviews were not undertaken unless all aspects of the interview criteria for the investigation were met. Purposive sampling through this method is an excellent contribution to the feasibility of my investigation.

Table 1: Categorisation of Respondents by Institutional Division and Country

Source: Prepared by the author based on interview data

Sectors	Jamaica	Trinidad and Tobago	Total
Governmental Organisations	6	8	14
Regional Organisation (3) *	1**	---	2
Government Advisors	3	3	6
NGO's	3	3	6
Business Leaders	1	1	2
Media	2	1	3
Academics	3	5***	7
Total	19	21	40

Notes:

**There are four (4) respondents interviewed from different branches of the CARICOM Secretariat, three (3) of which fell outside the two case studies but still sits within two CARICOM nations (Barbados and Guyana). Their numbers are not reflected in the total (40) here, which solely indicates the total carried out within the two case studies.*

***In Jamaica, some members are government officials who also happen to be members of different branches of the CARICOM Secretariat.*

****Some academics interviewed here were from other Caribbean nations like Cuba. However, they were living and working in Trinidad and Tobago at the time of the interview.*

It is importance to note that with regards to the nationality of respondents, the investigation defined 'Jamaican' or 'Trinidad and Tobagonian' private and public sector elites as largely those who originated from or those who have been living and working in these countries for more than a decade. The latter usually ensures that even if the respondent is not originally from either of the two cases, they are in possession of citizenship for either countries having lived

there for a considerable period of time. Both the Jamaican and Trinidad and Tobagonian population often consists of members who did not necessarily originate from either country. However, often the case is that they are in possession of citizenship and have established their life in these countries to the point where they exist in powerful echelons of both societies. As a result, they were not excluded from the investigation, and this selection criterion resulted in three (3) being interviewed for this study.

The investigation diverged in interviewing a very minute supplementary group out of a much different reason. It is to be noted that at no point did the study sought to make CARICOM as a regional bloc, a case in and of itself. However, when the snowball method came into effect, outside of the one respondent in Jamaica that existed in the regional organisation, an additional three from different branches of the CARICOM Secretariat and who were respondents existing outside (Barbados and Guyana) of the two cases were also interviewed. The aim here was to discover the extent to which elites in the regional bloc viewed China's involvement with its member nations that adhere to the 'One China' policy, as a matter that presents opportunities or challenges. Additionally, CARICOM elites' perspective on the issue of integration when dealing with China, was of importance to explore along with the implications it foresaw for its member nations. Moreover, policies that might have been discussed at the regional level with China that might impact their member nations and whether there have been any changes in intra-regional negotiations since China's rise was also deemed important to uncover. The data was used to supplement the body of my research but was not included in case-specific instances appearing in the study. An example of this are chapters 5 and 6, which focuses solely on the findings from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

In presenting findings, especially regarding the elite cohort, it is essential to mention the extent to which representation can be hampered by inaccessibility to certain public sector structures and individuals themselves (Harvey, 2010). With regards to my investigation, the response rate can be described as fairly good. Accessibility to a vast majority of the organisations and individuals targeted was achieved especially when the snowball method came into effect. Respondents from the highest level of seniority in each institution were in most cases, achieved. However, in some cases, access proved challenging. This was partly because fieldwork was undertaken during the Caribbean's hurricane season. Though neither of the cases was adversely affected by this except for a few thunderstorms, they were placed on hurricane watch which proved to be a major disruption in accessing some individuals and organisations. Another factor

that contributed to this challenge was the fact that access to certain officials was prohibited by gatekeepers, who felt that their role was to protect the integrity and privacy of their superiors and organisations that they thought could be threatened by the study. In other areas, the time pressure of some senior officials was given as the reason for their inability to meet.

This wasn't the case for only one of the countries under investigation, but both. In Jamaica, for example, it was challenging to interview parliamentarians that held ministerial positions. This was due to time pressures and the fact that at the time (October 2017), the St. Mary South Eastern by-election was also in motion. As a result, several of these elites were not included in the research. Additionally, both in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, there were instances of prohibition when it came to garnering access to some Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Directors. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, the problem identified was that of time constraints but in the case of Jamaica, the issue was that of gatekeepers who deemed that the relationship their superiors and organisations have with China could be disrupted if they were to disclose any form of information regarding the PRC. Though confidentiality was promised, in one instance, it was pointed out that given the nature of their organisation's relationship with China, the organisation deemed it in their best interest not to conduct an interview on the matter. These roadblocks have led to underrepresentation in areas such as the business sector existing in the study. In this instance, the lack of interest in meeting for an interview can also be deemed as a finding in itself. It is evident that even if the interview was permitted, these respondents would have probably refused to answer any questions deemed 'too sensitive'. Since it was highly unlikely that they have direct input into the policy-making process and instead are only able to influence it indirectly, compensation for this small-scale section of the data was offset by interviews with government advisors who offered more transparency.

Nevertheless, none of the mentioned challenges bore any severe impact on the findings of the investigation. They are however mentioned here to divulge transparency to allow readers the ability to conduct their analysis on the extent of generalisation as it pertains to the research findings. In both the Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago cases, the government officials that were interviewed were deemed sufficient to demonstrate the differences between the public and private sector. The former of which bore a greater enthusiasm for engaging with China albeit their growing concerns as opposed to the latter. Examples of this can be seen in chapters 3-9.

2.7.3 The Structuring, Transcription and Analysis of Interviews

Flick (2014) states that ‘data analysis is the central step in qualitative research. Whatever the data is, it is their analysis that, in a decisive way, forms the outcomes of the research’ (Flick, 2014). Although the nuances of semi-structured interviews, as opposed to surveys or structured questionnaires, conceives of more flexibility, the aim is to still have ‘conversation with a purpose’ (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001) and therefore the interviews still required a great deal of planning. Caution was taken to not present questions that would be deemed as leading. On this account and as it relates to this study, it was also pertinent to maintain a strategic distance from particularly mentioning other actors in the region. This entail the examples of Russia, Japan and Germany, as it was hoped that these would emerge naturally from the respondents themselves. The inclusion of questions on China’s rise as a concern or debate at the start of the interview provided the understanding of the participant’s own opinion as to what is driving the various concerns as it relates to China. This data was important, considering that one of the findings of my study is that the idea of the ‘China threat theory’ was not only relevant to the US, as previously thought.

Majority of the interview questions were structured in such a way that eight (8) broad topics were covered not necessarily in the following order:²²

1. Respondent’s views on the emergence of China in the Caribbean Community. This introduction covered selected questions on elites’ perception of the different debates and concerns surrounding China’s presence and to offer their personal opinion on the matter.
2. Respondent’s view on the ‘China threat theory’ as it relates to the United States. This section covered questions surrounding elites’ perception on China as a threat to US’s national security, whether CARICOM nations were using China as a counterweight to US’s influence in the region and the possibility of a US hegemonic decline which would give way to a Chinese hegemon. The questions in this section were probed in depth with elites being asked about the implications these might present for countries in the sub-region.

²² A more detailed list of interview questions can be found in *Appendix D*.

3. Respondents' view of China as a form of neo-colonial power in CARICOM nations. Elites' were asked about their view on the discrepancies between current interchanges with China from those centre-periphery relationships of the past. Both governmental and non-governmental elites were asked if they deemed their country's interaction with China as a form of a 'win-win' situation or strategic cooperation as was put forward in the 2011 Forum. Additionally, they were asked about who they deem would benefit more from the two policy papers passed by China as it relates to Latin America and the Caribbean. The power imbalance issue existing between their nation and China was also proposed and elites were asked to offer solutions on how it can be best remedied. This also included their views on whether or not they believed that their nation should be cautious in their agreements with China and whether they should take steps to safeguard themselves from the PRC. This latter question was probed in greater depth when elites were asked to list several measures, they deem their nations could take to safeguard themselves.
4. Respondents' perception of integration and the lack of an integrated approach in dealing with China. Interviewees were asked about the split in recognition of the 'Two Chinas' and the implications this might present for CARICOM nations.
5. Respondents' perception of China's motives for engaging with the countries existing in the Caribbean Community. This section contained questions on the effect of China's motives and policies on these nations, the cost surrounding infrastructure trade-off for natural resources and whether the government was concerned about these impending impacts. In addition, both government and non-governmental elites were asked what their perspectives were on the strategic location of CARICOM as it pertains to China's motives.
6. Respondents' views on the motives/reasons for their country's alignment with China. Both governmental and non-governmental elites were also asked about the possibility of corruption in their nation's interaction with China and whether their alignment with China was a case of self-preservation.
7. Respondents' views on China's drive to diplomatically isolate Taiwan in the region. This section dealt with selected questions on the opportunities and challenges Taiwan's

diplomatic isolation could provide for nations in the sub-region and a closer look at St. Lucia's switch from Taiwan to China and then back again. Elites were asked if St. Lucia had made a good move in doing so, and to say what lessons other CARICOM countries could learn from St. Lucia.

8. This section contained two of the most crucial questions of the interview, specifically having to do with whether China's emergence to date poses any implication on the sub-region's intra-regional relationship as well as their relationship with traditional partners such as the United States and Europe.

The importance given to the implications on the economic and political areas of the intra-and inter-regional relations of the sub-region reflects a diversion from the original research question of the investigation which was too broad. This ensured that the elimination of the previous research question did not in any way, distort the research findings. For example, due to the danger that respondents might not be able to understand what essentially constitutes direct or indirect impacts for the Caribbean Basin as a whole, the findings would have been cumbersome and flawed. The terminology of 'Caribbean' as stated before, is not a settled term. Its definition is often in a constant state of metamorphosis.

In many instances reordering the questions contributed to the rigour of the research findings. This allowed the investigation to capture any inconsistencies in previously related questions which provided a practical basis for comparison. This also aided me in denoting the unintended effect previous questions belonging to a similar grouping might have had on the respondent's answer to subsequent questions.

Not every interview followed this initial pattern (*see Appendix C*). Few of the interviews had minor variations with only foundational questions remaining. Interviews were also recorded where possible. Semi-structured interviews provide a wealth of possibilities wherein the interviewer 'address specific topics to the phenomenon of study while leaving space for participants to offer new meaning to the focus' (Galletta, 2013). The arrangement of the questions provide a great deal of versatility wherein the researcher can also alter the questions based on participants' understanding. Additionally, the format allows for a cross-comparison of individual interviews.

Occupying a middle position between structured and unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews which are non-positivist, when rigorously prepared, allows for greater depth and insight which maximises objectivity and makes the result more plausible (Kallio et al., 2016). This illustrates its suitability with regards to my investigation's hermeneutic and interpretivist epistemology. Additionally, three other factors enabled the use of a semi-structured interview: elites are mainly not open to having a constrained nor linear conversation (Kakabadse, 2011). Additionally, since the topic under investigation is underexplored and theorised, a survey approach was not deemed suitable.

In both cases, the recording of interviews was undertaken where possible. In Trinidad and Tobago, 62% of all participants consented to being recorded while in Jamaica only 42% consented in this regard. The other 38% and 58% respectively opted to speak off-record but submitted the answered questionnaire with non-identifiable details. Where recording was not possible, and notes were instead permitted, shorthand jottings were applied and quickly expounded upon based on memory immediately after the interview. Recorded interviews were later transcribed in full.

The choice between transcribing the data in a naturalistic or *denaturalistic* fashion is always something to consider (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Based on the needs of my research, which was not one of conversational analysis, the removal of involuntary vocalisation such as ('ahh', 'er', 'umm', 'uh-huh', 'you know' etc.) as well as the translation of certain words in the respective dialects, was later adopted for readability and comprehension. The interest here was more so the substance of the perspectives as opposed to how they were communicated (Howitt, 2016). Minimal editing of transcripts once undertaken mindfully and strategically provides more clarity and gives the effect of a whole text (Swaminathan and Mulvihill, 2017). I believed this to be important so that participants could get a fair hearing. Additionally, there are certain phrases used by participants in their dialect that can only be understood by those like me who are familiar with such lingo. On this basis, transcripts were minimally edited for grammatical and readability purposes. For the most part, the act of repetition was not tampered with.

Post transcription, interviews were coded and analysed by NVivo (Version 12). Qualitative data is not only large but also complex and messy (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013). The problem is not in generating the data but instead in making that data valuable, useful and relevant (Richards, 2014). Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS), has aided researchers in archiving, structuring and analysing their data over the last decades (Pasfield-

Neofitou, 2012). NVivo provides a range of tools in managing qualitative data of a large size. This involves coding singularly or in categories, as well as cases and annotations that can be applied to the data record (Richards, 1999). NVivo, in short, helps manage and synthesise data. Due to its versatility, I chose to adopt this software as a tool to aid in analysing the data. As a result, comparisons between themes and groups of respondents were generated through this tool. However, the implications these presented especially with regards to the literature was singularly analysed by me. After all, only the mechanical aspects of qualitative data can be computerised. The interpretive work which involves making sense of the data is always left up to the researcher (Lee, 1991). On this account, the delegation of the mechanical part of the research to NVivo meant that I was able to maintain control over the interpretive and conceptual aspects of the analysis.

2.7.4 Triangulation and the use of Supplementary Documents

Though the key source of data for this project were interviews, secondary data in the form of various documents were employed for triangulation. These fell into four classes (See full list in *Appendix E*):

1. Documents on different policy agreements issued by or on behalf of the Jamaican and Trinidad and Tobagonian governments as well as the CARICOM Secretariat.
2. Ruling parties' speeches and reports to parliament in each country cases.
3. National Policies, Legislation and Acts existing in each country cases.
4. Opinion pieces, official speeches and other documents emanating from media outlets in each country.

Whenever the principle of triangulation is discussed, the core idea behind it is that multiple methods will give way to a more accurate outcome that can lead to multiple perspectives of understanding (Flick, 2018). Often used to eliminate distinctive threats to validity, triangulation takes on four distinctive forms. These involve 'data triangulation' which includes collecting data from a variety of sources, 'theoretical triangulation' which consists of the use of multiple theories to interpret the data, 'methodological triangulation' which includes multiple research methods and 'investigator triangulation' which involves many researchers engaging in the gathering and interpretation of data (Denzin Norman, 1970).

Since the different perspectives existing in the documents mentioned above are occasionally separate from the views of the elites that were interviewed, the type of triangulation used in my research consisted primarily of ‘data triangulation’ and with the emergence of theories in some aspect, ‘theoretical triangulation’. Additionally, there were several instances where the views of these elites intersected. This, in conjunction with the way the interviews were conducted and analysed, together with the sourcing and analysis of the other documents, lends the study an element of methodological triangulation. Carter and New (2005) describe this as a combination of a range of methodologies that sometimes conflict with each other, while taking into account the different assumptions regarding their epistemology and ontology.

The selective use of certain elements existing in the classical form of content analysis, such as the calculation of key terms and the quantification of standard coded sources, are all factors that contribute to the methodological triangulation existing in this investigation. My study often takes advantage of the features of NVivo that enable the frequency of words to be quantified, as well as in areas where the text is so dense that it facilitates the discernment of particular associations and patterns that occur in elite perspectives. This is similar to what Roller, Mathes and Eckert writing in Kelle and Bird (1995) describes as ‘*hermeneutic-classificatory content analysis*’. Hermeneutic-classificatory content analysis involves the process wherein the data is systematically revised through coding and classification employing both a qualitative and quantitative approach (Kelle and Bird, 1995). According to the authors, this approach is especially suited for analysing both unstructured and semi-structured interviews in which respondents have the freedom to express their perspective on a particular topic in their own terms (Roller et al., 1995).

As previously mentioned, purposive sampling was the approach undertaken in my research. Consequently, the quantitative elements existing here should not be viewed as statistically transferable to general cases. The fact that 84% of Jamaican elites, view China’s emergence in the Caribbean Community as a matter of concern, for example, does not immediately mean that sentiment is shared by the same percentage of the Jamaican population. Instead, what the principle of investigative generalisation does, is grant accessibility to the reviewer as it relates to the respondents presented in (*Appendix D*) and the positions they hold in (*Table 1*). It is up to the reviewer to come to a reasoned judgement as it relates to applicability to more universal cases. In an attempt to avoid misrepresentation in the data, my research has also avoided any form of quantitative analysis wherein less than ten (10) elites are being analysed surrounding

a specific area. This has enabled the triangulation of data without infringing on the interpretive focus of the study.

2.8 Ethical Consideration

‘Every research activity is an exercise in research ethics; every research question is a moral dilemma, and every research decision is an instantiation of values’ (Kilty et al., 2014). Accordingly, it was essential that I contemplated the moral obligation towards those that were interviewed. My commitment to comply with the research guidelines set out in the RMIT Human Research Ethics Procedure in accordance with the Australian National Statement, meant that informed and voluntary consent was required from each respondent who wished to participate in the study. Researchers must not be inclined to engage in the coercion of respondents through the dissemination of insufficient or misleading information (Garner et al., 2009). As a result, the questions: • *Do you consider yourself to be ill* ○ *Have extremely limited knowledge about the topic area covered* ○ *Not able to consent to participation in this study* ○ *None of the above*, acted as an eligible measurement as to who could participate in the investigation and who could not. Those who fell into any of the categories above were promptly excluded from the investigation so as to avoid ethical pitfalls.

Since respondents should also be informed of the purpose of the research along with the sponsoring organisation without jeopardising the investigation’s aims (Smith, 2017), a letter or introductory email bearing full details of my institutional affiliation, name and general research area, namely, ‘*The impact of China in the Caribbean from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago Perspective*’ was sent out to all prospective interviewees. Those who requested a copy of the questions was provided one displaying all the intended questions except for the one addressing the matter of corruption as it relates to that particular case’s relationship with China. Inclusion of this question, I believed, would have led to a proportionally high amount of bias which would have skewed the results acquired from asking this question. To avoid engaging in deception of any kind as it relates to this question, participants were informed that the list of questions received was in no way exhaustive in nature. Additionally, interview schedules were sent to participants one week preceding the official meeting and it was stated clearly the context in which the data would be utilised. It is imperative that a researcher also inform participants of the right to withdraw from the study without having to face any adverse consequences in choosing to do so (Rosenstein, 2019). As a result, all participants were given my contact details

and was informed that they could withdraw at any time or request the destruction of their recording until it was no longer feasible to do so (August 2018). Interviews not conducted over the phone, Skype or LinkedIn were conducted in a place most convenient to the interviewee, all of which happened to be a place of work.

In a few cases, both governmental and non-governmental participants expressed opinions and disclosed facts that could potentially jeopardise their position. As a result, in ensuring that no harm is incurred by subjects (Pimple, 2017), care was taken in preserving the respondent's confidentiality and anonymity. On account of this, participants were granted the privilege to have their names, titles or organisation concealed or omitted entirely. Expressions disclosed 'off the record', were also not affiliated to any respondent present in the study.

An investigator's duty with regard to ethics extends far beyond the reach of participants to also include readers and the general academic community. This involves transparency in reporting findings and in the crediting of works used by others so that knowledge generated by the study can be compared across other areas (Melnik and Morrison-Beedy, 2012). Given that this is the case, I have provided clarification here on the multi-faceted processes that underpinned this investigation from start to finish. Resting on this confidence, transcripts (edited to only ensure confidentiality and anonymity) as well as coded data can be offered upon request to any other researcher wishing to corroborate the findings presented here.

2.9 Conclusion

The research utilises a holistic constructivist approach towards foreign policy analysis (FPA) while employing the analytical political theory as a methodological framework. The analytical political theory deals exclusively with governments, organisations and the practice of states while having the ability to weld together insights, data and understandings taken from elites of both country cases. As a result, I was able to reconstruct and pinpoint the origin of the previous political associations of these nations and, in some cases, the moral principles of their foreign policy approach. This not only aided in my answering all the proposed research questions but also in providing an in-depth discussion undertaken in chapter 10 which pulls together the entire thesis in order to provide a more wholistic picture. The theory also provided room for a case study and interview approach, which is the main tool through which I was able to utilise a wide range of sources. These include documents, memoirs, insights, opinions and speeches which form the basis of chapters 3-10.

Considering that a state's corporate and social way of life as a unified exhibitor demonstrates that both domestic and systemic levels can influence the interests, behaviour and outlook of the state; meant that a holistic constructivist approach to FPA could adequately explain how Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's identity was formed, both nationally and internationally. This is important to chapters 3, 5 and 6 of the study. Chapter 3 informs us of the formation of the vulnerable identity these CARICOM nations, chapter 5 distinguishes between vulnerability as a category and identity and discusses how Jamaica came to adopt such an identity, while chapter 6 takes a similar approach to chapter 5 but focuses solely on Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, and on this basis, chapters 5 and 6 were able to provide an analysis of the concept of vulnerability and vulnerability as a construct of the identity of these two nations. This in turn led to their reasons for aligning with China even in instances that were not advantageous to them (discussed in chapters 4-6).

Additionally, a holistic constructivist approach to FPA is able to offer an insight into the continuous process of how these two nations' domestic and social identities interact with each other, to attain or duplicate how any new definition of 'self' and 'other' is viewed. This is the basis of Chapter 7, which examines the intra-regional relationship between these nations and the implications that China might have on that relationship. Additionally, how China as 'other' is viewed by elites in these two nations outside their traditional partners (US and Europe), provided space for various opinions on China. It is for this reason that most participants existing in the two case studies agree on the consensus that China will a) never be able to replace their connections with the US and b) never be accepted as the new hegemon in the sub-region. This is discussed at length in chapter 8.

A holistic constructivist approach to the FPA also gives the project scope for arguments in this dissertation to reflect on the ways in which China's foreign policy ties in with its domestic policies and how elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago believe that their respective nations will fit into this. This is important to the analysis undertaken in chapters 4 and 9. Chapter 4 focuses on China's motives for alignment with the two CARICOM countries, coupled with the debates and concerns surrounding China's impact on the societies of these two nations from their elites' perspective. In additionally, chapter 9 also examines, from the perspective of the elites of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's, China's foreign policy commitments to these CARICOM nations since the launch of the 2011 Forum and the impact it has had on these nations since then.

Finally, the holistic constructivist approach to FPA challenges the division between both the intrinsic and local framework and creates a platform that merges both the state's identity and interest. This relates to the overarching question of my project, as the approach was able to offer an alternative view of how elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, perceive China's engagement with their nation and how they, in turn, viewed their nation's response to the PRC. The holistic constructivist approach has also been able to place the perspectives of these elites and their nations' foreign policy behaviour towards China in the developmental behaviour of the geopolitical and post-colonial period. This aspect of the approach is important to the next chapter, which deals with the historical background of CARICOM nations, how this history has shaped their vulnerable identity and their foreign policy responses to more powerful states, as well as their current views on the implications of being categorised as 'small'.

PART II: CHINA AND THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY: HISTORY, EMERGENCE AND MOTIVES

Chapter Three: The Caribbean Community: The Historical and Geographical Context



Map of the Caribbean.

Source: World Atlas.

The most fitting generalisation of the Caribbean's topography is that it is characterised by its diversity. The appeal of the region is represented by both the hilly and low-lying areas of a significant number of islands. However, of equal importance is the fact that the islands of the Caribbean, encompasses and demarcates the Caribbean Sea, as opposed to sitting in it. Divided into the Greater and Lesser Antilles, the Caribbean provides a centre of assorted topographical connections between the surrounding islands and terrains. The uniqueness of the islands can be found in the way they form an archipelago, spreading across a broad circular segment with vast waterways on either side, and in the way the archipelago sits detached from the mainland (Higman, 2010). The significance of the Greater and the Lesser Antilles, however, is far more prominent than that of giving a beautiful appeal. It provides a background to the unfurling of the Caribbean's history.

The first section of this chapter briefly discusses the historical and geographical evolution of the Caribbean and Caribbean Community. It begins with what constitutes the term 'Caribbean' and 'Caribbean Community', and why it has been deemed a region of importance for centuries. This is important in terms of the project's overarching question as it provides us with contextual

information that will aid in understanding the reasons for China's sudden interest in the region. This section will also highlight the emergence of CARICOM and highlight the role played in its formation by Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. This is also linked to the central question of the dissertation, because it is here that we will come to understand why the PRC has sought to deepen its engagement with Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago more than with any other CARICOM nation. My argument establishes here, that the Caribbean and CARICOM are both areas of strategic importance. This section will demonstrate that both the region and the sub-region were always considered entry points to Europe and Latin America. A fact that is not lost on China. In addition, the section will explain how the region has always been caught up in power struggles between powerful nations due to its strategic importance. This is no different from recent years wherein the sudden rise of China in the region has caused a great deal of concern to US policymakers who regard the PRC as a potential threat to the hegemon's national security. This section is essentially the foundation of the project. It is the guide that will help readers understand why a group of small nations is so heavily guarded by the hegemon of the world and why a rising superpower has found it necessary to integrate them into its foreign policy.

It is important to remember that CARICOM, which was used as a subset of the Caribbean in this study, was used to assist the project in refining the holistic constructivist framework in order to understand the perspectives of governmental and non-governmental elites of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago as it relates to China. CARICOM countries, including the two cases that form the foundation of this investigation, have a similar history, culture, political system, identity, population size and development rank as identified in the World Bank's Small States Programme. Having isolated this subset, the investigation was able to within reason, treat these nations as homogeneous units in a few areas with the primary differences being their natural resource endowment, population size, foreign policy strategies, perspective on and responses to China. When the term Caribbean Community is used in this study, it is only in reference to the member nations²³ found in this integration bloc. However, as previously mentioned, the investigation focuses solely on elites from two countries existing in the Community—Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Following this, the second section of the chapter sets the context, by highlighting the issues that dominate the literature surrounding small states, the definition of what constitutes a small

²³ The member nations of CARICOM are further outlined in this Chapter.

state, their unique features and how it all relates to CARICOM nations. It will be established that elements highlighted in the literature with regards to the category of ‘smallness’ and the characteristics therein, underlined by decades of colonialism, have always impacted on the foreign policy undertakings of CARICOM countries. The chapter then moves the discussion into the distinguishing characteristics of the foreign policy of CARICOM nations, by providing an exposition of the early-colonial and post-colonial era of the sub-region. Here the colonial history is acknowledged, only to the extent that this history has determined the configurations and structures of power existing in the region’s present inter and intra-regional political and economic relations. It establishes that there is truth to Robert Young’s argument when he posited the stance that ‘post’ in post-colonialism did not signify a leaving behind of colonialism but instead emphasised the continued relevance of its impact on these [CARICOM countries’] politics, economy and development after decolonisation (Young, 2016). Young’s argument is further evidenced in the data findings presented at the end of this chapter. This section is also applicable to the central question of the thesis as it helps us to understand the factors that have made the foreign policy of CARICOM nations into what it is today. My argument here will demonstrate that it is the conditioning of the early and post-colonial period that has contributed to the creation of a vulnerable identity through which these nations are currently operating in their dealings with China. Such an identity has also affected their view of China and also their reaction to the presence of the PRC in the sub-region.

To fully comprehend these nations’ position, an overview of CARICOM countries’ foreign policy strategies with regards to their alignment with the West since the 1950s is also provided. My thesis finds that great powers will always be a key element of CARICOM nations’ foreign policy and, although this might change over time, they will always remain the basis on which the economic pillars of these countries are built. As a result, my research will make mention of Wendell Bell’s and Kenneth Waltz’s major studies. Both writing in different periods, suggest that small countries like [Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago] will not only search for new networks with countries that could serve their purpose, but will most likely ‘bandwagon’ with a superpower rather than balance against it. The chapter concludes this section by offering an examination as to how CARICOM nations sought to situate themselves in the global arena over time. There are conflicting studies in this regard. Some researchers (Nabudere, 2000, Hoogvelt, 2001, Loomba, 2007, Krishna, 2009) argue that the transition of these nations from colonial to post-colonial construct is paramount in understanding how these small states sought to situate themselves in the global environment. Others such as (Snyder, 1952, Rosenau, 1969, Hussain,

2011, Weissmann, 2015) argue that decision-making and domestic politics are the important elements, which has led these small states to employ strategies in order to secure themselves in the international arena. My argument will show that CARICOM countries such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago can fit into both sides of the debate. On one hand, the dismantlement of European colonialism has impacted the way in which these nations have sought to adjust to globalisation, as they have indeed transitioned through what Bell (1977) termed as ‘the three more or less overlapping, newly emergent and articulate groups of nations that emerged at that time; namely: the “less developed”, “nonaligned” and the “third world”’. On the other hand, from the 1970s to present CARICOM nations have adopted a more ‘promotive’ form of foreign policy, aimed at creating a new equilibrium between domestic and international demands by changing both environments.

When considering small states’ foreign policy, it should be remembered that it ‘is still a relatively young discipline, occupying a niche position in IR’ (Neumann, 2004). As a result, most of these analyses (Hunt, 1996, Bernstein and Munro, 1997, Krenn and Gates, 1998, Otte, 2002, Mankoff, 2009, Henry, 2010, Garver, 2011, Sakaki, 2012, Beckley, 2018) over the years, have gravitated their interests towards the foreign policies of powerful nations and as a result small states are often overlooked. Notwithstanding, when researchers such as (De Raeymaeker, 1974, Katzenstein, 1985, Art and Jervis, 1985, Prasad et al., 2005, Maass, 2017), do allude to powerless states, systemic as opposed to domestic variables are given much more attention. The comprehensive insight within the IR field is that domestic determinants are less salient when studies concentrate on how smaller states conduct themselves because outer limitations are more extreme and universal determinations are more convincing. As a result, the existing literature falls short in explaining the unique foreign policy strategies that these small states may employ. As Kassimeris (2009) points out ‘the role that these states play in the international system, probably, accounts for the lack of interest in exploring their foreign policies’.

Having suffered from sporadic research and a lack of empirical investigation, the chapter contributes to the literature of small states by concluding with the first set of empirical results. The findings explore the current attitudes and points of view of governmental and non-governmental elites in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, with regard to the impediments and defined attitudes that result from being a small nation. Data on how these two countries, classified as ‘small’, view and interact with their colonial past, will also be presented. The chapter establishes that, given the geographical dimension and the colonial history of these two

CARICOM countries, dependence/vulnerability still remains an economic constraint for the governing elites of their nations. As a result, these variables remain an ongoing trait of these small and open CARICOM countries' foreign policy. In addition, the data also indicate that the categorisation of 'small' for non-governing elites is simply a mentality steeped in a colonial past practised by the governing elites of their nations. It is here that the data shows that, of all the characteristics identified by researchers as inherent to small states, aid-dependence remains for these two CARICOM nations a consequence of their geographical dimension. This aid-dependence is also a dominant characteristic of their foreign policy that continues to determine their superpower alignment. The overall argument made in this section of the study is one that lays the foundation for helping readers understand the rationale behind Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's perspective on China. It is also here that we are better able to comprehend the course of action that small nations like those in CARICOM are willing to take in an effort to align themselves with a superpower or a potentially emerging one. This is key to understanding the arguments presented throughout the rest of this dissertation.

3.1 Defining the Caribbean and Caribbean Community

The Caribbean is important to the comprehension of the Caribbean Community as well as the result of the global outcome of its colonial exchange. Similarly, the unpredictable processes and the multifaceted flows that have historically shared in the formation of various societies in the region, have rendered comprehension of the Caribbean a challenging task. Capriata quoted in Torres-Saillant (2006) stated that 'the word "Caribbean" is fraught with as much difficulty as the word "jungle"' (Torres-Saillant, 2006). At any given time, the Caribbean can either include a population of 135 million, or 30 million, both of which is dependent on whether it is defined as a basin or islands and atolls (Sutton, 1993). The definition of the Caribbean region with which this dissertation is concerned is the one posited by Figueredo et al., (2008). He defines it as follows: Comprised of more than 700 isles, islets, cays and atolls the Caribbean is enveloped by the Caribbean Sea which is a stretch of water that is a part of the Atlantic Ocean. Toward the north of the Caribbean Sea are the islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica and Puerto Rico, and toward the South are the nations of Colombia, Panama and Venezuela. Central America and the Yucatan Peninsula lie on the west of the Caribbean Sea, and toward the east are the smaller islands of Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago and Martinique (Figueredo and Argote-Freyre, 2008). The mere fact that the Gulf of Mexico is toward the North and West of the Caribbean Sea, with the islands stretching out more than 600,000 square miles from the tip

of Florida to the shoreline of Texas and Mexico, should be enough to highlight the Caribbean's importance (Figueredo and Argote-Freyre, 2008). A relatively large number of the world's transportation continues to take place in this sea today. Having established a general definition of the Caribbean, as previously mentioned, the investigation will only be dealing with a subset of this region—the Caribbean Community.

The definition of CARICOM digresses from the complexities provided by that of the Caribbean and adopts a more uniformed rationale. A regional organisation consisting of 15 member nations with 5 as associate members, CARICOM is primarily a vehicle for deeper economic integration for the region. CARICOM mainly functions as a construct seeking to achieve harmonisation among its member nations in the following areas: foreign policy, functional cooperation and trade and economic (Hall, 2012). Jessen (1999) describes it, as 'the oldest integration scheme in the Western Hemisphere, the largest in terms of membership, yet by far the smallest in economic and geographic terms'. 15 member nations are existing in CARICOM: *Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Surinam, Barbados, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Belize, Saint Lucia, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Montserrat, Guyana, Jamaica and Haiti*. Those making up the associate members are namely, *Anguilla, Turks and Caicos Islands, Bermuda, Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands*.

Though initially CARICOM was implemented to provide a sustainable Community to facilitate a continued economic connection between English-speaking nations existing in the Caribbean, it later extended to include both Surinam and Haiti which falls outside this scope (Hornbeck, 2008). Also deemed as an area of importance, islands existing in the Community once served as transit zones to Spanish and British merchants (Richardson, 1992). However, it wasn't until the mid-17th century that islands in the community were 'irrevocably harnessed', on the grounds of delivering staples, mainly sugar cane, that couldn't be grown in Europe (Higman, 1999). From that point onwards, countries existing in the Caribbean Community experienced a history of priority and prolonged colonialism that lasted well into the 1900s. The Caribbean and nations existing in CARICOM were after all the initial site of contact between people who had previously been separated by an inconceivable sea, and one that was fundamental in the making of new methods of financial associations, new dialects and new types of social relations (Higman, 1999). It was through these advancements (Spanish, English, French and Dutch) into this section of the world, that scholars often connect with the introduction of the modern world and concept of modernity and later, the idea of globalisation (Higman, 2010). By definition

then, CARICOM and its importance are tied to the Caribbean. In its simplest form, it is a regional integration bloc that has emerged out of the greater Caribbean region and is often seen and referred to as a subset of the Caribbean.

In the end, whatever the definition of the Caribbean, there are two geopolitical facts as it relates to the broader region and its CARICOM subset. As Anderson (1984) puts it: ‘(1) no other sector of the ocean has so many different political entities adjoining or facing a common water surface and (2) the region lies adjacent to the United States’. This latter fact is what has to this day, secured the Caribbean and its Community as a jewel in US’s crown. Having been preceded by earlier European powers, US expansionism into the Caribbean was at its all-time high by the nineteenth century. From being economic outposts, naval stations and a key communication point for the Dutch and the English, the Caribbean soon found itself as the keystone of US’s ‘third border’ (Palmer, 1998). As Griffith (2004) puts it, ‘in terms of security networks, up until the early 1990s United States officialdom considered the Caribbean its “southern flank” as well as its “strategic rear”’. This categorisation of the Caribbean later witnessed a power projection by the US wherein the security of the new global hegemon became synonymous to a military predominance in the Caribbean.

At the heart of this military hegemony in the region was the US’s concern for its national security marketed as both economic and strategic concerns (Muniz and Beruff, 2016). What this meant was that the US was committed in every way possible to deter the establishment of any military or geopolitical presence from external or internal hemispheric powers in the region. The presence of any external power in the region for mainland United States, would have been a direct threat to its national security. Undoubtedly, this move of throwing the Caribbean under its military umbrella helped in skyrocketing the region’s geopolitical value. As Muniz and Beruff (2016) contends, ‘the reach of the US policy also echoes the Caribbean’s historical position as both an internal and external region of the United States’. This meant that from a geopolitical vantage point, the Cold War in the Caribbean was something that had begun long before the Grenada contention (Morris, 2016). This was an outlook that remained unchanged even with the emergence of the Caribbean Community.

3.2 Emergence of the Caribbean Community

The development of regional blocs has been one of the most advanced in the political and international discourse as of late (Chase, 2009). Almost all nations hold membership status to

at least one trading bloc. At the first level, the agreements existing among these blocs involve tariff removals on exchanged merchandise among member states. However, many extend their reach to encompass non-tariff boundaries, to include investments and other policies. At their most profound, the objective can be that of a monetised union, which may also involve a shared sound foundation and legal or executive institutions. Schiff and Winters (2003) remind us that the acknowledgment of effective integration, requires more than substantially reduced duties and quotas, since other barriers provide a dividing factor in relation to the different markets existing in the various member states. In essence, these barriers could result in the hindrance of policies, goods, administrations, investments and services. With respect to CARICOM, geographic and economic space has always been the prevailing and practically the primary justification offered for Caribbean integration. There are two reasons behind this. In the first place, these developing nations consider integration to be an apparatus for improvement and second, integration forms part of the global political and financial conditions.

The Caribbean's first movement towards regional integration was that of the West Indian Federation whose inception was brought forward on January 3, 1958. With exception of British Guiana and British Honduras, Britain's colonial office saw a federal experiment as the ideal solution for a more unified administration of nations that could take their first step towards independence (Pantin and Teelucksingh, 2017). The West Indian Federation would become a medium through which a practical political unit could be created. This would, in turn, prove to be economically independent and, in this manner, would have met all requirements for self-government. However, economically, Britain continued to perpetuate trade barriers among the islands, thus constraining all trade through the motherland. These variables, in addition to growing patriotism on each island, bound the federal experiment to failure. Additionally, both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, the two largest nations in the British Caribbean, wanted no part in the Federation to begin with, and this led to its death before conception. As a result, fragmentation of regional development in the Caribbean was witnessed through the failure of the short-lived Federation, which came about as a result of Jamaica's withdrawal in 1962 and Trinidad following suit shortly after. Emmer et al. (2004) summed it up by pointing out that 'over a span of 15 years, the idea of a West Indian Federation was born, developed and died'.

With the emergence of various integration blocs in other surrounding areas, especially in Latin America where the 1960 Latin American Free Trade Area (LAFTA) came into effect, followed by the Central American Common Market (CACM) shortly after the same year; the feeling that

the Caribbean should also engage in an integration model began to mount (Payne, 2008). At this point, intra-regional activity, as it relates to economic matters, was especially poignant. Caribbean officials soon embraced the thought of possibly creating a Caribbean Economic Community and concluded that the simplest way to achieve this, would be through the creation of a free trade area. In July 1965, Prime Ministers Errol Barrow and Forbes Burnham of Barbados and British Guyana declared that both countries had agreed to create a free trade area (Secretariat, 2005). The intended date for its emergence would be no later than January of the following year. Both prime ministers expressed that cooperation from other territories in the Caribbean region would be welcomed in a scheme destined to be called the Caribbean Free Trade Agreement (CARIFTA) formed in 1968 (LeVeness, 1974). These developments were geared towards CARIFTA becoming a definitive target that would create a suitable economic community and a common market for all Caribbean territories (if they so desired) that were soon to gain independence. This, of course, caught the attention of the Trinidadian government, especially since most observers quickly proclaimed that the announcement was a genuine stride towards the accomplishment of Caribbean economic integration. However, Jamaica, for the most part, remained vaguely interested in the matter. The conviction was that the region's economies produced a similar scope of primary products (Egoumé-Bossogo and Mendis, 2002). The held belief was that existing barriers between Caribbean nations would not have had an incredible re-distributive impact on the production pattern of economies existing in the union. However, with a push for deeper intra-regional trade preferences, the 1968 CARIFTA grew out to CARICOM in 1973. Still, it was not until the signing of the treaty of Chaguaramas in Trinidad in 1973 by Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Guyana that a Common Market came into being (Mawby, 2012a).

The focus of the founders was predominantly on building a regional bloc, by implementing a Common External Tariff (CET), fortifying practical participation and by advancing the coordination of foreign policies (Sadikov, 2008). Soon a total of 15 member nations and 5 associate member nations quickly found their way into the Caribbean Community (Caribbean Community Secretariat Report, 2011). Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and British Guiana started discussions surrounding its formation in 1963 and Antigua, British Honduras, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Montserrat, St. Kitts/Nevis/Anguilla and St. Vincent came on board in 1974.²⁴ Shortly after that, the Bahamas in 1983, Suriname in 1995 while Haiti secured

²⁴ Caribbean Community Secretariat report on: *The history of the Caribbean Community* published 2011 (Accessed March 23, 2017). URL: <http://archive.caricom.org/jsp/community/history.jsp?menu=community>.

provisional membership in 1998 and became the first French-speaking Caribbean state to become a full member in 2002 (Caribbean Community Secretariat Report, 2011). According to this same archival report, in 1991 the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos became associated members, followed by Anguilla in 1999 and The Cayman Islands and Bermuda in 2002 and 2003 respectively (Caribbean Community Secretariat Report, 2011).

With these diverse member nations, CARICOM faced two initial challenges; first, the external tariff remained uncommon in many CARICOM territories, and in others, the efforts to integrate remained a superficial attempt. However, in 1991, member states agreed on the priorities of establishing the Caribbean Single Market Economy (CSME) and vowed then, to move beyond the aims of a typical market, by encouraging the development of and access to the components of production, the internal movements of merchandise in the sub-region, the conveyance of services and the establishment of commerce (Hall and Chuck-A-Sang, 2013). Nevertheless, it was not until 2006, that the CSME was implemented, and it quickly witnessed free labour movements, tax policies, custom laws harmonisation and regulations, as it relates to dumping and subsidies (Pollard, 2007). CARICOM nations, especially Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago saw this, to a great extent, as a reaction to moderate development in intra-regional investment and trade, more noteworthy multilateral exchange advancements, loss of trade preferences and the need to fortify regional competitiveness (Hall and Chuck-A-Sang, 2013). As a result, economic development through integration became CARICOM's main priority in dealing with globalisation and gaining more influence in the global sphere.

3.2.1 The role of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in the creation of CARICOM

Both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have assumed seminal roles in the development of the Caribbean Community throughout the years. Their impact on and participation in regional integration ventures has been both positive and negative. Provincially, the failure of the West Indian Federation has been ascribed to Jamaica's refusal to take an interest, and locally, the issue of regional integration has been a source of conflict in numerous national elections in the island. As previously mentioned in chapter 2, Trinidad and Tobago can be credited with the proposed formation of CARICOM. This came in wake of Trinidad's announcement regarding its intention to also withdraw from the Federation. The proposal made by the former British colony was that CARICOM should include not just the ten (10) nations that were formerly part of the West Indian Federation, but also the three (3) Guianas and every one of the islands of

the Caribbean Sea—both autonomous and non-autonomous (Axline, 1979). To discuss the idea further, the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago convened the first Heads of Government Conference in July 1963, which was attended by delegates of Barbados, British Guiana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (Berry, 2014). At the point of the Caribbean Community's establishment in 1973, Jamaica's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was an estimated US\$1,218 and was the world's largest exporter of bauxite-alumina while Trinidad and Tobago whose GDP per capita was a whopping US\$1,681, had the biggest petroleum refinery in the overseas Commonwealth (Levitt, 2005). Together with Barbados (GDP per capita US\$867) and Guyana (GDP per capita US\$662) the four alleged 'More Developed Countries (MDCs)' inside the Caribbean Community became the motors of development anticipated to lift the 'Less Developed Countries (LDCs)' islands out of poverty (Levitt, 2005).

The Governments of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago submitted themselves to the objectives of CARICOM, including economic reconciliation involving the CET, the coordination of foreign policy approaches by member states, and functional participation in joint activities and administrations. For these two nations, guaranteed enrolment in the Common Market was dependent upon participation in the Community, which meant that Caribbean nations would be even more motivated to join CARICOM (Jessen, 1999). This, of course, would diminish the chances of a free ride by solely joining the Common Market as it were. In response to principal and boundless advancements on the global scene, for example, with the dismantling of the Soviet Union and the creation of the European Union, both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago understood that the Caribbean Community needed to re-position itself, if it somehow intended to be a genuine medium for Caribbean improvement through integration. As a result, the 1991 West Indian Commission was as Bravo (2005) points out 'established by the CARICOM heads of Government, to help the people of the West Indies prepare for the twenty-first century'. The apparent role of the Commission was to define recommendations to advance the objectives of the 1973 Treaty and to present its report to the July 1992 Heads of Government meeting (Bravo, 2005). Following well-recorded consultations with institutions and individuals all through the Caribbean and among the West Indian diaspora in the United States and the United Kingdom, the Commission issued six key proposals for the appropriation and direction of the Community.

The recommendations adopted from (Ramphal, 1993) were summarised as follows:

1. Permit West Indians to travel the region without any difficulty, since they are nationals of a country homogeneous to all—and encourage exchange visits, particularly among youngsters.

2. Permit West Indian alumni of the University of the West Indies (and other distinguished institutions) and media personnel to work and live openly anywhere in the region as an initial step to allowing the free movement of skilled individuals in the region.
3. Maintain solid strides like the establishment of a free Caribbean Financial Authority and a common exchange.
4. Dispatch a Caribbean Investment Fund of US\$50-70 million to invest resources into the region's stock exchanges. The Progress Report set out a proposition for propelling the Fund.
5. Consider of grave importance, the CARICOM Single Market with its three essential principles: The Common External Tariff, the Harmonised Scheme of Fiscal Incentives, and the Rules of Origin ought to be implemented.
6. Assemble CARICOM so that it constitutes a solitary negotiating stance and a single voice for global transactions fundamental to the Community's common interest.

Emerging from the recommendations of the Commission and the Heads of Government, was the decision to amend the Treaty of 1973 which resulted in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas in 2001 (Bravo, 2005). It was aimed from there on out, at fundamentally changing CARICOM to an institution that fused the political and financial dimensions of the Caribbean Community and Common Market. This followed a new commitment from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago to actively coordinate their trade policy arrangements with the other small CARICOM nations as partners.

3.3 Conceptualising small nations in the Caribbean Community

3.3.1 *Defining a small state*

Over the last decade, scholars and researchers have invested a considerable amount of time, assessing and conceptualising what it means to be a 'small state' in the global environment. In this section, the chapter seeks to embolden the literature on what the notion of being 'small' means to Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites. Though there is no universal agreement as to what defines a 'small state', the United Nations, in the 1960s, having been concerned with the viability and vulnerability of small states; attempted to establish an upper populace limit for what it means to be 'small'. The definition settled on by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research was any nation having a populace of less than 1.5 million (Braveboy-Wagner, 2007). Economists in agreement with this definition, have shown that with regards to small nation-states, a significant correlation exists between the actual populace, and different

measures of monetary size and aggregate land territory (Liou and Ding, 2002). This confirms that in an economic examination, it is sensible to characterise small states by the populace paradigm alone. However, Vital (1967) contends that an upper limit of 20-30 million should instead be recognised as the set limitations by which a state should be defined as small. East (1973) to some degree, in concurrence with Vital, utilised results extracted from statistical data to precisely characterise small states as having less than, 23.7 million individuals. Reiter and Gärtner (2001) on the other hand hold the view that the definition of small states ‘generally rely on thresholds and includes such factors as population size (15 million or less), geographical area and GNP/GDP per capita’. The problem here is that there is no concrete cut-off point as it relates to the threshold of what constitutes a small state. As a result, there is a lack in universal consensus on what population limit should be used to identify smallness. *Table 2*, for example, provides a roster of developing states that are also found in the World Bank’s Small States Programme. In total there are 48 of these states in the programme, most of which are in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, East Asia and the Pacific. As defined here, these small states are sovereign nations with a population of less than 3 million.

Table 2: Developing States by Region Which are Found in The World Bank’s Small States Programme

Source: Adapted from the World Bank’s List of Countries in the Small States Programme 2016.²⁵

AFR	EAP	LAC	MENA	ECA	SAR
Botswana	Brunei Darussalam	Antigua and Barbuda	Bahrain	Cyprus	Bhutan
Cabo Verde	Fiji	The Bahamas	Djibouti	Estonia	Maldives
Comoros	Kiribati	Barbados	Qatar	Iceland	
Equatorial Guinea	Marshall Islands	Belize		Malta	
Gabon	Federal States of Micronesia	Dominica		Montenegro	
The Gambia	Nauru	Grenada		San Marino	
Guinea-Bissau	Palau	Guyana			
Lesotho	Samoa	Jamaica			
Mauritius	Solomon Islands	St. Kitts and Nevis			
Namibia	Timor-Leste	St. Lucia			
São Tomé and Príncipe	Tonga	St. Vincent and the Grenadines			
Seychelles	Tuvalu	Suriname			
Swaziland	Vanuatu	Trinidad and Tobago			

²⁵The World Bank- List of countries in the small states programme published in the policy paper entitled ‘World Bank Group Engagement with Small States: Taking Stock’ published September 8, 2016. (Accessed: April 1, 2017). URL: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/244361475521083722/Small-States-Stocktaking-2016.pdf#page=18&zoom=100>.

The fact is that despite these differing views, it should be noted that whatever variables are employed to define a small state, population size remains a continuous threshold used in the political science literature. All other positions that are chosen as the breaking point, according to researchers like Morris (2008) 'is arbitrary'. However, Morris's conclusion here is fallible. My argument is that although population size should be the primary variable used in defining a small state, other characteristics such as its topographical location, military prowess and GDP are far from arbitrary and should also be taken into consideration. As a result, my thesis stands in support of the argument presented by Moosung Lee. Resting on (Vayrynen, 1971) and (Barston, 1973) arguments respectively, Lee argues that there are two conventional ways of defining a small state: quantitative and qualitative (Lee, 2006). The quantitative approach would assemble nations not only by their population size but also by military power, GDP size, geography and other quantifiable measures. The qualitative strategy on the other hand, would characterise the notion of 'small' on the idea of perception (Lee, 2006). This argument likewise upheld by (Keohane, 1969), (Goetschel, 1998) and (Hey, 2003), includes the assessment of a state's relationship to its more extensive condition, taking into account the amount of influence a state exercises, and the degree to which it sees itself and is seen by others as being small.

Given that the idea surrounding the concept of smallness, relies on the notion of power and on the nature of the international framework in which the states are acting in a given time or under a given circumstance, which in turn may bear direct meaning on small power; I considered both the qualitative and quantitative approaches proposed above. In doing so, the investigation finds that relying solely on a population limit means that this threshold would equate countries such as Costa Rica (with an area of 19,730 sq.mi.) to Norway (with an area of 148,729 sq.mi.) because they have roughly similar population figures (5.0 million for Costa Rica versus 5.3 million for Norway).²⁶ This is despite the fact that the former is considered among the first 100 smallest nations of the world, while the latter is among the first 100 largest.²⁷ Nevertheless, it bears consideration that population density could also be used to remedy this limitation, but as a stand-alone, population density offers no way of distinguishing between countries that are large in the traditional sense (such as India with a population density of 460) and those that are

²⁶ Findings compiled from raw data on Countries in the World by Population (2019) based on the latest United Nations Population Division estimates. Accessed (June 17, 2019). URL: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>

²⁷ Findings compiled from raw data on Countries in the World by Population (2019) based on the latest United Nations Population Division estimates. Accessed (June 17, 2019). URL: <https://www.worldometers.info/geography/largest-countries-in-the-world/>

small (such as Comoros with a population density of 457).²⁸ Thus, relying on a singular variable such as population size to conceptualise CARICOM nations, would mean excluding several key contributing factors as to what encapsulates ‘smallness’. This would incite me to ask, which countries ought to be defined as small? And whether the countries of this study would be appropriate cases for such analysis. It is for this reason, (Lee, 2006) approach of incorporating both a qualitative and quantitative approach seemed more legitimate in extending the definition to nations existing in CARICOM. This means that population size, geography, GDP and ‘small’ in relation to perception are used in this study’s examination concerning small nations existing in CARICOM.

3.3.2 Refining the definition of small states regarding CARICOM nations

So how then would one define small nations existing in the Community? Though the quantity of small states in the world is often questioned, with various studies coming up with different figures, the number of small states existing in the world is ultimately subjected to the definition of ‘smallness’ being utilised. As previously mentioned, population size is the most favoured measurement, yet even this is not consistently used. For example, the UN characterises a small state as one with a population less than 10 million, while the Commonwealth Secretariat, defines a small nation as one with a populace under 1.5 million.²⁹ However, in conceptualising small countries in CARICOM, the implications of the nature of the context under review must be taken into consideration. For instance, this integration bloc brings about a comparatively small number of member nations that are not only different in terms of size but also appears diverse in terms of foreign policy strategies, interests and outlooks.

Despite these differences, small nations in the Community such as that of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago shares a similar economic, political and historical background. These small nations though ‘among the most stubbornly and disproportionally democratic countries in the world’, are rarely studied despite sharing seemingly obvious similarities (Corbett and Veenendaal, 2016). Therefore, though the small state literature focuses much energy on defining small states in terms of population size, my thesis did not focus solely on this primary variable. Instead,

²⁸Findings compiled from raw data on Countries in the World by Population (2019) based on the latest United Nations Population Division estimates. Accessed (June 17, 2019). URL: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/> .

²⁹Commonwealth Secretariat- Report entitled ‘Small States Meeting Challenges in the Global Economy’ prepared by the Commonwealth Secretariat and World Bank Task Force. Published on April 2000. Accessed: April 1, 2017. URL: <http://www.cpahq.org/cpahq/cpadocs/meetingchallengeinglobaleconomy1.pdf>

geography, GDP and ‘small’ in relation to perception coupled with their shared history as well as their disparate foreign policy strategies, interests and outlooks were utilised to conceptualise these small nations in the Community. In so doing, the dissertation was better able to explain why Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago developed similar and, in some cases, divergent behavioural pattern in their engagement with China along with the differences and similarities existing in their elites’ perspective on the PRC. I judged it necessary to explore these distinctive features, as they were considered relevant to the two cases and inevitably to other countries existing in CARICOM. Conceptualising these countries in conjunction with these variables was worthwhile for several reasons:

1. First, they help to explain how specifically the governing elites in some and/or all CARICOM nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago behave in certain situations especially as it relates to superpowers and seemingly emerging ones like China.
2. Second, they also help to understand why there is a divergence in the foreign policies of these two nations with regards to China.
3. Third, they help to explain and identify the perspective that governmental and non-governmental elites in the two CARICOM cases may have regarding the effect of China’s foreign policy on their nations and others in the Community.

The project was able on this ground to identify the distinctive features unique and/or common to small nations, especially those existing in the Caribbean Community.

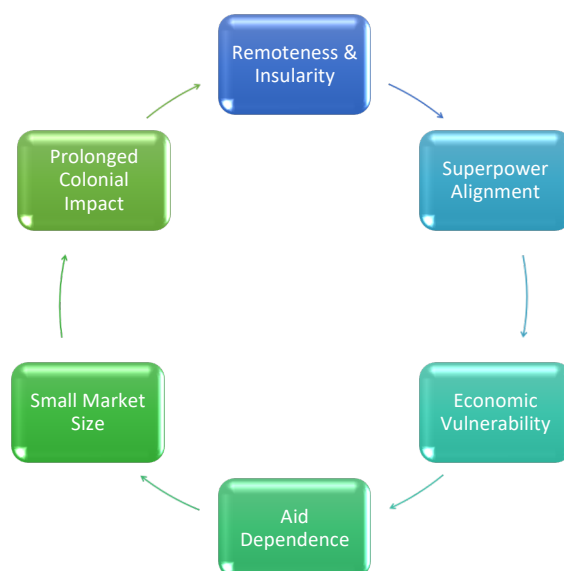
3.3.3 Features of small states and how CARICOM nations relate to them

Regardless of contrasting perspectives as it applies to a set upper limit, or whether regions should also be taken into account when settling on an upper limit, most researchers (Olafsson, 1995, Charles, 1997, Ota and Cas, 2008, Ingebritsen et al., 2012, Archer et al., 2014, Khonje, 2015) have agreed that, while states vary from one to another, it is possible to distinguish certain components with which a large number of small states hold in like manner. ‘Whatever the precise definition of the small state’, the smallness of the state, i.e., its power restriction, produces a significant distinction between the issues and constraints, as well as the resource alternatives and policy options faced by small states as opposed to larger ones (Karsh, 2012). This may, in turn, bear directly on their economic, political and social standing. The features

with which a significant number of researchers agree on as the common threads found in the fabric of small states have been identified in *Fig. 1*.³⁰

Figure 1: Common Features of Small*³¹ Developing Nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago

Source: Prepared by Author from interviews and data triangulation



Remoteness & Insularity:

While all economies have the potential to be incorporated into the global economy, a few economies, by virtue of their consolidated area, most likely as a result of their size, can be hindered as far as costs, delays, indivisibility in foreign trade and enhanced vulnerabilities are concerned. However, it is only conceivable that these variables can only be expressed indirectly through the cost of international transport (Atkins et al., 2001). This high transport cost and marginalisation from main transport centres exacerbate the problem of increase dependence on international trade (Hill and de Sousa Saldanha, 2001). Identifying with CARICOM countries, there is still the matter of a significant absence of Caribbean nationalistic spirit in the region. Instead, allegiance is communicated with pride when nationals refer to themselves as Jamaican or Trinidadian. These islands, regardless of their incorporation in CARICOM, still maintain a remarkable self-image and are equally aware of their individuality. This insularity among the

³⁰ Any diagram that is not a Table will from henceforth be referred to as Figure.

³¹ *These characteristics are interrelated and offers an insight to the most critical elements that are attributed to small states. None of them independently are exclusive to small nation states, however on the whole they offer a wealth of knowledge into what components shape the very foundations of small states in various degree instead of in kind to bigger states.

islands not only affects the dynamics of the area's political structure, but also facilitates negative impacts on future economic progress; as most financial analysts believe that political and economic integration in the region are a prerequisite for a solid Caribbean economy (Peters, 1992). Despite this, nations in the Caribbean Community still struggles to integrate effectively. Though they share a common past and contemporary predicament, some degree of insularity is still maintained as the Community remains firmly anchored to island and enclave. Many of the participants expressed the issue of 'insular mobility', lack of integration and tight hold on nationalistic pride as the sub-region's downfall in achieving economic advancement. This is further explained in chapter 7.

Superpower Alignment:

Alliances are often treated with caution because, when compared to larger ones, the asymmetry of power between those in this relationship poses greater instability and uncertainty for smaller states. However, numerous smaller states have looked for casual understandings as it relates to their security with major or regional powers to provide them with an 'umbrella' under which their survival, notwithstanding extreme dangers, can be guaranteed (Neal, 2017). In the case of nations existing in the Caribbean Community, the question of which 'superpower' to align themselves with, has more to do with their immediate circumstances and the relative strength and weaknesses that presents itself in the state. The Commonwealth Secretariat contends that, while there is an universal and established guarantee of security for small states, alliance with a superpower or an emerging one ensures that the latter, is prepared to oppose aggression on their behalf (Secretariat, 1997). This provides an alternative option through which, these small states can hope to have their specific security needs acknowledged and recognised (Secretariat, 1997). As it relates to the Caribbean Community and China, for example, a lean more towards China as opposed to the US, suggests that China is providing an alternative centre of support for these small nations who would like to pursue development and security policies that are not sanctioned by US's ideology.

Economic Vulnerability:















It has always been argued that small states are also economically vulnerable. This also feeds into superpower alignment. To offset their economic vulnerability, small states seek protection from superpowers or their larger neighbours (Steinmetz, 2016). These small states would then, shelter under the bilateral agreements that the superpower or emerging power provides. This is

similarly the case when it comes to CARICOM nations. Despite being a member of several international organisations created after World War II, and receiving direct financial support from their membership, particularly as it relates to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, countries in the Caribbean Community continued for several decades, to be economically protected by its largest neighbour which happened to also be the superpower, the United States (Maingot and Lozano, 2005). Another glaring fact as it relates to these countries in the Caribbean Community is that the average population of countries belonging to the Common Market,³² is less than 3 million and a number of them cover small land spaces. Seven (7) CARICOM countries have a land area less than 5,000 Km^2 , and all except Suriname and Guyana cover areas smaller than 30,000 Km^2 (Jessen, 1999). The total population of CARICOM member nations currently stands at less than 18 million, which further exacerbates these countries' economic vulnerabilities. The annual Gross Domestic Product for the member nations of the Community averaged US\$79.6 million in 2016³³ thus illustrating that even the combined strength of CARICOM countries is very limited. *Table 3* below paints a more vivid picture of the data.

Table 3: Members of the Caribbean Community: Indication of population size, Gross Domestic Product, Human Development Index and Debt (2016)

Source: Caribbean Country Economy database:

<http://countryeconomy.com/countries/groups/caribbean-community>

Caribbean Community							
Countries	Population	GDP Mill.\$	GDP per capita	HDI	Debt	Debt (%GDP)	Deficit (%GDP)
 Antigua and Barbuda [+]	91.818	1,297M. \$	\$ 14.129	0.783	\$ 1,226 M.	100.42%	-2.94%
 Bahamas [+]	388.019	8,854M. \$	\$ 22.818	0.790	\$ 5,629 M. \$	64.44%	-4.37%
 Barbados [+]	284.215	4,385M. \$	\$ 15,428	0.785	\$ 4,624 M.	104.96%	-6.89%
 Belize [+]	359.287	1,753M. \$	\$ 4,879	0.715	\$ 1,439 M.	81.88%	-7.97%
 Dominica [+]	72.680	538M. \$	\$ 7,400	0.724	\$ 429 M.	82.16%	-4.32%
 Grenada [+]	106.825	978M. \$	\$ 9,156	0.750	\$ 924 M.	101.39%	-4.66%
 Guyana [+]	767.085	3,164M. \$	\$ 4,125	0.636	\$ 1,576 M.	51.21%	-5.43%
 Haiti [+]	10,711,067	8,713M. \$	\$ 813	0.483	\$ 2,623 M.	30.10%	-2.39%
 Jamaica [+]	2,814,000	14,218M. \$	\$ 5,053	0.719	\$ 17,352 M. \$	120.39%	-0.29%
 Saint Kitts and Nevis [+]	55.572	922M. \$	\$ 16,589	0.752	\$ 690 M.	79.76%	9.39%
 Saint Lucia [+]	184.999	1,436M. \$	\$ 7,764	0.729	\$ 1,121 M.	80.25%	-3.72%
 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines [+]	109.462	738M. \$	\$ 6,742	0.720	\$ 585 M.	79.29%	-2.14%
 Suriname [+]	542.975	4,878M. \$	\$ 8,984	0.714	\$ 2,238 M.	43.46%	-8.77%
 Trinidad and Tobago [+]	1,360,088	27,806M. \$	\$ 20,444	0.772	\$ 11,192 M. \$	44.20%	-6.91%
~ TOTAL: CARICOM	17,848,092	79,680M. \$	\$ 4,464		\$ 51,648 M. \$	63.53%	

³² In principle, the Common Market houses all CARICOM member nations except the Bahamas and Haiti. Therefore, in this study, mention of the Caribbean Common Market refers to CARICOM minus the Bahamas and Haiti.

³³ See: Members of the Caribbean Community: Indication of population size, gross domestic product, human development index (Nia) and debt (2016). Accessed: June 20, 2017. URL: <https://countryeconomy.com/countries/groups/caribbean-community>

Aid Dependence:

In small states, economic vulnerability owing to open and undiversified economic bases often leads to reliance on aid. Usually this foreign aid is transferred to small state economies through the form of loans, grants or other aid programmes all to achieve economic and political stability in recipient nations. As a result, it can be argued that there are generally more prominent levels of Official Development Assistance (ODA) per capita existing in these small states as opposed to larger ones (Dornan and Pryke, 2017). This has led to many of the small states employing various strategies in their need to keep up preferential trading arrangements to guarantee access of their products into metropolitan markets. Santos-Paulino et al. (2013) understanding this concept points out that, albeit numerous parts of small states have been broadly researched in the development literature, particularly having to do with their structural differences in contrast to more prominent countries, little is known about the viability of these aid in these small states. This is surprising given that one of the most distinctive features among smaller states is their increased level of reliance on foreign aid (Santos-Paulino et al., 2013). For some small states, especially CARICOM nations, reliance on aid, has become more of a lifestyle. This has often prompted their orientation to regularly become more outward than inward, particularly in the economic area, where it becomes apparent in their dependence on income from tourism and remittances. Embedded in their history, these nations on the eve of independence profited fundamentally from aid especially from the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Europe. Throughout the years, these sources were expanded to incorporate Russia and Japan. However today, China is the fundamental player in this aspect.

Small Market Size:

There are limited opportunities for economies of scale and investment in innovative work due to the small domestic market size of these states. This adds to inadequate market competition as governments in these states are usually crippled as it relates to actuating additional resources domestically as well as internationally (Peretz et al., 2001a). A number of studies (Davenport, 2002, Favaro, 2008, Jones et al., 2010, Archer et al., 2014) surrounding small market size in small states indicate that a large portion of these states need talented work or satisfactory human capital, which would be able to reverse economic activities to become more diversified and less specialised. Deficiency in these areas demonstrate that small states continue to suffer from technological innovation, inadequate communication facilities, inefficiencies in production and

absence of incentives for advancement which compounds these states' high unit production cost (Charles, 1997). With regards to CARICOM nations, production costs in these countries tend to be higher for many activities, than those prevailing in the global marketplace. This lack of global competitiveness increases import demand and reduces exports. These countries tend to have a narrower range of domestic and export production because of the small size of the market and the limited scope of their resources. Having exceptionally modest economies that are extremely vulnerable, making it impossible to contend with the world's economic superpowers and gradually losing their particular preferential treatment, the special associations of these CARICOM nations with their metropolitan mainland are driven by globalisation and the strength of the free market in the international arena. (De Jong and Kruijt, 2005).

Prolonged Colonial Impact:

One of the leading arguments existing in the literature of the small states is the vulnerability of the economies of these small states and the aggravated impact that is usually attributed to their colonial past. Vlcek (2008), for example, argues that present financial conditions are the result of a collection of trade and agricultural choices that may backpedal three hundred years in some instances. This is because, amid their time as colonies, as a primary concern, monetary choices would frequently be made within the setting of the larger collective of the metropole state and its different provinces. The main finding in the literature was that colonial condition was not just a matter of constitutional status. The conclusion is that external power was exercised in a variety of other ways. Namely: co-optation, finance, trade and security arrangements (Bishop, 2013). Ideological co-optation, however, was argued to be the most powerful form of control. This involved the conditioning of the thinking of the population and especially for the ruling elites, this proved to be the most effective way of influencing the populaces' behaviour. But how does this relate to CARICOM nations?

My argument is that the starting point, as so often in a political investigation, is history. The setting of this can be found in the 500-year history of colonial impact on the Caribbean, which was the first and most punctual domain of Western extension abroad. Sutton and Payne (1993) contend that British colonialism lasting more than 300 years meant that Caribbean elites would undoubtedly become anything else other than liberal democrats. After all, let us not forget that this was a past filled with victory, genocide, colonisation, settlement, African subjugation, European competition, piracy, the plantation, steady movements of individuals and imperialist

military intercession. Amid these processes, each ethnic-social group that occupied the Caribbean space did so on terms that recognised the prevalence of the colonising power. This proves that, just as it is with *remoteness and insularity, superpower alignment, economic vulnerability, aid dependence and small market size*, history (in the form of colonial past) also renders these small states jurisdiction to perceive themselves as being vulnerable. Due to the concept of smallness, I have found that aside from population size, CARICOM nations also possess the above characteristics. In addition, not only does this concept of smallness influence their perception as it relates to their dependency/vulnerability, whether economic or otherwise, but it also influences their foreign policy strategies. Therefore, to overcome the different kinds of perception as it relates to their dependencies/vulnerabilities and to meet their national interests, they are often prompted to develop behaviours embedded in their foreign policies which appear to be unique to these small states.

3.4 Foreign Policies of CARICOM nations

The foreign policy approaches of small states are often times ruled by economic contemplation, both in the context of the general absence of diplomatic resources and the fact that economic improvement is the main objective of foreign policy (Haggard, 1995). This accurately describes the case of CARICOM nations. Indeed, for these small nations, and other developing states, much if not all their foreign policy approach is geared towards economic development in one way or another. This is an established truism in both the scholarly and policy literature pertinent to developing countries' foreign policy. What has been less investigative, however, is putting this truism to the empirical test. That is, there has been very little in the way of measuring the impact of these countries' foreign policy on their economies as well as how new trade dynamics have exacerbated their old challenges.³⁴ Alongside this, is the ramification of the fact that they are small states, which gives rise to the perception of defencelessness and priorities as it relates to their national interest.

Regarding my discussion on the foreign policy strategies of these small nations, two distinctive elements ought to be considered. One, is the impact of the different features of these small nations, as it will not suffice to refer to the general qualities of these small states so as to provide

³⁴ See: Trade Matters: New Opportunities for The Caribbean. Published 2015. Accessed June 22, 2018. URL: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/738061467998816272/pdf/93184-v2-P146683-Box391466B-PUBLIC-trade-caribbean-web.pdf>

a comprehensive overview of how these CARICOM countries would act. The other is the contextual impacts, since the situations that these nations are in, might as Lee (2006) puts it, 'both enable and constrain the range of potential strategies and opportunities available to them'. As a result, an effective foreign policy strategy, permits CARICOM nations to adjust their approach in ways that would confine their expenses and improves their advantages. From a methodological point of view, the literature on foreign policy examination holds an obsolete accentuation on the supposedly great forces and the 'trouble spots' in the world (East and Robertson, 2012). Therefore, in the post-Cold War period, the manner in which CARICOM countries approach their foreign policies has experienced much disregard. In cases where it was remembered, the focus as Bishop (2013) puts it 'is usually upon the larger countries, or the region as a whole is cast in a supporting role in a seemingly more exciting global saga, such as that pertaining to multilateral trade politics'. This sub-regional bloc of micro-nations seldom has a story of their own (Bishop, 2013).

There are two common interrelated critiques of foreign policy research (particularly as it is established in the United States): 1) it disregards the 'third world' and 2) relies on hypothetical models that overlook the realities of legislative issues in underdeveloped regions (Aviel et al., 2003). The last point is important, as models designed to explain the basic decision-making of the US cannot be applied to CARICOM countries, many of which have small governments, restricted economic and military capabilities, and completely different foreign policy issues from that of the US. This is quite similar to the use of the Latin American model to cover that of the Caribbean, as I mentioned earlier in chapter 1. They remain inappropriate solutions in both cases.

This section will add to the literature on this by examining the intersection existing between CARICOM nations' foreign policy. My thesis diverges from attempting to fit CARICOM into any models relating to the US and its foreign policy and instead, seeks to treat CARICOM as a model in itself. It is, however, important to note here, that not all CARICOM nations exercise the same foreign policy strategies, but there are, however, areas in which glaring similarities are present. That is to say that, though there may have been changes in these nations over the years, there are still numerous strands in the foundation of their foreign policy approaches that remained constant (Morris, 2008). This includes architectural forces of slavery, colonialism, racial and ethnic groupings (Bishop, 2013), which this section establishes, are steeped in the foundation of their historical background and which to present day, has aided in persistent

poverty, underdevelopment, aid dependency and a weak political and economic identity. As a result, following this discussion, the section lends credit to Robert Young's argument that the word 'post' in postcolonialism does not mean moving away from a colonial past to complete independence but instead refers to societies characterised by an attitude of 'in-dependence' (Young, 2016). This further highlights the fact that models surrounding the foreign policy of CARICOM nations are very different from that of the US's. The section further evidences this argument through the examination of the foreign policy strategies of these CARICOM nations by framing them in the context that were/are facing. For the most recent context as it relates to China, the implication of the contextual effects will also be included in the actual empirical studies later on. With this in mind, the project will proceed to give an overview of the foreign policy strategies these nations employed under the heading of *early-colonial* and *post-colonial era*.

- *Early-colonial era*

From the early colonial period, the Caribbean was an object of dispute between the Spanish, Dutch, French and English (Sandiford, 2000). The ingredient that stirred this competition was trading rights, and the growing maritime power of the states. The early government of these new European provinces was, by and large, left to private travellers and proprietary companies that had established them, acting under royal assurance and at times given a free hand (Pons, 2007). The Caribbean at this time was essentially an economic outpost to Europe and as such, policy approaches relating to Caribbean nations, were subsequently the result of decisions made by individual capitalist pioneers, who for their own advantage, productively endeavour to exploit the assets of the islands and the labour of the general population (Bulmer-Thomas, 2012).

For the Caribbean, the colossal change of economy and society that happened all through a several of the islands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be traced specifically to sugar cane cultivation as the source and the plantation as the production framework. The term 'plantation' here refers to any and all enterprises in which agricultural commodities are produced. As Knight et al. (1997) puts it, 'though these plantations may differ structurally, technologically, and in work regime; all of them at least in English, was always known as plantations'. Amid this period, sugar commanded high costs all through Europe, on the grounds that there were few alternative sources for sweetness. To maintain this market, the sugar supply

had to be of good quality and the Caribbean region was accepted to be the best supplier of this. For the better half of the 1600-1770, sugar remained a luxury commodity and the Caribbean remained, the largest exporter (Heuman, 2018). As a result, the sugar revolution brought great wealth to the colonial masters but very little went back to the Caribbean colonies.

Caribbean reactions to expansionism at this time were multifaceted; the endeavours to make liberation more complete were directed along social, political and financial lines. In the British Caribbean, colonial enactment denied the arrangement of trade unions. As Mawby (2012a) points out, 'despite its [Caribbean nations] persuasiveness, this reasoning was rejected by metropolitan policymakers on the grounds that candidates for statehood must demonstrate their financial fitness for statehood'. This culminated in a clash between the local labourers and the existing oligarchs in the island. Acts of resistance and violent uprising on plantations became a push-back to colonial rule and European exploitation. This resulted in the British Parliament moving to abolish the trading of slaves in 1807 and to enact a policy of emancipation (Mawby, 2012a).

When emancipation became a reality in these islands, so did commercial and financial distress. Production cost skyrocketed and protected markets became increasingly competitive. As Butler (1836) points out, 'the price of sugar dropped between 1819 and 1831, but the duties remain constant'. This decline in sugar was evidenced in the Caribbean's economy and resulted in a mass exodus of wealthy planters. However, this mass exodus gave way to newly freed slaves growing different crops for their use. This led to the emergence of new export crops (Sandiford, 2000). As a result, the periods, 1880-1930, witnessed the most striking component of the economies of the Caribbean which was its venture into foreign markets, an extension managed through the modernisation of the export assembly (Figueredo and Argote-Freyre, 2008). This modernisation of the industry quickly turned into a globalised procedure. Emmer et al. (2004) argue that, although nations in the region were moving at contrasting speeds and accomplishing distinct outcomes, in all cases, the improvement of the new export merchandise was adapted by the consolidation of capitalist innovative and monetary components. This impetus growth and development allowed integral capital to begin to form and move to the area of production of goods in these Caribbean countries. This culminated in the passageway of capital from more developed nations, particularly the United States and Britain. Additionally, capital turned out to be the key to the progressions that happened in relation to production, where for the region,

modernisation delegated the decay of monetary and social relations grounded in subjugation, making it conceivable to move towards the power of a current corporate capitalism enterprise.

- *Post-colonial era*

The social, political and economic reactions to the extensive system of expansionism must be comprehended in a context, of a feature of the heterogeneity of the post-liberation frontier. That is to say, before the end of the nineteenth (19th) century, sugar continued in a considerable measure in most Caribbean islands. This renders the story of the post-emancipation era of the Caribbean as one of concentrated rearrangement of the Caribbean's sugar industry. With the nosedive of the industry, as mentioned above, profound and broad changes became essential to its survival in the twentieth century. The industry at this point, requested changes in the method of labour association and trade directions, as well as enhancements in the quality and amount of production. After all, the first year of the century was starting to experience a moderate boom due to the events of the First World War (Emmer et al., 2004). Not able to keep up with global competitions, Britain was rallied to not impose on its newly emancipated colonies, any unfair tariffs from sugar and to ensure that they were not treated equally as other foreign countries. According to Casimir (1992), this meant that 'although there was an international market, the Caribbean did not offer its product for sale on the international market. European trading companies did that on their behalf'. Later, this special and differential treatment of Caribbean nations culminated in them being recipients of numerous preferential trade arrangements. One of the most distinctive of these is the Lomé Agreements which involved over 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries which benefited from preferential treatments upon the creation of the EU (Panagariya, 2002). According to Greenaway and Milner (2006) 'a key feature of the Agreements is that access has been offered on a non-reciprocal basis'. What these Agreements did for these nations, however, was essentially re-established the colonial lines along a different margin. Caribbean nations were mainly now placed in a position where, yet again, raw material was being exported from these nations, only this time, it was done along the line of established preferential agreements (Segal, 1969). Such a system served solely to concentrate capital and technical expertise in the agricultural sector, while these less developed nations continued to import industrial commodities from the metropolitan countries (Segal, 1969).

Following this, the most prominent area regarding Caribbean modernisation became trade and commerce. As a result, the second flood of expansionism squeezed into the Caribbean more visibly and more profoundly to some degree due to American's presence and 'interest' in this 'backyard' area, and partially because of the small size and restricted populace of the Caribbean islands. Along these lines, the topic of double imperialism had started to work its way into other literature (Hogan, 2000). Stemming from this US influence in the Caribbean, it was no surprise that the US became the Caribbean's biggest trading partner at this time. During that time, logwood, coffee, banana, cocoa, sugar and cotton became the leading export crops of these Caribbean nations (Healy, 1988). Trinidad and Tobago, in particular, became the biggest exporter of petroleum to the US and Jamaica trading sugar, coffee and cocoa to Europe and North America, commanded an export sector that was growing exponentially (Beckles and Shepherd, 1993). Again, following from the early-colonial era, preferential agreements became the basis of this relationship as the US insisted on entering into the Caribbean equation. In entering the equation, however, the continental mainland ensured that its first course of action was to ensure that the Lomé Convention was dismantled. This meant that Britain could no longer guarantee the security of Caribbean nations' commodities. This disappearance of Britain from the scene meant that colonial loyalty quickly shifted to the US and this culminated in a pro-Americanism mindset with elites in these nations accepting American identity and interest as their own (Sutton, 1993).

As we delve further into the examination of the foreign policy of Caribbean nations, it is important to note that, the Caribbean postcolonial regards the Caribbean as both a case and a cross-examination of post-coloniality. This meant that Caribbean countries needed to position themselves politically in connection to the New World, the Third World, the Communist Alliance, and each other (Puri, 2004). Even years after fighting for independence, sovereignty did not bring freedom from imperialist influences. Robert Young in agreement contends that, though postcolonialism is a rationalistic idea that denotes the expansive chronicled certainties of decolonisation and the decided accomplishment of power; the truth was that these countries were developing in another imperialist setting of financial and in some cases political dominion (Young, 2016). Reinforcing this is an intense awareness of their dependency and what that position means to them. According to Sutton (1991) 'Caribbean countries have come to accept, albeit reluctantly, a subordinate position in the international exchange, implying an acceptance of the international system as given and their position within it as peripheral'. As a result, CARICOM countries' perspective emerged when the agency of these post-colonial sovereign

nations endeavour to accommodate their fixed territorial nature with the structure of patriotism that straddles borders, the global financial framework and issues of the global order, as dictated by the activities of great powers.

3.4.1 CARICOM'S alignment with the West (the 1900s-1950s)

Since the 1950's US-Caribbean economic relations isolates into two periods: 1) the era of the Cold War when security stressed over the spread of communism which later shaped the US's foreign policy strategy, and 2) the period following the end of the Cold War wherein the Caribbean's importance to US's strategic interest decreased, and its policy plans became driven by a new foray of concerns. The part that CARICOM plays in issues surrounding the United States' legislation is specific. US governments have, on many occasions, intervened in the authoritative issues of CARICOM nations in order to guarantee the results that they required, and continued to do so, even before the world witnessed its worldwide authority (Post-Second World War era) (Davies and Jardine, 2003). The Cold War, as a result, holds an important spot inside the long history of US-CARICOM relations. Wendell Bell writing in 1977 in his work, dealt with the increased agreeability and trade that emerged with the passive-aggressiveness between the United States and the Soviet Union during that time (Bell, 1977). According to Bell, this event sent these small states seeking new networks of interactions with a diversity of countries which would serve their interest (Bell, 1964). This argument was later cited with much validity, as the events of the Cold War essentially began to set the tone for CARICOM nations to, once again, wind up as treasures of the United States. With the rise of Communism which the US saw as a danger, the mainland was nothing shy of fixated on the Caribbean and its sub-region. The principal concern for the US at the time was imminent danger presented by communism in a region that the US deemed as being very close to home. Bear in mind that as stated previously, the Community at this point was deemed as the US's 'third-border'.

Bearing witness to the misgivings and the fearful feelings that the Cold War incited in the US, CARICOM nations began to campaign for their own interest. This led to the US becoming a hegemonic influencer in the region, doing everything it could to appease CARICOM countries in any way that would ensure they remained democratic. Bell contends that these tactics used by these small nations were done in an attempt to challenge the old international world order wherein these nations could limit foreign exploitation of their raw materials (Bell, 1977). It

becomes evident then, that a change in systemic conditions meant that leaders in these nations would tailor their domestic policies accordingly.

Kenneth Waltz, on the other hand, writing in 2010, looked at the determinants of small states' foreign policy, by examining the position of small states in the international system in relation to their foreign policy strategy (Waltz, 2010). With respect to Waltz's theory, weak nations like those existing in CARICOM are thought to be more likely to bandwagon with aggressive great powers, than balance against them. Taken from the 1980s, evidence in support of this argument suggests that three variables were responsible for CARICOM nations' convergence in the direction of a Western-oriented strategy concerning their reinsertion into the international order. This included: 1) a systemic universal fiscal and strategic approach, for instance, creating monetary dependence and trans-nationalisation, the emergence of overall markets and the drive towards privatisation, and the fall of the Soviet coalition along with the culmination of the Cold War era; 2) domestic improvements including the debilitation of the import substitution model of industrialisation, restored budgetary dependence and changes in the socio-political structure in relation to financial changes; 3) the distinctive role played by rising political pioneers that supported the liberal democratic framework, free markets, alignment with the West, and close connections with the United States (Payne and Sutton, 1992). At this point, the US's trade exchange in the Community developed at an exponential rate. Free trade areas that were formally organised formulated the basis on which the development of trade and other economic relations were formed. This included the establishment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a framework that encourages the economic welfare of the United States, Mexico, Canada, Central America and the Caribbean signing free trade agreements with the trilateral trade bloc (McKinney, 2016). As a result, a surge of US foreign direct investments became evident especially in the Caribbean Community thus financing the augmentation of tradable economic activities.

By August 1983, the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) was executed. A unilateral programme of economic aid, and trade measures for Central America and the Caribbean, the initiative was established out of US's security considerations. President Ronald Reagan in fear of the domino effect with regards to communism in the region, established the CBI which excluded Cuba but extended its projects in the Caribbean Community (Watson, 1985). Initially referred to as the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA), which later extended at the start of the 21st century to incorporate the US-Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA), the legal

instrument ensured a unilateral duty-free access for CARICOM members and additionally, for the Dominican Republic and Central American Countries (Porter, 1995). Placed in a position to ensure such comparative duty-free access was not offered to other nations, US merchants were permitted to source merchandise coming from recipient nations on a duty-free premise. Nevertheless, CBERA was also restrictive in its extension as it didn't cover the entire universe of tax lines. That means that merchandise which were excluded, were liable to positive rates of duty when imported to the US (Stamps, 1994). Also, it had no lasting lengths, as it was expected to be terminated in 1995 (Potoker and Borgman, 2007). This was, however, revoked in 1990, and CBERA was given indefinite status as a feature of the improvement of the programme (Stanley and Bunnag, 2001). Alternative improvements made in the 1990s joined an expansion of different products regarded as qualified to freely enter the US market. All things considered, the financial changes had specific and also common effects on global and fiscal diplomacy. CARICOM governments found themselves faced with the decision of developing a system of a specialist who could orchestrate strong, specialised trade, investments and other financial issues with the United States and with various other countries in the region. The fact of the matter was, that national interest and the interests of specific business firms, in international, inter-American, sub-provincial dispute boards or court-like proceedings needed to be shielded. These modifications in CARICOM nations' political administration, added to the change. How they began to interact and relate to the US before the end of the 1990s i.e. democratisation in light of reasonable elections, competitive parties, constitutionalism and regard for the law that governs the freedom of people, had progressed all through the Community.

The end of the Cold War and the separation of the Soviet Union which culminated in the dismantlement of communist administrations in Europe, along with the end of the US-Soviet clash; witnessed an effect on the Community that was inconspicuous but however essential. However, there was only one exemption to this seemingly benign global process. The United States was presently liberated to overlook its constant trepidation of communist danger. Shortly after US's monetary activities decreased in the region, there were three issues emerged: opiates, immigration, and concerns about particular preferential tax administrations, which supplanted the customary concerns besting the US's security motivation (Palmer, 1998).

By the late 1990s, the US began its move to replace preferential trade treatment with tariff reciprocity as a feature of its Caribbean policy. Soon after, endeavours to allow NAFTA parity for CARICOM nations started to stall in Congress. The sticking point has consistently been a

duty-free treatment for textile items, obstructed by proceeding opposition from fair exchange groups, worker's guilds, and portions of the textile industry (Rivera, 1995). At the heart of the problematic character of US-CARICOM financial relations, is a contrasting way to deal with the worldwide economy. Meanwhile, CARICOM countries grew anxious to integrate into the global market on the shared belief that the small size, lower level of progress, and primitive export structures of their nations were able to undermine their chances of viably participating in global trade advances without preferential treatment. Be that as it may, generally speaking, the US held to the neoliberal view that all nations should compete equally in the global market.

3.4.2 CARICOM's adjustment to the Global Arena

The changes required in globalisation are so profound that the implications for small nations cannot be tended to, simply by having a sound, traditional financial arrangement. While this is vital, the response is a formative issue, rather than an issue of economic governance. According to Kendall (2008), the globalisation process presented CARICOM nations, in particular, with an immense aggravation of their inherent weaknesses. Consequently, a more suitable reaction to globalisation by these CARICOM nations, would have been an improvement strategy, best depicted as 'strategic worldwide repositioning'. This involved a procedure of repositioning a state in the worldwide economy and world issues by actualising a vital medium-to-long-term plan; arranged from detailed and ceaseless exchanges between the public, private, scholarly community and the social division (Peretz et al., 2001b). This meant a proactive structural and institutional change (not alteration) concentrated on change, enhancement of exports, global, monetary and political relations. Accomplishing this, would in this manner, require changes in both internal and external relations. The latter of which is of crucial importance on account of the very open and vulnerable nature of these small developing economies.

For CARICOM nations, the start of repositioning followed on the heels of the demise of the Cold War which had been both a gift and curse to these nations. Most governments in the sub-region were relieved that the US no longer felt it was vital allegorically, and at times, almost literally, to investigate their 'backyard' to guarantee that they remained inside the limits of the political/ideological, conventionality insisted upon by Washington. However, the vanishing of whatever significance the Cold War had given the Community, had an undeniable drawback with its stark negative ramifications developing in the economic domain (Serbin, 1998). One undeniable new reality, for instance, was that the end of the Soviet alliance as a superpower

contender, expelled the significant motivating force for US's foreign aid activities such as that of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) (Maingot and Lozano, 2005). Consequently, with Washington losing its enthusiasm for such projects deemed previously as essential devices for pursuing its foreign policy agenda, CARICOM nations could no longer draw on the trade preferences and different advantages required, as a way to improve their economic security (Aviel et al., 2003). This lessening of trade barriers and the expanding openness of these economies did not prompt a noteworthy increment in intra-regional exchange or even aided in them becoming recipients of an offer of the extra-regional export market. Subsequently, these nations' development potential in the global climate became severely constrained.

The process of globalisation has become a linchpin for the development of specific divisions but, at the same time, has failed to provide the means to resolve the limitations and challenges that have characterised the progress of a portion of more traditional sectors (Hickling-Hudson*, 2004). In such manner, it has strengthened a process of progress in sectoral yield and as such, made current differences among CARICOM nations more visible and transparent. On account of the agricultural sector, this adjustment in the synthesis of yield has mirrored what Ahmed (2001) refers to as the loss of competitiveness because of high production costs, external shocks and substantial reliance on trade preferences allowed by the Community's traditional partners. Increased production costs encroach on overall revenues thus lessening the impetus to extend production, while external shocks, for example, brought about by cataclysmic events, have obliterated both framework and products in cultivated zones. While recent globalisation has made the decline of agribusiness and the related manufacturing sector obvious, it has activated the mission for new sources of raw materials, such as crude oil (Potter, 2017). Trinidad, for example, has customarily profited from a large number of foreign ventures that have been geared towards the misuse of its oil reserves. In the previous five years, it has exploited its market position and natural gas stores to change the arrangement of its hydrocarbon division (Auty and Gelb, 1986).

Subsequent to the development and advancement of the natural resource industry, Trinidad has turned into a main producer and exporter of methanol and ammonia. Apart from agriculture or production based on natural resources, the 1990s witnessed an improvement in the manufacture of apparel but with declining success. A valid example of this is Jamaica. At that time Jamaica's manufacturing division was the second (2nd) largest segment of economic activity taken after distribution (Ross, 1990). Until the 1980s, the manufacturing sector had been advanced as an

import-substituting segment (Ross, 1990). Under market-oriented auxiliary alteration programs in the 1990s, Jamaica switched its trade orientation to concentrate on building up its textile, clothing and manufacturing ventures. Most of the pieces of clothing reached the United States under the offshore assembly programme (Sullivan, 2006).

Other routes which these nations used to arrange themselves in the global context, was to sell their sovereignty to other nations in order to finance their budget or get foreign aid (Morris, 2008). For instance, as indicated by Greenpeace in 2002, Japan had given more than US\$323 million of ‘aid’ in return for votes in the International Whaling Commission so as to switch the worldwide whaling boycott through its fisheries grant aid (Cooper and Shaw, 2009). Amid the events of the Cold War, the East and West struggled for geo-strategic access to remote islands, such as the Caribbean. Similarly, in CARICOM, the China-Taiwan conflict continues to benefit some of these islands as Taiwan provides sufficient foreign aid advantages to those nations in the Community that decides to officially recognise it (Erickson and Chen, 2007). Since then, these small nations have continued to utilise their adequate use of diplomatic acknowledgment, alongside an inferred ideal United Nations (UN) vote on issues of concern to ‘both Chinas’, in order to win economic favours from each of the two claimants to Chinese rule (Morris, 2008). Subsequently, sovereignty has been an imperative resource in permitting these small countries to structure their global linkages and alteration in the global climate (Cooper and Shaw, 2009). However, this adjustment has created not only a constant propensity towards a reliance on foreign aid limitation, but also a sustained need to attract foreign capital. This restricts the manoeuvring abilities of these nations while invigorating the development of those activities that require foreign capital.

3.5 FINDINGS: Jamaican Elites on the continued impacts of being a small nation

3.5.1 *Smallness equates to powerlessness, or is it a mindset?*

Before divulging Jamaican elites’ perception of the impact of being a small nation, it should be first noted that at no point was a specific question regarding this particular issue posed. The attitude of being ‘small’ was one that came out in various areas of the interviews mostly as it relates to the question, *‘in your opinion what motives would you say are behind Jamaica and Trinidad aligning themselves so closely with China?’* (See Appendix C). Overall, both governing and non-governing elites in this case share the same sentiment that their country is

indeed small. However, for governmental elites, this reason dictates the majority of the intent regarding alignment with not only China but other powerful nations:

Jamaica is a small and an open economy that is hungry for investment, so it's about building relationships that can strengthen and renew itself in the international system. Now, it's about how the relationship with China can make this easier. (JRG7).³⁵

We're always going to be dependent. We just don't have the power especially in terms of resources. I mean they [China], have power and resources. We have nothing at all. So, if they offer their support, we'll take it because we need to develop (JG4).

The islands of CARICOM are very small and used to have bananas, but that's wiped out. We now have very little natural resources, so they have to do what they need to do to preserve themselves (JG1).

Let us recall that as I have previously stated, current theories surrounding small states' foreign policy practices indicate that due to the features present in small states, economic improvement remains the principal objective of their foreign policy. In addition, a moving away from their colonial past carries with it an attitude characterised by 'in-dependence'. This proves to be particularly true with the Jamaican case. The dismantlement of preferential trade agreements and the dependency legacy left behind by their colonial history has left governing Jamaican elites at a critical juncture decades later. Even in their dealings with China and being aware of the hindrances that are associated with being a small nation, they have still held to this day, the belief that the characteristics and categorisation of them being small has left them no room to innovate. Instead, the conviction is that they have no choice but to perpetuate foreign policy approaches entrenched in a colonial legacy:

Because we're dependent, vulnerable and desperate, we're just happy that someone is coming here to spend something. The truth is that we've been imprinted with a form of development diplomacy and vulnerability that we have been taught by our scholarship and history. The lesson is that we are not powerful enough, so let's just hope no one will kill us (JG5).

Okay, I mean the country is in a dire condition and we need as much support as we can, and if China offers it, I think we should take it (JG6).

³⁵ The method used to code the respondents is explained in Appendix D.

We're so small. So, for us, China is important right now. If we can try to get some benefits, then good, but you must also remember that in this case we have no power (JG3).

Interestingly, it was discovered that majority of the views shared by those in the governmental sector was not a sentiment shared by those in the non-governmental sector. It was found that of the nineteen (19) interviews done in Jamaica 90% (9 of the 10) governmental elites felt that the category and characteristics of being small meant that there was not much choice in dealing with China outside of accepting whatever benefits the PRC imparted to them. On the other hand, a contrasting 67% (6 of the 9) non-governmental elites were of the view that despite Jamaica's size, the foreign policy approaches were ones hinged on mindset as opposed to powerlessness:

Yes, we're small, but we have been so entrenched and conditioned in dominant relationships that it's almost like a default response for us to see any major power as a dominant power. We need to get rid of that attitude (JN17).

Size is not the only determinant of power, but our understanding of power is so limited to John Keynes that we do not necessarily understand how to negotiate our way out of that (JN18).

3.6 FINDINGS: Trinidad and Tobago's Elites on the continued impacts of being a small nation

In exploring the attitudes of Trinidad and Tobago's elites with regards to 'smallness', this section takes a similar approach to the previous. The previous section of the dissertation established that Jamaica's governing elites view the notion of 'smallness' as a difficulty to overcome and has adopted a mindset of 'aid dependency' that has become the dominant feature of their foreign policy that has dictated their superpower alignment. In this section, the corresponding views of Trinidad and Tobago's elites on the matter is presented.

To start with, the conviction of smallness resulting in powerlessness as purported by Jamaica's governmental elites turned out to be one similarly shared amongst Trinidad and Tobago's governmental elites, albeit to a lesser extent. The reasoning emerged in several areas of the interview but found its way coming up mainly under the responses to two questions: 'It is said that developing nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, need China more than China needs them. Do you see this as the case?' and 'In your opinion, what motives would you say are behind Jamaica and Trinidad aligning themselves so closely with China?' (*See Appendix*

C). Again, the belief that being a small nation meant that their nation had to subscribe to the whims of other powerful nations such as China was brought to the fore:

There was a time when individual countries were negotiating with Britain and these countries were being dealt with by Britain. Back then, we had preferential trade deals in areas like Saint Lucia that had bananas. People had stuff they could offer at that time, and there was the preferential treatment you would get because of the trade agreements. That's no longer possible. St. Lucia and St. Vincent, for example, no longer have any bananas or any special relationship. That's all in the past. So now we must all try to do what we can in terms of securing aid (T&TG2).

In a way, we will never be sovereign because we don't have any money nor resources. Look at the last hurricane, we've got nothing right now. No power. So, we can't ask for anything. We just take whatever support we get (T&TG7).

Trinidad is like the rest of the Caribbean because we are all trying to find prosperity and growth opportunities (T&TG1).

Well, we [Trinidad and Tobago], when compared to the rest of the Caribbean or CARICOM nations, we are not unique in any way. We also want capital and we see an opportunity for them [China] to build things that would take decades for our local contractors to build and probably with a lot more corruption (T&TG6).

This outlook, though similar to those of the Jamaican governing elites, bore a much smaller percentage of those who took this view in the governmental sector. Only 64% (7 of the 11) governmental elites in Trinidad held this perspective. The rest were of the view that Trinidad and Tobago, along with other CARICOM countries, simply needed to rid themselves of the dependency mentality and use strategic and innovative approaches to overcome any hindrance caused by 'smallness':

I think that by our very nature, as CARICOM countries, we've been forced to practise some very sophisticated diplomacy. We just need to be more innovative whether it's with China or any other powerful nation because you need to have the skill when you don't have the size (T&TG8).

The Chinese come in and they are taking over from the US. But listen, the Chinese don't care about us. The US also could care less where we're concerned. We care about us or we should at least. So, our safeguards should be a very robust look at the stuff we've all been discussing for decades that we need to do and not politicise our development. Instead, we need to focus on the things we really need and then let them [the US and China] outbid each other to do those projects here (T&TG10).

Though in Jamaica 67% of non-governmental elites took the view that despite Jamaica's size, foreign policy strategies were ones hinged on mindset as opposed to powerlessness, in Trinidad

and Tobago, 80% (8 of the 10) held this view. This showed a much higher number than their Jamaican counterparts existing in the same sector:

Here's the real kicker, the Chinese came here, and all the leaders and scholars immediately defaulted to the view that we need them, and we're so grateful that they're here with their capital. In an interview I had with some university professors in the region a couple of years ago, they asked me why would you focus on China and the Caribbean? China is so big; compared to them, we are so insignificant. Why are you not studying Singapore? What can China expect from the Caribbean? And are you talking about parity? We don't have anything they can benefit from that they can't find anywhere else. And, for what they offer, we just need to be grateful. I thought immediately that is why we are so oppressed (T&N15).

I'm going to tell you, the most powerful people in the Caribbean, who recognise power and independence don't come from government. For example, these are people who choose to be entrepreneurs. People who decide to study against the odds and then find jobs and migrate. Throughout the world you have Caribbean people doing well, why is that? Not because they have special gifts that the rest of us don't have. It's because some of them never quit. These people have an attitude that runs counter to the common grain which says that we are only small Caribbean people characterised by dependency, and so we are hoping for aid (T&TN20).

Based on the above findings, it is obvious that the majority (63%, 12 of the 19) elites in Jamaica view the notion of 'smallness' as a hinderance difficult to overcome. In Trinidad and Tobago majority of the elites from both sectors admits to the smallness of their nation but only 43% (9 of the 21) thought that that smallness indeed equates to powerlessness. Non-governing elites on the other hand, in both nations, acknowledged their nations' smallness but did not accept it as powerlessness nor thought it should be the driving factor for alignment with China or any other superpower. Based on these findings, it is difficult to measure with precision the implications of these two nations' colonial past on their economic and social conditions. However, based on the data available here, a causal relationship to how they approach their foreign policy strategies becomes evident. This not only reinforces Robert Young's argument, but also evidences my initial point that the category of 'smallness' coupled with characteristics underlined by decades of colonialism, are all consistent with the foreign policy undertakings of CARICOM nations such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

3.7 Conclusion

Most of the Caribbean, including CARICOM nations, are small, geographically, economically and demographically. Albeit a few have moderately large amounts of per capita income, these

nations still feel vulnerable during an age of global financial liberalisation. Downturns in the fortunes of a single industry or commodity can have genuine economic repercussions. Dealing with the progressions that may tremendously affect their small economies is consequently an uncommon political concern.

Globalisation has both cultivated and highlighted a process of sectoral changes in the synthesis of yield in favour of the services division and to the detriment of these nations' agricultural and manufacturing sectors. This process highlights the distinctions between CARICOM economies by creating a double pattern of specialisation so that the nations are isolated between service-based and merchandise-producing economies. Similarly, it illuminates the severe reliance and vulnerabilities of these economies. While trade development has been liable to the changes of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, import development, driven for the most part by purchaser merchandise, has not subsided. This has created a need to attract foreign capital to additionally invigorate the development and advancement of sectors that have been fruitful under globalisation. Trends in employment and migration have mirrored these adjustments in output and capital streams.

With the cutting of colonial ties and the realisation of independence came the responsibility of managing one's international affairs. From 1962 onwards, CARICOM governments became charged with the task of charting their islands' foreign policy, but the legacy of colonialism and the historical linkage to the West continued to play a determining role in how these nations approach foreign policy. The strong allegiance of CARICOM nations has always been to the West. Even in the first decade that coincided with their autonomy. Traditionally, these nations had trade and economic relation predominantly with the US, Canada and Europe and it is only in recent times that there has been diversification in their relations with other players. Even in increasing engagement of these CARICOM nations with these new players, it becomes evident that their colonial history and subsequent categorisation of being 'small' ensured a dependence on aid as a result of their geographical dimension. Even today, this remains a dominant feature of their foreign policy. This has continued to determine their superpower alignment to this day, as shown in the results of the data regarding to China. This is despite cases where there are serious concerns about this partnership.

Chapter Four: China's Emergence in CARICOM: A Matter of Debate/Concern

Within the relatively short time since its emergence in the Caribbean Community, the motives of China were quickly figured out. Appearing in the works of scholars such as (Olsen, 2009, Bernal, 2010, Montoute, 2011, Montoute, 2013, Johnson, 2013, Green, 2015, O'Boyle, 2017), the motives of China ran along the lines of 1) a search for raw materials; 2) the diplomatic isolation of Taiwan in the region; 3) the use of these nations' geostrategic location; 4) the use of these markets for Chinese products and investment. However, this economic and political engagement of the PRC with these small nations of the Community have, for the most part, created a foray of concerns for elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Though most of the beneficial and detrimental effects on these nations are usually drawn from trade documents and existing theories in the aforementioned studies; very few have presented findings based on the interview methodology so as to offer elites' insight on the challenges and opportunities each area of China's motivation has presented for their nation and sub-region at large. The chapter finds that the concerns of these elites run along two different strands: a) grassroots and b) foreign policy, both of which will be discussed later in the chapter. As a result, the investigation steps into this gap by presenting empirical findings from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites regarding their concerns surrounding the challenges China's motives has presented for their societies as well as for other CARICOM nations. The opportunities that emerged with the PRC's presence will be highlighted in chapters 5 and 6, which discusses why Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago is bent on forging a relationship with the East-Asian Powerhouse. As a result, this chapter opens by first engaging with China's motives regarding its relationship with these CARICOM nations by offering an overview of each separately. It then closes off by offering empirical findings as to what elites in both country cases view as the challenges stemming from these motives as it relates to China and what they are doing to push back against these challenges. Although all of the grassroots concerns are covered in this chapter, only one concern along the foreign policy strand is discussed here. Namely: the concern surrounding the quality of infrastructure projects. The rest of these concerns along this particular strand will be highlighted and discussed in some respect as we move from chapters 7 through to 10.

4.1 A look at China's Motives in CARICOM

4.1.1 A Search for Raw Materials

China's emergence and expansion in the Caribbean have always been linked to its global vision. According to Philips (2011), one of China's main aims lies in its overwhelming need to secure raw materials from those countries in the region it deems to be resource wealthy. Being one of the world's largest consumers of natural resources (Lafargue, 2006) it is no surprise that the PRC has sought to establish close relations with CARICOM countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. Jamaica for one can provide the PRC with bauxite, Trinidad and Tobago oil and gas, while Guyana is a wealthy source for timber. Accounting for 14.3% of the world's GDP, China is responsible for 45% of the global consumption of raw materials (Hendrix and Noland, 2014). This voracious appetite for raw materials has led to CARICOM nations exports to China, increasing from \$USD120.6 million in 2003 to \$USD661.7 million in the year 2014 (Bernal, 2016b). Though CARICOM's export to China only amounts to 00.001% of China's import³⁶, it ought to be noted that bauxite, oil, gas and timber being among these nations' largest export to China, are still not the only areas accounting for these numbers. For example, Jamaica's top exports from 2011-2016 to China included raw materials, metals, chemicals, vegetable and wood. While that of Trinidad and Tobago from 2011-2015³⁷ included fuels, consumer goods, raw materials, minerals and metals (*see Tables 4 and 5 respectively*).

Table 4: Exports to China from Jamaica to China 2011-2016 (US\$ Thousand)

Source: Created by author based on World Bank data.³⁸

Product Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Raw Materials	11,244.45	481.87	6,374.54	11,918.86	4,871.52	6,797.65
Metals	10,160.52	729.29	6,162.74	11,105.73	4,469.18	6,111.29
Chemicals	9,670.67	9,288.57	-	20,419.43	23,106.28	21,147.20
Intermediate Goods	9,683.62	9,670.04	205.76	20,611.15	23,157.93	21,220.76
Vegetables	1,006.95	283.38	477.00	743.46	415.55	495.37

³⁶ Bernal, Richard., 2011. *The Growing Economic Presence of China in the Caribbean*. Paper presented at the IMF/UWI Conference 'The Caribbean Challenges after the Global Crisis' Barbados. URL: <https://www.imf.org/external/np/seminars/eng/2010/carib/pdf/bernal2.pdf>

³⁷ It should be noted that there was an absence of data regarding Trinidad and Tobago's export to China in the year 2016.

³⁸ See: World Bank Data showing the various countries and their import and export commodities to their different partner countries. URL: <https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/JAM/StartYear/2011/EndYear/2016/TradeFlow/Export/Indicator/XPRT-TRD-VL/Partner/CHN/Product/All-Groups> (Accessed: August 10, 2017).

Wood	208.23	163.90	196.27	229.41	67.64	182.84
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Table 5: Exports to China from Trinidad and Tobago to China 2011-2015 (US\$ Thousand)

Source: Created by the author based on World Bank data.³⁹

Product Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Fuels	48,527.10	8,667.64	7,761.58	14,574.62	45,553.48
Consumer Goods	46,396.70	597.45	555.54	10,286.83	40,513.42
Raw Materials	27,869.85	16,900.24	17,605.92	44,155.21	61,133.25
Minerals	15,801.94	2,694.46	4,624.76	38,049.70	55,480.28
Metals	13,660.09	6,141.21	6,001.37	1,916.77	597.07
Intermediate Goods	4,406.46	851.65	465.76	218.20	45.92

This ‘raw materials’ need of China, has resulted in the PRC developing tight links with CARICOM leaders. According to Zhao (2014) deepen engagement with those whom China deems as resource-rich nations, means that the East-Asian powerhouse will have a steady supply of valuable resources that can be used to fuel the growth of its manufacturing and industrial sectors. Researcher Hongqiao Liu, in agreement, contends that China’s motive for engaging with these nations on this level is one that will help to ensure that China moves from being a manufacturing power in the world, to the world’s top manufacturing giant.⁴⁰ The key sectors that China is using these raw materials to fuel include its manufacturing, energy, engineering and construction sectors. Manufactured goods make up 80% of China’s export and consists of textiles, electronic equipment, agricultural products and chemicals (Goodman and Segal, 2002).

This consumption of raw materials especially in the areas of coal, iron ore, crude petroleum, natural gas and bauxite within these sectors have significantly aided in putting the PRC on a path to becoming the world’s largest economy by nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Gu, 2006). A growing economy means a heightened demand for raw materials to meet new industry

³⁹ See: World Bank Data showing the various countries and their import and export commodities to their different partner countries. URL: <https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/JAM/StartYear/2011/EndYear/2016/TradeFlow/Export/Indicator/XPRT-TRD-VL/Partner/CHN/Product/All-Groups> (Accessed: August 10, 2017).

⁴⁰ Liu, Hongqiao., 2017. *Dug Up in China: The World’s Critical Raw Material*. Published on February 15, 2017. Accessed: August 8, 2017. URL: <http://www.chinawaterrisk.org/resources/analysis-reviews/dug-up-in-china-the-worlds-critical-raw-materials/>

needs and changes in lifestyles. As a result, China has increasingly looked to the global community for additional supplies to supplement this need. Much like African nations, China views CARICOM countries as assuring suppliers in this regard. (T&TG3) maintains that, 'China's focus is strictly on obtaining resources. CARICOM islands may not be able to offer up 100,000 barrels or 100 million barrels of oil per year, but we have bauxite, timbre, oil and gas. So, maybe we don't have much, but we have natural resources, and yes, China wants to get into it'. Nevertheless, China's only intention for engaging with these nations isn't just a motive hinged on the search for raw material, but one that also sought the isolation of Taiwan.

4.1.2 The Diplomatic Isolation of Taiwan

The conflict between China and Taiwan cannot be more evidenced than it was when China shifted its focus from Africa and South America to that of the Caribbean and Central America. As Zhu (2016) points out, this strategic move by China was made in an effort to secure its global rise. China, therefore, had to contend first with the issue of Taiwan that it had sought for decades to reintegrate into the mainland. Of the 24 countries in the world that recognise Taiwan, half of them are located in Latin America and the Caribbean (Wigell et al., 2018). As a result, China opened with the use of dollar diplomacy in a bid to win over these small nations in the region that continued to maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan. This diplomatic contest strategically played by the PRC, was designed to ensure Taiwan loses its representation in any major government institution that would contribute to the ability of China to rein in its rogue state. According to Copper (1992) the fact that Taipei still retains diplomatic ties with small but less important nations means that, if not delayed, China's efforts will be thwarted for the moment. However, none of the countries that recognise the Republic of China (Aberbach et al.) are eligible for Chinese lending (Piccone, 2016a). This means that Taiwan is caught in a constant battle of always trying to hold on to its diplomatic allies. As (Lin, 2014) aptly points out, China's repeated suppression of Taiwan's claim to legitimacy remains a constant reminder to Taipei that its nation's welfare is highly vulnerable.

This aggressive policy towards Taiwan was also done in a bid to fuel the 'One China' policy and kill the spread of 'double recognition'. According to McCord (2017), the issue of 'double recognition' is one steeped in the legacy of the Cold War era.⁴¹ With the conclusion of the

⁴¹ McCord, Edward., 2017. *One China, Dual Recognition: A Solution to the Taiwan Impasse*. Published June 20, 2017. Accessed: November 13, 2017. URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2017/06/one-china-dual-recognition-a-solution-to-the-taiwan-impasse/>

Chinese Civil War in 1949, the Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Party government supplanted its foothold in the Republic of China (ROC) and then declared itself as China's sole legitimate government. Meanwhile, the Communist Party of Mainland China asserted that the PRC was the only legitimate authority presiding over all of China, including Taiwan.⁴² In the end, both sides fulfilled the conditions of what constitutes a sovereign state and both governments insisting on exclusive recognition, meant that in the context of the Cold War, the global community came to accept both nations' claim to legitimacy. However, this recognition of Taiwan by the international community witnessed China doubling down on its use of fiscal interdependence and military pressure in an attempt to achieve political integration (Lin, 2016). An international recognition of Taiwan would mean that the nation could seek entry to the major international organisations in the world. The PRC has always thwarted these efforts by Taipei to join or re-join international bodies. Take, for example, Taiwan's efforts to re-join the United Nations (UN) which was blocked by China under the argument that the UN should only be reserved for nations that are strictly sovereign states. China contends that since Taiwan is primarily a province of China, then its admission to the UN should not be allowed (Li, 2005).

This issue surrounding Taiwan's sovereignty stems from the nation being tied to the 1992 Consensus Agreement which reinforces the 'One China' principle but allows for varied interpretations while prohibiting the nation from seeking independence. A formal declaration of Taiwan's independence from the PRC, would undoubtedly mean a strategic location win for the United States, who according to the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, permits the US to supply Taiwan with defensive arms while regarding any efforts made by Beijing to coerce the nation into re-integration, a 'grave breach of peace' (Carpenter, 2015).

Since China is cautious on pushing the envelope in this regard to avoid the outcome of a direct military confrontation with the US, the use of dollar diplomacy so as to ensure the exclusion of Taiwan has been the PRC's best bet. This exclusion of Taipei is one that feeds into China's broader foreign policy. This broader foreign policy is one based on the foundation of a multi-polar world that is of the PRC's own making. Such an undertaking means that for Beijing, an accumulation of allies is necessary. As a result, CARICOM nations who still recognise Taiwan become easy targets to ensure that the stated aims of Beijing's foreign policy are achieved.

⁴² McCord, Edward., 2017. *One China, Dual Recognition: A Solution to the Taiwan Impasse*. Published June 20, 2017. Accessed: November 13, 2017. URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2017/06/one-china-dual-recognition-a-solution-to-the-taiwan-impasse/>

Even more, CARICOM nations are privy to voting in the United Nations. This means that if China is able to isolate Taiwan diplomatically, CARICOM nations having now subscribed entirely to the 'One China' policy will be forced to support China in its endeavours in the international community. Morris (2008) contends that China's intention of being a legitimate champion of Third World issues, means that China can act in several international government organisation in an influential manner, as the very concept of legitimacy remains a significant part of China's foreign policy. Taiwan's mere existence as a 'renegade state' undermines this legitimacy but support from CARICOM nations, if a complete switch were to take place, would allow China's bargaining positions held in these multilateral forums, to be reinforced (Nathan and Scobell, 2015). Already, under the banner of 'strategic partnership', the Community has witnessed China's rise as a member in organisations such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) while organising its mechanisms such as the China-Latin America Forum and the China-Latin America and Trade Cooperation Forum, all of which Taiwan is not a member.

4.1.3 The Use of CARICOM nations for Chinese products and investments

It would be an inaccuracy for me to omit the fact that China's interest in CARICOM nations extends far beyond its quest for raw materials and the isolation of Taiwan. The PRC is also driven in search of new markets for its goods and services. Abdulai (2016) credits this frantic search for markets as a factor deriving from the PRC's economic boom, which has led to a saturation of its domestic markets regarding goods and services. This push factor has since probed the East-Asian powerhouse to secure an outward look in an attempt to acquire these markets. The problem of overcapacity and supply has also been detrimental to its domestic markets. This particular issue stems from previous policies that existed in which Chinese governments prioritised industrialisation that was not based on the market. According to Abdulai (2016), this surge in oversupply and overcapacity creates an environment for possible factory crashes and the state-owned bank being bombarded with non-performing loans. As a result, China has sought to offload their cheap products in CARICOM markets.

It should be noted that the search for new markets by China is not only due to its overcapacity and over-supply, but also includes a deliberate foreign policy component. That is to say, this search is also a deliberate action on the part of the Chinese government. The 'going global' or 'going out' policy is instrumental in creating competitive companies and enterprises through the PRC's use of market forces and policy guidance. Quoted in (Shambaugh, 2013) Jiang

Zemin former Politician and General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, in his speech to the Fifteenth Party Congress contends that ‘We [China] should encourage and help relatively competitive enterprises with various forms of ownership to invest abroad in order to increase exports of goods and labour services and bring about a number of strong multinational enterprises and brand names’.⁴³ On this basis, Chinese companies were encouraged to establish Chinese ‘brand names’ abroad, thus expanding the export market and increasing commercial profits. The result of this was an inpouring of Chinese consumer goods and services into the markets of CARICOM nations. *Table 6* illustrates some of the big Chinese companies that ventured abroad under the ‘going out’ policy since China’s rise and have found themselves in CARICOM countries like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Much like the case of Africa, the idea was to use these CARICOM nations as a training curve, later to be refined, to penetrate more developed markets like that of the US and EU.

Table 6: Chinese Companies that Ventured Out in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago (by sector and revenue and year of venturing out)

Source: Created by Author based on data taken from Companies’ annual reports

Company	Country	Sector	Revenue 2015-2016 (\$RMB Millions)	Year Ventured Out
China Communications Construction Co.	Jamaica	Engineering/Construction	403.6-429.9 ⁴⁴	1980
Huawei Technologies Jamaica Company Limited	Jamaica	Information/Communications Tech.	395.0-521.5 ⁴⁵	1999
China Sinopharm International Corporation	Jamaica	Pharmaceutical Distributor	227.0-256.3 ⁴⁶	2006

⁴³ See Jiang Zemin’s report to the 15th CPC National Congress available at: <http://academics.wellesley.edu/Polisci/wj/308S/Readings/jzm15CCP.htm>

⁴⁴ Data taken from China Communications Construction Co. Annual Report. URL: http://chinaeast.cdn.euroland.com/arinhhtml/CN-CYY/2016/AR_ENG_2016/index.htm
Accessed: February 2, 2017.

⁴⁵ Data taken from Huawei Investment & Holding Co., Ltd. 2018 Annual Report. URL: https://www-file.huawei.com/-/media/corporate/pdf/annual-report/annual_report2018_en_v2.pdf. Accessed: December 12, 2018.

⁴⁶ Data taken from China Sinopharm International Corporation Company Report. URL: https://www.gtja.com.hk/UploadFiles/gtja_Report/2017/03/1099new.pdf. Accessed: January 18, 2018.

China Railway Group Limited	Trinidad & Tobago	Construction	240.6-240.5 ⁴⁷	2009
ZTE Corporation	Trinidad & Tobago	Information/ Communications Tech.	100.1-101.2 ⁴⁸	2006
CNOOC Limited	Trinidad & Tobago	Oil/Gas	171.4-146.4 ⁴⁹	2003

This search for win-win agreements and commercial profits has also brought to CARICOM nations, a situation in which Chinese firms have taken an interest in their service industries. For example, in the construction industry, the building of new infrastructures, roads and ports along with the reconstruction of dilapidated buildings has brought many of China's engineering and construction companies to the fore when it comes to large infrastructure projects existing in these nations. These include the building of the North-South Toll Road in Jamaica and the Government Campus Plaza Parkade in Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, expansion in the telecommunication business led by Information and Communications Technology (ICT) giants such as Huawei and ZTE has China accounting for significant network services in Central America and the Caribbean (Ellis, 2014).

Nevertheless, the more contentious component of Beijing's 'going global' initiative is arguably its Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) in these countries which entails financial flows of loans, grants and credits (Harris, 2014). In 2011 alone, according to Abdullah and Abdul Rahman (2015), FDI from China added up to \$56bn. Since then, China's investment in CARICOM nations has mostly taken on the forms of developmental aid and the funding of infrastructure projects (Bernal, 2014a). It is important to note that flows of China's FDI to CARICOM nations are very small when compared to traditional sources like Canada, EU and the United States (De Groot and Pérez Ludeña, 2014). Nevertheless, the sectors wherein Chinese FDI is reflected at its highest in these nations are agriculture, tourism, energy and raw materials (Stephenson,

⁴⁷ Data taken from China Railway Group Ltd. 2018 Interim Report. URL: http://www.ir-cloud.com/china/601390/financial/22/EN/2018%20Interim%20Report_y86nuLd6cD9D.pdf. Accessed: December 12, 2018.

⁴⁸ Data taken from ZTE Corporation 2018 Annual Report. URL: <https://res-www.zte.com.cn/mediares/zte/Investor/20190410/E1.pdf>. Accessed December 15, 2018.

⁴⁹ Data taken from CNOOC Limited 2017 Annual Report. URL: <https://www.cnooc ltd.com/attach/0/1804120631438791699.pdf>. Accessed: January 18, 2018.

2015). Table 7 below taken from (Bernal, 2016a) illustrates the sectors in CARICOM nations which China's FDI flows on a country by country basis.

Table 7: Chinese FDI Investments in CARICOM Countries-Company, Sector and US\$ Value

Source: Adapted from Bernal (2016, p 10)

Country	Company	Sector	Investment	
			Value	Date
Guyana	Bosai Mining ^a	Mining investment	\$100mn	2006
	Haier Computer Store ^b	Computer service center		2012
		Computer and TV assembly plant	\$10 mn	Deferred indefinitely
	Bai Shan Lin/China Forest Industry Group ^c	Forestry		
		Wood processing factory	\$70mn	Delayed
		Gold mining		2014
		Housing and mall development		2014
	Datang ^d (20% shares in GT&T)	Telecommunications	\$30 mn	2012
Jamaica	Xinfa ^e	Mining	In discussion	
	China National Complete Plant Import-Export Corporation ^f	Agriculture (cane farming)	\$156mn.	2011
		Manufacturing (sugar)	\$9mn.	2011
	China Harbour Engineering Co ^g	Transport	\$600mn.	2014
		Tourism-hotels		
Suriname	China Zhong Heng Tai Investment ^h	Agriculture/mfg (palm oil)	\$4.5mn.	
Trinidad and Tobago	Chaoyang BVI (25.5% share)	Energy (oil production)	\$0.78mn.	2009
	China Investment Corporation	Energy (natural gas)	\$850mn.	2011
	China Investment Corporation (30% share)	Energy (exploration)	In discussion	
	ENN ⁱ	Energy (compressed natural gas)	MOU signed	2014
	SINOPEC/SABIC JV ^j	Alternative energy (methanol)	Aborted	
The Bahamas	China State Construction Engineering ^k	Tourism	N/A	2014
Antigua	Yida International Investment Group ^l	Tourism	\$1bn	2015

Sources:

a. "Bosai Mining acquires South America bauxite mining company." *Mining Top News*, 2006. Retrieved on 23 November 2009.

b. "Haier service centre opens in Guyana." *Guyana Times International*, 24 February 2012.

c. *Kaiteur News* online edition.

d. "US\$25 mn from sale of GT&T shares going to NICIL." *Stabroek News*, 23 November 2012.

e. Henry, B. "God returns." *Jamaica Observer*, 7 May 2014.

f. Douglas, L. "Govt. seals sugar deal with Complant. Chinese company investing US\$156m in industry." *Jamaica Observer*, 16 August 2011, and "J\$8b Sugar Divestment Agreements Signed Between Government and Chinese Investors." 2 August 2010 Available at: <http://jis.gov.jm/j8b-sugar-divestment-agreements-signed-between-government-and-chinese-investors/>

g. Bennett, K. "CHEC adds 1,400 more rooms to planned North South Highway hotels." *Jamaica Observer*, 9 May 2015, 1

h. Ellis, R. E. 2012. "Suriname and the Chinese: Timber, Migration, and Less-Told Stories of Globalization." *SAIS Review* XXXII(2): 9; "Suriname's palm-oil sector to be rehabilitated." Available at: <http://agritrade.cta.int/Agriculture/Commodities/Oil-crops/Suriname-s-palm-oil-sector-to-be-rehabilitated>.

i. Harrinanan, S. "NGC signs agreement with China." *Trinidad and Tobago Newsday*, 24 February 2014.

j. Ellis, R. E. 2014. *China on the Ground in Latin America. Challenges for the Chinese and Impacts on the Region*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

k. "Nassau's British Colonial Hilton Sold." Available at: <http://www.caribjournal.com/2014/10/27/nassaus-british-colonial-hilton-sold/#>

l. "Soil Turned. Jobs On." *Antigua & Barbuda News*. 1 May 2015.

It is important to note that China's investments in these sectors are tied to its motives discussed here. The intention behind the PRC's FDI is both ideological and material (Rotberg, 2009). As

a result, China's investments in these CARICOM nations are not on a mercenary level. Such concessionary loans must be repaid either by relinquishing raw materials or by undertaking infrastructure projects connected to China's state-owned enterprises (SOEs). Since the year 2000, Chinese state banks have been the main lenders in these CARICOM nations (Stephenson, 2015) and it wasn't before 2010 that CARICOM nations were extended an approximation of \$USD35 million in credits to establish large infrastructure projects (Bernal, 2010).

4.1.4 The Use of CARICOM nations' geostrategic location

Abdulai (2016) aptly pointed out that the PRC will need not only allies, but also strategically located partners, to challenge the hegemonic influence of the US in a unipolar world. Winning and keeping friends is important, but food security, natural resources and strategic footholds in certain region are equally important. The CARICOM region presents a fertile ground within which China is able to increase its influence while simultaneously decreasing that of the US. David Jessop maintains that 'in naval terms, the Caribbean [and its CARICOM subset] enables control of the sea lanes and deep-water channels that provide access from the Pacific to the Atlantic, and to US ports in the gulf and on both of its coasts' (Caribbean Council, 2015).⁵⁰ While the US has in the past, employed brutal neo-colonial strategies to secure the region from outside influence, China is presently diverting from such measures by implementing 'win-win' partnerships with these nations.

Such partnerships, for example, see the building of transshipment ports and commercial zones in Jamaica by the China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) as well as port facilities in the Bahamas valuing US\$2.6 billion (Collins, 2001). These undertakings by China to secure the waterways that CARICOM nations' strategic location presents, can be likened unto US's activities in the South China sea. Though China's engagement with these CARICOM nations has been strictly economic, (Tannenbaum, 2018) points out that this engagement has recently retained a military dimension. As of late, this has witnessed Trinidad and Tobago securing maritime patrol ships from the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the PRC's contribution to Jamaica's defence force of non-lethal gear valuing \$7.5 million (Campbell and Valette, 2014) and Guyana, Barbados, Dominica and the Bahamas planned military coordination efforts with the PLA (Tannenbaum, 2018). Pinnock and Ajagunna (2014) affirms that, CARICOM's

⁵⁰ See: Jessop, D., 2015. A location of strategic importance. The Caribbean Council. Available at: <https://www.caribbean-council.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Jan4-A-location-of-strategic-importance.pdf>. (Accessed, April 1, 2017)

location presents a gateway that ‘sit at the intersection of the major “round the world” East-West trade routes linking Asia, America, Europe and the Middle East, and the important North to South routes between North and South America, and South America and Europe’. If China were to secure these waterways, then it could possibly gain control of the six main chokeholds present in the Caribbean Sea. Korybko (2017) identifies these ‘chokepoints’ to the region as ‘the Nicaraguan and Panama Canals, Florida Strait, Yucatán Channel, Windward Passage, Mona Passage and Cuba’.⁵¹ Such control may not only lead to a reduction in US’s influence in the region, but could also shake its security stronghold in its own backyard, undermining its international norms on the issues of democracy, governance and commercial practices (Koleski and Blivas, 2018).

An undermining of this hegemonic stronghold is linked right through the literature to almost all of China’s motives. (T&TG3) affirms that, ‘China really doesn’t want Maracas beach or to own it, well they might want to own the pitch lake, but they don’t want to own the bananas and coconuts. That’s not what they want. They want Long Island; they want control over the airports, and they want the Florida Panhandle’. As a result, as previously discussed, most of these motives follow as an explanation for the PRC’s increasing interaction, rise and role within these CARICOM nations. Nonetheless, several Caribbean political scientists, economists, and environmentalists are concerned about the consequences of China’s rapid rise in the region and what it means for the political, cultural, social, and environmental future of the area. Having uncovered that both governing and non-governing elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago share in these concerns, the subsequent section highlights along what lines they are established, before delving into a discussion surrounding each.

4.2 A look at the Challenges

4.2.1 Several motives and a barrage of concerns: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago’s elites on the challenges China’s motives has presented for their nation and sub-region

While China is welcomed, standing in a vacuum left by the US and offering CARICOM nations a renewed road to development; government and non-governmental leaders, while pointing to the positive results of the emergence of the PRC, express serious concerns about the challenges

⁵¹ See: Korybko, A., 2017. 21st Century Geopolitics of the Caribbean. Published July 12, 2017. Available at: <https://www.geopolitica.ru/en/article/21st-century-geopolitics-caribbean> (Accessed: January 21, 2018).

it also poses. In each case, elites from both sectors admit that there has been a pronounced polarisation and bias in their society since China's rise, which has created a 'fourth wave' of Chinese immigrants in these societies. This polarisation and bias existing among the local population and the Chinese newcomers stemmed more from concerns existing in the grassroots strand. As stated before, the investigation has uncovered that there are two dominant strands along which these concerns fall: the grassroots strand and the foreign policy strand. *Table 8* below gives a visual representation of each strand and the concerns therein.

Table 8: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's governmental and non-governmental concerns surrounding the challenges of China's motives

Source: Prepared by Author from interview data

Concerns along the Grassroots Strand	Concerns along the Foreign Policy Strand
Impact on local businesses/construction industries.	The backlash from the US if China seems threatening (blacklisting the Caribbean, withdrawal of loans and grants, trade wars and rising tension between the Caribbean and the US, etc.).
Environmental impact due to the depletion of natural resources (ecocide, deforestation etc).	Bilateral agreements that are more beneficial to China than CARICOM nations.
The outflow of capital made from Chinese businesses in these societies.	Debt trap resulting from infrastructure development.
Government corruption in dealing with China (the state).	The growing trade deficit with China.
Government corruption in dealing with these new Chinese migrants.	Having to choose between the 'two Chinas'.
---	Complete isolation of Taiwan, leading to intense competition amongst each other for the PRC's investments.
---	Permanent displacement of the US hegemon.
---	The use of Confucius Institutes as foreign policy tools to deepen their stronghold within CARICOM nations.

---	Quality of Infrastructure Projects
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4.2.2 Pronounced bias and Polarisation as a result of Chinese migration

‘Especially in Trinidad and Tobago there are four waves of Chinese migration. One was around emancipation 200 years ago; one was coming up on independence and the other was because of the Chinese 1911 revolution. This last one is stemming from the construction boom and Chinese investments in the last 10 to 15 years, wherein they took their families with them’ (T&TN17). Scholarship surrounding the ‘first wave’ through to the ‘third wave’ of Asians to the West Indies has been reliably evidenced and chronicled. However, this ‘fourth wave’ that has emerged with China’s recent and deepened engagement with CARICOM nations, have been left underexplored. It is an indisputable fact that China’s increased investments into these nations would have resulted in the rise of a new group of labourers and sojourners to the region.

My findings have shown that, unlike the first through to the third wave, which has succeeded in adjusting to their new environment, this fourth wave fails to assimilate into their respective societies and instead opted to maintain close family or friendship networks in many respects. Anne-marie (2010) maintains, that this sudden and massive influx of Chinese migrants to these regions, whether legal or illegal has created for these societies, some of the greatest challenges. I have found in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, that this influx and the additional isolation of these newcomers has led to areas of tension and disturbance between them and the local population:

The negative consequence is that with this new migration, there is polarisation. This latest one is so isolated that they stay among themselves and go to shops together. They don’t integrate with society, which causes a more pronounced bias and polarisation. (T&TG6).

They tend to stick together, so what you will normally find is that they buy houses and convert them into communes, and they’ll put up such a big fence so nobody can see. All you might see is them walking on the road, or you might hear the sizzling of the pot on the veranda. Such an approach does nothing, however, to ease the tension between them and the rest of the population (JN14).

Personally, with this new influx of Chinese people, I have many concerns. I like people keeping to themselves, particularly my neighbours, but it’s disconcerting to see an entire group of hundreds and also thousands of people making themselves deliberately inaccessible to the people of the country they’re doing business with

and whose money they're taking. I am a little bit disturbed by that, to be honest (T&TN18).

As discussed earlier in chapter 1, the influx of Chinese into these nations is not a new phenomenon. 'China's presence in the region yields back to indentured labour which later saw their penetration of the informal sector in a tremendous way. Almost to the point where a Chinese shop always seems to be nearby' (JG1). So, what then is creating such a upstir in these societies with this recent wave of Chinese? (T&TN20) maintains that:

At least during the colonial period the labour force was involuntary or semi-voluntary and it was sort of imported here but it stayed here, whereas in this instance, the labour force kind of transferred and there is no plantation culture and there is no integration into the space in which these people work. So, it seems to me that most of China's business initiatives depend on this sort of moving labour force that does not encourage cultural, communication or any form of integration. In that sense, I think it's very different from earlier, and I mean even more cruel and even more exploitative. For at least back then, people had a place where they stayed and built a society (T&TN20).

(GRG1) affirms that, to identify the differences between the influx of Chinese then and now, 'we need to look at the changing nature of Chinese presence in the Caribbean'. She further maintains that 'there is Chinese presence in all of the wholesales in Jamaica and in Trinidad. When you look at the wholesale sector, China has been there from the very beginning. So, what has changed? What has changed in terms of the Chinese presence is the sophistication and the actual areas of the economy that they are penetrating, and the visibility of that penetration' (GRG1). (JRG7) reminds us that we should,

not forget that China was very much present when we had the whole 804 structure⁵² under the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). And in fact, there were problems then because China basically exported not only it's labourers to work in the Free Zones, but they also exported their work standards. So basically, they came with their workers, and they came with their work standard and their labour standards which were considerably less than Jamaica. And that raised questions in terms of high and low labour standards etc. The debate around that has not gone. So, with the increased penetration in the construction sector, and we are talking about the construction sector in terms of road works and in terms of physical infrastructure. China is there. So, that has its presence and that is very different from previous years (JRG7).

⁵² Referring to the section under the CBI covering textiles and apparel.

Agreeing along similar lines (T&TG3) affirms that,

across the world, there has always been a Chinatown. And while it is debatable whether people can take their sense of patriotism and nationalism to another country and exercise it, nothing is wrong. But then how do you mitigate that when you have a couple thousand people doing it, and you generally create for all intent and purposes a mini-China within your country, wherein they are governing themselves by some of their laws. For instance, labour laws, do they recognise our constitution and what we say about labour? I don't think so (T&TG3).

It is these differences like the current Chinese migrants and their failure to assimilate into a society, that has led to an increase in anti-Chinese sentiments in these two nations. In some cases, it has even reached a level wherein the livelihood of those within their conclave who have created local businesses, have become severely threatened:

Yes, crimes against Chinese nationals, particularly robberies, have increased. For example, one of the common threads you'll find is that bandits can invade the home of a Chinese businessman and can steal up to \$400,000. Or they can raid a Chinese mansion and 3 or 40, 0000 TT cash or even 20 to \$USD30,000 cash will be stolen. They usually have a lot of cash (T&TN15).

These Chinese shops are one of the country's big targets for criminals, and in fact, every time I go into a Chinese business, I've tried to get out of there very-very quickly. You just never know when that business is going to be attacked. You must have heard that one of these Chinese places were attacked recently and that some of them were killed, and in some cases, they also kill people (T&TG3).

We don't have enough officers to patrol these supermarkets and grocery stores, and that's a major barrier. But we also don't speak their language. There was a big security issue that flared up the other day with Chinese food places being robbed (T&TG7).

It is important to note that although there is polarisation in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago with regard to the new Chinese wave and the local population, attacks on Chinese businesses have been found to be much more pronounced in Trinidad and Tobago than in Jamaica. A high number (72%) of respondents in Trinidad and Tobago made mention of these attacks, while those in Jamaica made none. Nevertheless, in the two country cases, elites from both sectors affirm that the existing polarisation and bias in the society stems primarily from grassroots concerns. The study found that concerns regarding the impact on local businesses/ construction industries, environmental impact due to the depletion of natural resources, outflow of capital made from Chinese businesses, the acquisition of prime real estate in these countries, government corruption in dealing with China (the state) and in dealing with these new Chinese migrants, were the culprits for creating this ghastly situation.

4.2.3 China's impact on local businesses/construction industries

As previously stated, the presence of this new wave of Chinese in these CARICOM nations stems directly from China's investment projects that have been initiated in these nations around infrastructure construction. Lumsden (2015) noted that China's practices are more consistent with avoiding local hiring and are more inclined to send its workers to these nations in an effort to solve their own problems of unemployment. However, the PRC's emphasis on the use of large numbers of Chinese workers to develop infrastructure has led CARICOM nationals to become increasingly dubious about the economic impact of these Chinese-investment ventures (Campbell and Valette, 2014). For example, the Chinese-sponsored highway built in Jamaica in 2016 connecting Kingston to Ocho Rios valuing \$730 million witnessed the China Harbour Engineering Company bringing in approximately '1,000 workers and engineers from China to build the highway' (Tannenbaum, 2018) while Bahamas Baha Mar resort valuing \$3.5 billion, saw the use of 7,000 Chinese workers (Campbell and Valette, 2014). All the 'skyscraper' buildings in Port of Spain together with the National Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA) saw the Chinese bringing in their workers on this project, which was from 2007 (T&TN14). 'Wherever the Chinese are involved, they bring their own workers' (T&TN14). 'Contractors liked San and Shanghai construction which comes in on projects worth billions of dollars, hires very few locals. In fact, if I remember correctly, it was the local Contractors Association somewhere in the early 2000s, I believe the head of it was Michael Joseph, they expressed concerns that local people weren't getting jobs' (T&TG3). The importation of these workers, however, has caused severe marginalisation between them and the local population, who blames both China and Chinese nationals for interfering with their livelihoods, especially in the construction industry:

Well, the complaint among local construction leaders is about unfair competition because they [China] can out price anybody, thereby giving preference to Chinese workers (T&TG4).

The discussions are very different at the grassroots level where people are talking about, for example, having Chinese workers and Chinese construction companies coming over and displacing local industries (JG9).

I think that in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, where there are usually vibrant construction industries, the Chinese Construction Companies' incursion into these public-sector projects, which are usually major projects, has led to a debate as to whether or not they should allow the Chinese government to subsidise

the production of these needed infrastructures to the apparent detriment of the local contracting firms (BRG1).

First, they prevent you from exporting anything and then they are killing your construction industry in your own country. They are bankrupting your country (JN19).

There has been an increased presence in the construction industry, particularly from the Chinese government and what they have provided for us (JN13).

They are essentially taking over the construction industry in these small countries, and that is a fact (T&TG5).

What you have is the crowding out of local building contractors and workers when it comes down to these infrastructure programs (T&TN12).

What we see here and in many other countries in the Caribbean, is a presence of Chinese workers, construction people, and they do come in and secure contracts and so on (JN17).

In the two country cases, this encroachment was found to be a major concern among elites from both sectors. A little over half (53%) of all respondents in the Jamaican context voiced their concerns about the take-over of the local construction industries by China. However, it was found that a majority (8) of these respondents belonged to the non-governmental sectors of society. In the Trinidad and Tobago context, 86% voiced their concerns over the impact on the local construction industries with respondents stemming from both sectors of the society. The concern was found to be much more rampant in the Trinidadian context. Additionally, it was found that especially in Trinidad and Tobago, this out-crowding was not just taking place in the construction industry, but also in smaller-scale businesses like supermarkets, restaurants and even the craft industry:

I see them here. They come, and they operate a lot of small restaurants and a lot of small supermarkets. I don't know if this is being guided by people in Beijing, but they do. I mean, in my town Chaguaramas, everywhere, of course, there is a new Chinese restaurant (T&TN15).

As of recently, we have seen them in the creative art industry (T&TN17).

They are in infrastructure, they are in restaurants, they are in the gambling industry, and they are in supermarkets. They seem to be everywhere (T&TN13).

More and more supermarkets, the supermarkets seem to be a big thing to them and not only here but elsewhere (T&TG10).

Here in Trinidad, the industry on Carnival artefacts was to be moved to China because it was stated that it will undoubtedly be cheaper to produce there (T&TG3).

I can see it impacting the creative industry significantly. Already there are other crossovers in terms of us and Japan with the Soca (T&TN12).

At the grassroots level, this concern about the displacement of local construction workers overlaps with the foreign-policy concern about the quality of these infrastructure projects that China is setting up in these countries. It was found to be a very disconcerting issue in Trinidad and Tobago in particular:

So like China (*)⁵³ is a horrible company! They messed up everything, and we had to fire them from E-Teck at some point because they could not manage the time and the project. They continued with the UTT [the University of Trinidad and Tobago] project in Tamana and have taken what is it now like 11 years to build two buildings. I mean, it's unbelievable! (T&TN19).

You must be aware and must have seen the National Academy for Performing Arts (NAPA). There are some serious issues. It's a disaster! (T&TN16).

Some of these infrastructures never tend to work on the inside. For example, Tamana's flagship building, they used cladding that cannot be used in a tropical environment, so it continuously fills up with mould and moss. This means that they have to pressure wash the building once a month. And when you look at the SAPA [Southern Academy for the Performing Arts] the condensation has essentially rotted and stained all the gypsums inside the building because of nature and how they designed it in using single pane glass and things like that, it shows you they don't know what they're doing (T&TG9).

The issue with this low-quality infrastructure management is that it possesses the ability to latch in undesirable ecological practices for a considerable length of time (Gokkon, 2018).⁵⁴ Therefore, if this is the effect of poorly built projects of which elites in these countries are aware, then how is it that Chinese construction firms continue to win against local construction industries? The answer can be found in concerns surrounding government corruption in dealing with China:

I mean once again, one has to question why China Railway won it [bid*]⁵⁵ over other people. Were they the cheapest bid? They likely were. Why were they the cheapest bid is the bigger question. So, a lot of times these bids come in, and it may

⁵³ Name withheld to maintain confidentiality.

⁵⁴ See: Gokkon, B., Environmentalists Are Raising Concerns Over China's Belt and Road Initiative. Published July 18, 2018. Available at: <https://psmag.com/environment/environmental-concerns-over-chinese-infrastructure-projects>. (Accessed November 20, 2018)

⁵⁵ Details of bid withheld to ensure confidentiality.

say that China Railway won the interchange bid but who were the subcontractors that they bid with? I am not saying anything more on this matter (T&TG9).

The Chinese have done the whole Port-of-Spain landscape. All of these new buildings like the Hyatt are Chinese buildings. And yes, I think there is a lot of corruption involved in that (T&TN17).

Most of these agreements done with China are not known, and so politicians should share the information with the public so that all suspicion of corruption is removed (JN13).

Jamaica's politics and politicians are corrupt. So, no doubt that bribes possibly exist in these interactions with China. Most of the time, the details of these deals are just unknown (JN16).

From the outside looking in, some deals seem to be 'sweetheart' deals. For example, China is given the Roaring River and its surroundings in Ocho Rios. This is a prime real estate, and it was just essentially handed over to them (JN14).

China can provide funding for political parties and as such this money plays a vital role in the extent to which China infiltrates the government of both Jamaica and Trinidad to secure deals that are perhaps not so transparent (JN11).

While corruption has been found to be a problem in both countries, in the case of Jamaica, opinions around this issue have been found to be greater than in Trinidad and Tobago. A high of (63%) believed that there is a corrupt element present in these deals made between the Jamaican government and China. The majority (9) of whom voiced such concerns, emanated from the non-governmental sector of the society. The remainder of whom originated from the governmental sector opted for anonymity.

What was quite interesting to note, was that in the Trinidad and Tobago context, the issue of corruption was found to fuel the concern about the government's corrupt dealings with Chinese migrants than that of the state of China:

I mean, for instance, I know a Chinese guy he has a driver's permit and a national ID card, and he can't write English, and he barely speaks English (T&TN15).

We had instances where Chinese nationals were given firearm permits, and we have businessmen here who have been waiting for 20 and 30 years to get approved to carry a firearm, and these businesses are being robbed. But the Chinese come here, and within 3 to 6 months you are licensed to carry a concealed weapon, and you can't write English, you have a license, and you can't read English. How are you passing those tests? So, it smells of corruption in some sense because throwing a few dollars at an official to look one way is worth having your presence here (T&TG3).

This concern about the influx of these new Chinese migrants coupled with their effects on local industries and the suspicions surrounding government corruption is also fuelling the fire around China's ability to engage in extractive malpractice on these islands. This in turn has enhanced the PRC's natural resource mining in these nations and its steady cash outflow.

4.2.4 Environmental Impact from the extraction of Primary Resources and the Cash outflow era

China's mining activities and natural resource extraction in these nations not only open them up as favourable locations to conduct business, which in turn boosts their economic health, but the PRC's resource exploitation is set to have serious impacts on these societies' environmental fabric. Gallagher (2016) maintains that, there is considerable ecological impact associated with China's 'extractive industries' and that there is no constitutional or applicable framework for managing such effects (Myers and Wise, 2016). The elites of both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago share this sentiment and contend that:

It's starting to be a real concern, especially around mining because in areas where China is carrying out these activities such as St. Elizabeth etc. residents have started to become quite ill. The mining is not only polluting the air but also the water and when it's over, they usually just move on. Then the land is left so barren (JG6).

Chinese investment is mostly viewed at the commanding heights of the economy. And it's also to the detriment of the environment, so that the whole growing awareness from the environment and environmental degradation in Jamaica and the region, is also clashing with Chinese practices and what we know about Chinese policies towards the environment. Most of the population is concerned about these practices and their impacts. So those are the areas of concerns (JRG7).

I have heard through a conversation with a business interest that China was a bit bummed by the Jagdeo Initiative⁵⁶ which sought to protect the natural forest and so forth in Guyana because there is a lot of wood there and China needs wood. And they [China] have been trying and it is my understanding that they have met with businessmen in the Caribbean to get them to invest there as CARICOM citizens and then their investments would, in turn, go across the pond. How successful has that been? I don't think it has been very successful because the Jagdeo Initiative is pretty ironclad and it's pretty straightforward. Plus, the Guyanese people are proud,

⁵⁶ Refers to an initiative that was created by the President of Guyana, Bharrat Jagdeo who is also the CARICOM Head of Government for Agriculture. The Initiative is one that dismisses restraints surrounding agricultural development and is a conjunctive measure to the previous regional endeavour surrounding the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). For a full outline of details surrounding the Initiative see 'The Private Sector Commission, Technical Information Bulletin'. Published October 8, 2007. Available at: http://www.psc.org.gy/press/bulletins/tib_08%20-%20The%20Jagdeo%20Initiative.pdf (Accessed, August 11, 2018).

but if China was to get its way, then can you imagine the environmental havoc that would reap on their nation? (T&TG3).

However, it is not solely the environmental impacts that are concerning but also the fact that capital from businesses operated by Chinese citizens find its way back to China as opposed to being reinvested in these nations:

This comes down to economics because China isn't Colombia which sends drugs all over the place, they send people all over the world and then they send money back home—which should ostensibly build their military and do infrastructure projects, and run the communist state a little tighter. So, the economic influence and political influence here is quite visible (JN14)

What is important to China is making these investments and getting money back to China. So even the ones living overseas send money back to China. And that for China, is their number one concern (JG6).

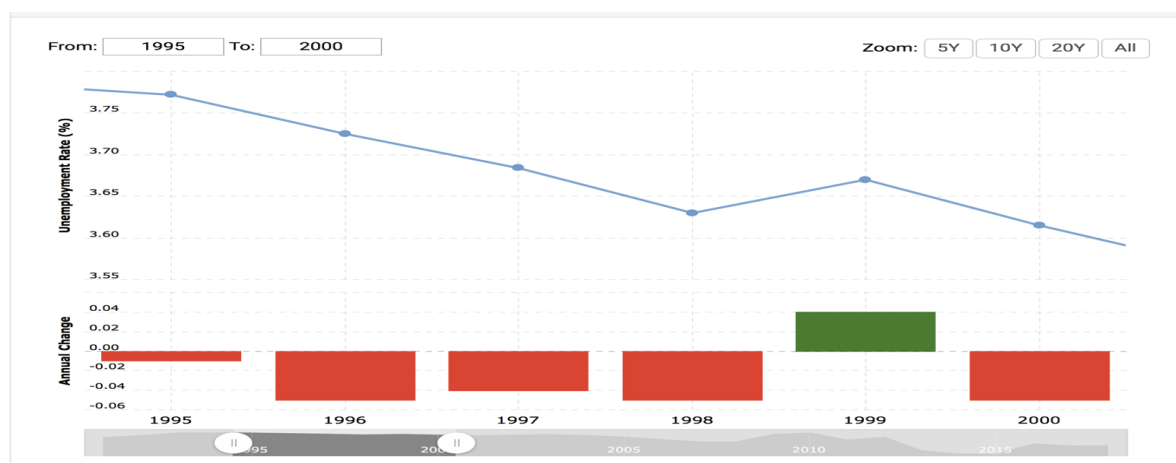
With the proliferation of Chinese businesses, literally every 500 feet, you will see a Chinese gaming machine. And there is a Chinese national sitting there whose English is limited to 'put money', 'take money' and 'yes' and 'no' and 'buy me a beer' and 'can I have a cigarette?' and 'can I have a light?' That's all they know. They sit there all day on their iPhones, I don't know what they work for, but they collect money that Trinidadians work for, that we labour for and at the end of the day, they take it home (T&TG3).

Chinese businesses don't hire local people. In a Chinese food place, for instance, you may have one local, but that is the person that will take the orders because they understand what we want. For example, do you want chow mien or chicken fried rice? And at the point when some of the nationals get to understand the menu items, they don't need the Trinidadian anymore. So, all of that money now goes back to China. So, the concern is more an economic one primarily, then from that, the lack of integration culturally (T&TG6).

Since the influx of this new wave of Chinese and their reluctance to hire locals coupled with the out-crowding of local industries, unemployment data in Trinidad and Tobago shows that whereas from 1995-2000 there was a steady decline in the unemployment rate with just a slight 0.4% increase in 1999, since China's engagement with the nation unemployment rate has been a bit more erratic see (*Fig. 2 & 3*). This does not mean that the influx of Chinese workers into investment projects and their reluctance to hire local people in businesses has directly affected these trends, but it is interesting to note the differences since then. To determine if this is indeed the case, further research on the matter would be needed.

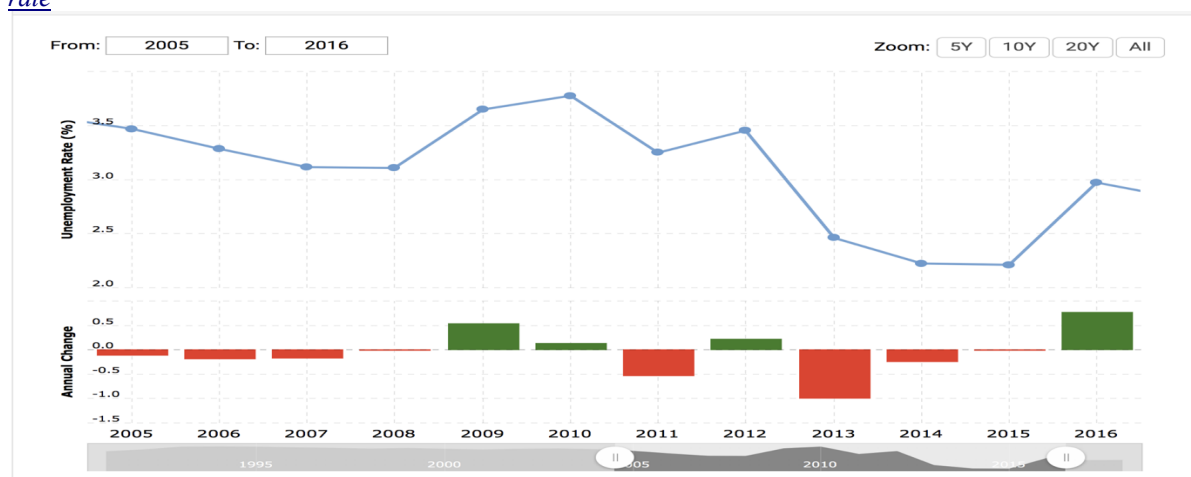
**Figure 2: Illustration of Trinidad and Tobago's unemployment rate from 1995-2000-
Pre China contact**

Source: Data was taken from <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/TTO/trinidad-and-tobago/unemployment-rate>



**Figure 3: Illustration of Trinidad and Tobago's unemployment rate from 2005-2016-
Post China contact**

Source: Data was taken from <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/TTO/trinidad-and-tobago/unemployment-rate>



It feels like we have a bunch of small Chinese restaurants mushrooming up every time they [China] build something in Antigua, and some of their people don't go back. And basically, what you find is that they have sent out so many small and medium enterprise persons to generate income to go back to the mainland. It is just a form of network remittances (GRG1).

The Chinese economy is slowing. That crazy growth that we saw in the 2000s and early 2010 is done. The only way for them to keep up, I would say half of that level of growth, so if they were even getting 5% or 6% growth per year, it would be for businesses to invest abroad and channel their profits home. (T&TG9).

This outflow of money back to China is essentially what Hickel (2014) termed as 'aid in reverse'. That means that 'rich countries aren't developing poor countries; poor countries are

developing rich ones' (Hickel, 2014). The author maintains that data has shown, that 'the flow of money from rich countries to poor countries pales in comparison to the flow that runs in the other direction' (Hickel, 2014). So, if it is evident that there are serious concerns and impacts surrounding China's motives in these CARICOM nations, what exactly are these governing elites doing to combat these forces?

4.3 The matter of safeguarding against China's 'aid in reverse' wave

When the question surrounding the matter of safeguarding their nations (*see question 15*) from China was posited to elites in both country cases, they remain divided on the issue. Although the majority agreed in both countries that steps (which will be disclosed in chapter 11 under recommendations) should be taken to safeguard their nations against China, some were of the opinion that they did not see how this could be done since there was nothing their country could offer the PRC to start with:

There's nothing we have to give that they can't get anywhere else, so I don't know how we could safeguard ourselves. I don't even see that we should safeguard ourselves against China because I don't see China as a danger (T&TN21).

Not, at this time. There are no better opportunities, China is helping us to develop (JG2).

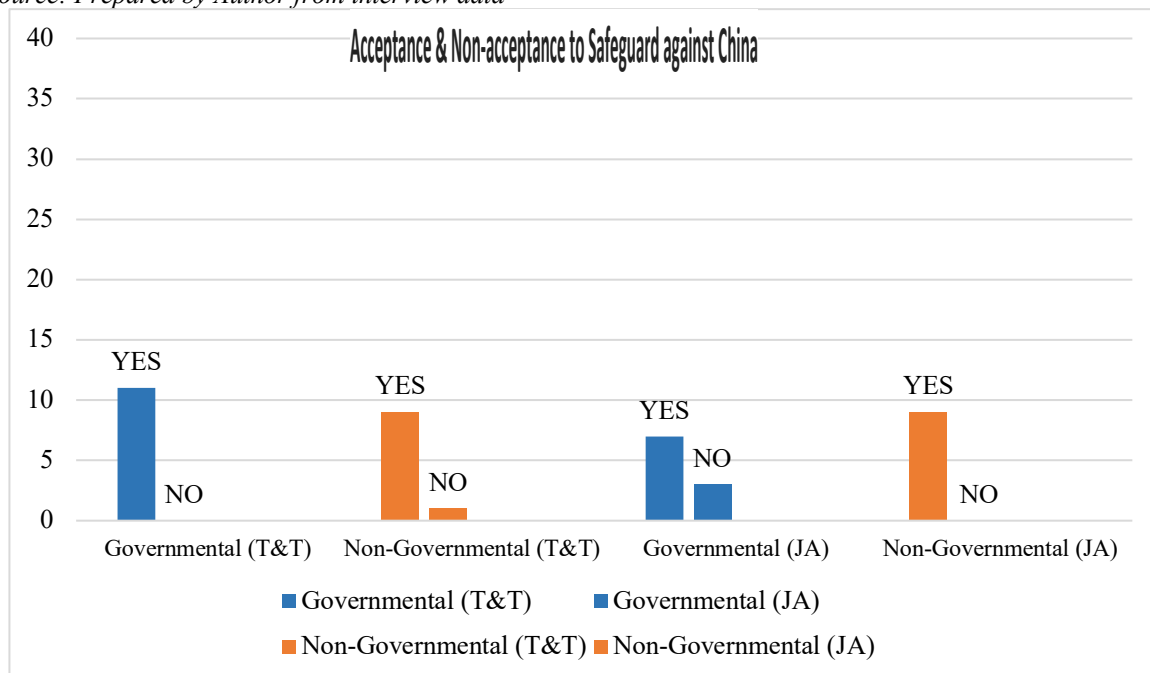
Not necessarily, China is investing its money here, and we need the investments. They are helping to build our roads etc. so I don't see the need for that (JG4).

No, I think when you say it like that, you are seeing China as a real threat. What are we safeguarding ourselves against? Should we be happy with the American influence instead? (JG10).

Of the 21 respondents in Trinidad and Tobago, 20 thought it was very important for their nation to seek to safeguard themselves against the impact stemming from China's rise in their country and sub-region. In Jamaica of the 19 interviewees, 16 shared in the sentiments carried by the majority in Trinidad and Tobago. It was also found that while 100% (11) of the governmental elites interviewed in Trinidad and Tobago, thought it was important for their nation and other CARICOM nations to employ strategies to rebuff the negative impacts of China's emergence, only 70% (7 of 10) of the governing elites in Jamaica shared in this sentiment. The graph below (*Fig. 4*) illustrates the findings in this area.

Figure 4: The Acceptance and non-acceptance to Safeguard against the impacts of China's rise as depicted by elites in different sectors in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Source: Prepared by Author from interview data



While the majority agreed on safeguards and a push-back against the effect of China on their societies in both nations, it was found that ruling elites in Trinidad and Tobago were actually implementing safeguards to ensure this push-back, as opposed to those in the Jamaican context that only said there should be. (T&TG9) for example, contends that ‘they [Chinese construction companies] have no choice locally, they absolutely have to do it [abide by rules involving partnering with local industries]. They can’t win the bid at this point in time and this is not an official government policy, but I can quite categorically state that they cannot win a bid at this point solely utilising labour that they are bringing from China or even bidding by themselves. We won’t allow it’.

In an attempt to prevent the overcrowding of their local labourers and industries, Trinidadian government elites continue to maintain that:

What you’ll find is that with companies like China Railway that have traditionally completed all the projects they’ve built in Trinidad before time and under budget, is it uses Chinese [Engineering Procurement Contractors] (EPC) contractors that create large cost savings for the Trinidad and Tobago government when properly managed. We have evolved in that we now demand that there will be local content in the way that they administer their subcontractors (T&TG9).

So, we're making sure that it's not just a Chinese company bringing in everything and doing this work, which would leave Trinidad and Tobago not having any real economic benefits. We also severely restrict any of the technical expertise they can bring in. While there was a lot of resistance from the Chinese EPC contractors before, they now know that there must be local managers and project managers in their company. So, they can't bring everyone from China (T&TG10).

If there's a lack of labour supply, they [China] must at least demonstrate that they've hired everyone they can hire locally before they start supplementing the project with Chinese labour. So, over time we've grown immensely. I don't think we're flawless, so there's still potential for miscommunication and implementation errors. But we're also not allowing them to take us for ransom (T&TG4).

The difference between Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in attempting a push back is not a new practice when it comes to emerging economies and more powerful ones. While some small states are determined not to be perceived as weak and taken for granted, others are determined to 'turn a blind eye to the inherent flaws in [their] economic policy' (Ray et al., 2017). The authors maintain, that when China's 'commodity boom [comes] to an end, those flaws cannot be ignored' (Ray et al., 2017). The question then is, why are some of these nations ignoring these flaws and for those that are not, why are they choosing to forge ahead with the PRC?

4.4 Conclusion

In November 2018, the Jamaica Gleaner published an article titled '*Mischief! – Shaw Dismisses Concern Over Jamaica-China deals*' (The Jamaica Gleaner, 2018).⁵⁷ In the editorial, Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Audley Shaw, maintains that individuals who have expressed concerns about China's local presence and the economic and cultural effects that it may have over the coming decades, are simply being 'mischievous'. He further affirms that such concerns are unfounded. Along a similar strand and just a few years prior, in a separate article published in the Trinidad and Tobago Guardian, titled '*Chinese Contractor Praises Calder Hart*', overseas Business President Tong Ji Sheng of the Shanghai Construction Group argues that 'all the projects his company has been hired to do in Trinidad are safe for the next 100 years and more' (Alonzo, 2009).⁵⁸ Later in 2012, in an article titled '*China calls for protection of its citizens in Trinidad and Tobago*', published by The Daily Observer,

⁵⁷ See: Robinson, C., Mischief! – Shaw Dismisses Concern Over Jamaica-China deals. Published: November 18, 2018. Available at <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20181118/mischief-shaw-dismisses-concerns-over-jamaica-china-deals> (Accessed December 8, 2018).

⁵⁸ See: Alonzo, R., Chinese Contractor Praises Calder Hart. Published: November 4, 2009. Available at <http://www.guardian.co.tt/news/chinese-contractor--praises-calder-hart-6.2.323894.41f63b349f> (Accessed December 8, 2018).

National Security of Trinidad and Tobago, Jack Austin Warner, maintained that he was assured and could pledge to the Chinese embassy that Chinese were not being targeted in Trinidad and Tobago.⁵⁹

However, careful evaluation of the interview data shows that the above-mentioned sentiments are quite contrary to the research findings on all three separate occasions. Firstly, concerns surrounding the challenges of China's rise in the Jamaican society is not as unfounded as Minister Audley Shaw would like to believe. Environmental degradation, especially in mining areas, were found to be of grave concerns among elites across both sectors of the Jamaican society. Such environmental considerations need to be taken seriously as Kogel et al. (2006) maintains that, if not, the quality of the groundwater can be seriously compromised and the existing flora, fauna system can be threatened. If left entirely unchecked this can even result in human fatalities. Despite growing rebuttals from current party officials that such concerns are mere mischief-making in the media, there is little evidence to suggest that this is a sentiment shared by Jamaican elites wherein only 16% maintains that China's presence is not a matter of debate/concern. Additionally, concerns surrounding government corruption is corroborated by the World Bank (2004) which affirms that, the business environment in Jamaica is not only plagued by corruption but that 'bribery and a lack of transparency in government contracts are considered to be important problems'. As a result, my research data establishes that such concerns are not only founded but are also grounded in legitimacy.

Similarly, the evidence gathered in this study shows that the elites of Trinidad and Tobago do not share the same sentiment despite growing media assurance from Chinese officials regarding the quality of infrastructure projects in Trinidad and Tobago. (T&TG9) surmised it by stating that,

when NAPA was built nothing worked, and of course, I also speak and read Mandarin, so they called me in to figure out what's going on with all of the equipment there. And basically, everything was provided with 220 power, and the electricians came in and change the plugs to 110 and then basically blew everything. And so, they do need to be managed because they do deliver projects on time and they deliver projects that look great, but most times I think they only look appealing externally (T&TG9).

⁵⁹ See: The Daily Observer. China calls for protection of its citizens in Trinidad and Tobago. Published: July 16, 2012. Available at: <https://www.antiguaobserver.com/china-calls-for-protection-of-its-citizens-in-trinidad-and-tobago/> (Accessed December 8, 2018).

In fact, Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of National Security, Jack Austin Warner, cannot provide guarantees that Chinese nationals are not targeted in Trinidad and Tobago. My research data indicates the opposite trend. It is clear that it is difficult for elites on both sides of the fence to admit to the insurmountable obstacles that is derived from the motivations of the PRC. Even in cases such as Jamaica, where elites are aware of the implications sweeping their nation and the sub-region, the feeling of safeguarding is held in high regard, but the ability to do so is lost on its governing elites.

Chapter Five: Reasons for Jamaica's Economic and Political Relations with China

The Caribbean Political Science discipline has a relatively large body of literature which explores these nations' economic and political motives regarding their alliance with the West. Usually, their economic and political motives are explained by either the 'bargaining model' or the dependency theory. The former having to do with frail nations agreeing to the terms and conditions of more powerful states out of fear of being disciplined through sanctions, etc., or out of the conveyance of benefits such as financial aid for example. The latter on the other hand, purports that these peripheral nations are so deeply infiltrated by the monetary interest of core countries that their foreign policy approach bears quite a similar and predictable pattern with the interest of the prevailing core nations. However, what is missing is that very few of the current discussions look specifically at the motivations behind these nations' alignment with China and surprisingly none utilises the theoretical tools provided by my thesis.

Drawing on the findings from my interviews with elites from both case studies, this and the next chapter presents empirical findings exploring the perspective of governmental and non-governmental elites on vulnerability as their respective nations' identity. The chapter does this in conjunction with the vulnerability theory as expressed by Anthony Payne (Payne, 2009). My argument here is that the vulnerability theory takes precedence over both the 'bargaining model' and dependency theory. This is because, although both the 'bargaining model' and the dependency theory are able to explain the mechanisms that shape these nations' foreign policy, none could explain the reason why these countries are determined to follow through with such foreign policy approaches. The vulnerability theory, which I use in this chapter as well as the subsequent, supports my argument regarding the fact that vulnerability has become more than a category for these CARICOM nations, and is now more like a construct of their identity. The notion of being small and vulnerable, as previously mentioned in chapter 3, translates to the need to comply for these nations. The arguments laid out in this chapter is not to discredit neither the 'bargaining model' nor dependency theory. In fact, they both offer an explanation as to how conditioning through both the model and theory have led to small countries like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago constructing a vulnerable identity.

Vulnerability as a concept has been widely studied at the micro-level as it relates to smaller nation-states. That is, on the micro-level, the populace in small nations have been extensively investigated particularly on the grounds of poverty analysis (Guillaumont, 2010). As it relates to the macro-level which is the less investigated of the two, the focus is usually on structural features resulting from exogenous factors (Guillaumont, 2010). Consequently, features of vulnerability, viability and to a large extent, vulnerability as a category, becomes elements widely discussed in the international relations and political science literature. Notwithstanding this, there is a gap in the discourse concerning the analysis of vulnerability as a construct of small states' identity. Very little attention has been paid to how micro and macro-levels of vulnerability has contributed to a fixated vulnerable identity that is reflected in these countries' foreign policy. As Brown (2016) points out, while the literature on vulnerability is regularly by all accounts conveyed by those intrigued by more structural ways to deal with the disadvantages it presents, regard from the viewpoint of those categorised as vulnerable are yet to be investigated. This is important to facilitate further understanding of the investigation's overarching question. Proving that there is, in fact a vulnerable identity in both countries gives us a better understanding of the nature of the foreign policy stance they are taking towards China. It also helps us to understand why it is that these nations have still decided to engage with China, even in the face of overwhelming negative impacts. In addition, it provides us with a more accurate perspective from CARICOM nations that have been categorised as vulnerable.

The chapter begins by first setting the context of exploring the concept of 'vulnerability' which is more-so represented in the literature as a category for small states rather than an identity. As Anthony Payne puts it, to date, vulnerability is effectively illustrated as more-so the structural condition of small states (Cooper and Shaw, 2009). Therefore, in presenting vulnerability here as an identity, in this chapter and the next, I draw on the empirical findings from governmental and non-governmental elites in both country cases while standing on the foundation of Anthony Payne's expression of vulnerability as an identity. In doing so, I found that such a construct becomes a state of victimisation, where the belief of weakness permeates these nations' foreign policy. My argument as a result, is that vulnerability not as a category, but instead as an identity is responsible for both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's increasing economic and political relations with China. That is, policymakers in each country cases view their relationship with powerful states such as China as a matter of need/necessity due to an identity grounded in vulnerability. This stems from the mantra of 'we are seen as weak, so we must be weak' especially in the Jamaican context. This inevitably translates to weak approaches in foreign

policy relations with more powerful states. For Trinidad and Tobago, although elites have admitted to the vulnerability concept, they, unlike their Jamaican counterparts, do not believe it equates to powerlessness unless they allow it to take on that nature. The mantra for Trinidad and Tobago takes on the form of ‘we are seen as weak, but we are trying not to be’. As a result, in the Trinidad and Tobago’s case, the existence of the identity is there but to a much lesser extent than it is in its Jamaican counterpart. For these nations, this vulnerable identity has contributed to economic and political relations that have for decades remain lopsided. It has always favoured the powerful and further victimise the powerless. Even in the case of Trinidad and Tobago where the nation is attempting to not appear powerless, its need for aid and its strong reliance on external assistance puts it in a precarious position where a vulnerable identity is being fed alongside the will for self-determination. Interviews with governmental elites in particular revealed that this outlook of helplessness, when extended to the foreign policy processes of each country, causes these two nations to treat negotiations with Beijing as one where China, being more powerful, is able to get its way and not be challenged in many of its negotiations.

Since the dissertation wishes to uncover whether a vulnerable identity has indeed formulated the foundation for these countries’ motivations for alignment with China, this chapter and the next, analyses each nations’ economic and political motivation. This chapter, however, begins by first tackling the concept of vulnerability and the difference between the concept being cast as a category as opposed to an identity before dealing solely with the Jamaican case. The case of Trinidad and Tobago will be dealt with in chapter 6.

5.1 A look at the concept of ‘vulnerability’

To be vulnerable is to be particularly helpless and unguarded in the midst of hazard or harm. It is usually a forced condition which constricts the movement of the vulnerable party and results in said party succumbing to the woes of the imposition. The concept of vulnerability emerged out of the investigation undertaken first by the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1985, which was provoked in great part by the political response to the United States’ attack on Grenada a year or so prior (Sutton, 2011). The investigation found that there were 5 inherent characteristics a vulnerable state possesses: openness, insularity, flexibility, fragility and dependence (Charles, 1997). Emerging in the early work of Lino Briguglio (1995) as it relates to small independent states, vulnerability became a category only in the areas of financial as well as natural frailty

(Briguglio, 1995). The concept itself consists of several dimensions with elements ranging from institutional, financial, natural, geographical and socio economical. Nevertheless, the majority of the work in the discourse on vulnerability includes the works of (Pelling 2001; Schiff, 2002; Guillomont 1999), where the concept has been attributed solely in part to economic vulnerability. It has emerged out of the understanding by financial experts that the economies of small states might be prone to occasions of unanticipated events, changes in the external conditions or sudden shocks, which happens outside of these states' control and are also frequently not their own fault (Kambon, 2009).

Intrinsic to the concept of vulnerability, is additionally the notion of strength or sustainability which takes note of not just the effect of the peril or hazard, but also the limit of the framework to withstand the effect (Brown and Beck, 2002). On this premise, there is a consensus among researchers that a vulnerability index would be helpful to strengthen the Gross National Product (GNP) based edge, in looking to build up access to official funding by small states. It also would be valuable in guidelines directing modes of exchange for small nations (Kambon, 2009). According to Kambon (2009), such an index would give an extra measure of the intricacies surrounding the advancement processes for small states and would exhibit their distinction as a bloc in the international market. This would ideally afford them extra space for mobility and practical improvement. This vulnerability index or the Net Vulnerability-Resilience Index (NVRI) as it came to be called, didn't emerge until later in Bates et al. (2014). The index provides: (i) a holistic perspective of vulnerability and flexibility with 5 reciprocal measurements in accordance with reasonable advancement, (ii) a mathematical foundation based on graph theory to choose the root factors that go into its calculation, (iii) an express qualification between vulnerability and versatility factors, (iv) a non-deterministic perspective of defencelessness (Bates and Angeon, 2015). The NVRI is said to be a helpful apparatus in reassessing the vulnerability and strength of small states.

5.1.1 Vulnerability as a Category versus as an Identity

The concept of vulnerability as a category hinges on the factors mentioned in the investigation undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1985. According to the Commonwealth Secretariat and the World Bank Task Force, for a nation to be classified as vulnerable, there has to be exposure to external shocks of which the afflicted nation not only has minimal control but also finds itself unable to withstand and recover from these shocks (Secretariat, 2000).

Therefore, a nation is ranked on the vulnerability index according to determinable factors of susceptibility and resilience to exogenous shocks (Secretariat, 2000). This allows not only for the ranking of these states but also their classification. The index acts as a broad umbrella for sub-categories that exists below it. These include the Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI), The Human Development Index (HDI), The Climate Risk Index (CRI) and the World Risk Index (WRI).⁶⁰ Table 9 below offers a visual representation of the aforementioned indices and their functions.

Table 9: Sub-Indices existing in the Vulnerability Index and their Functions

Source: Adapted from *The World Bank Operations Policy and Country Services (OPS) Report- 'Small States: Vulnerability and Concessional Finance'* pg. 6-7.

Sub-Indices	Functions
<p>Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI)</p> <p>A. Exposure Index</p> <p>B. Shock Index</p>	<p>Developed by the United Nations in 2000.</p> <p>EVI is used to measure constructural vulnerability due to monetary or environmental shocks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers 145 emerging nations and is used to identify the Least Developed Countries (LDC). Consist of the Exposure Index and The Shock Index. The Exposure Index: deals with population size, amplitude, consolidation of export, percentage of agriculture existing in GDP, percentage of the population living in low-lying coastal regions. The Shock Index: measures the imbalance existing in export commodities and services, a casualty of natural catastrophe, volatility in horticultural produce. <p>Higher scores signify greater vulnerability.</p> <p>The inclusion of population size in the EVI means smaller countries are more vulnerable.</p>
<p>The Human Development Index (HDI)</p> <p>A. Living Standard</p>	<p>First Developed by Pakistani Economist Mabub ul Haq in 1990 then adopted by the</p>

⁶⁰ The World Bank Operations Policy and Country Services (OPS) Report- 'Small States: Vulnerability and Concessional Finance'. Published July 2018. Accessed: October 9, 2018. URL: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/339601536162647490/Small-States-Vulnerability-and-Concessional-Finance-Public-Disclosurev2.pdf>

<p>B. Health</p> <p>C. Education</p>	<p>United Nations Development Program (UNDP).⁶¹</p> <p>HDI is used to measure nations buoyancy or capability to deal with shocks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers 188 developed and developing nations ranking them as Low, Medium, High or Very High on the Human Development scale. • Comprises 3 sub-categories: Living standard (Gross National Income (GNI) in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)), Health (life expectancy) and Education (years in school or expected years in school). <p>Higher indicates greater Human Development.</p>
<p>The Climate Risk Index (CRI)</p> <p>A. The Global Climate Risk Index</p>	<p>Developed by the Think Tank Germanwatch in 2007.</p> <p>CRI is used to measure metrological conditions that are relevant to small nations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers 182 developed and developing nations that are frequently affected by weather conditions. • Does not measure rising sea-levels nor earthquakes. • Forecasts future extreme weather conditions based on previous weather-related disasters (such as mortality rate and economic damages). <p>Lower scores mean greater risk.</p>
<p>World Risk Index (WRI)</p>	<p>First developed by Prof. Jorn Birkmann and Dr Welle⁶²</p> <p>WRI is used to measure and calculate the risk of disaster.</p>

⁶¹ See: McNeill, D., 2007. 'Human development': The power of the idea. *Journal of Human Development*, 8(1), pp.5-22.

⁶² See: Krüger, F., Bankoff, G., Cannon, T., Orlowski, B. and Schipper, E.L.F. eds., 2015. *Cultures and disasters: understanding cultural framings in disaster risk reduction*. Routledge.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers 171 developed and developing nations ranking them as Low, Very Low, Medium, High or Very High. • Comprises 4 units: Natural Disaster Risk (rising sea levels, earthquakes, hurricanes etc.), Infrastructural, Nutritional and Living Condition dependency, Governments' ability to cope with healthcare and disaster preparedness, Ability to adapt. • Captures risk and resilience linked to human and material resources, policy and organisations.
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As evident from the above table, vulnerability as a category is based on a structural grouping. According to Manyena (2006), this structural grouping helps to determine a nation's ability and capacity to cope with various exogenous shocks and gives an indication of whether actions can be taken to moderate the outcomes so as to lessen the negative impacts.

The case is, however, altogether different when a country adopts vulnerability not as a category but instead as its identity. In this case, a vulnerable identity is one that can be defined by the danger of an economically deficient nation seeing its advancement hampered by both the internal and exogenous shocks it encounters. As Anthony Payne puts it, the vulnerable identity is one in which the perspective of the small state towards itself is that which casts it as the victim caught up in a constant situation of genuine or potential turbulence, to which, as an open framework itself, is required to be continuously adjusting (Payne, 2009). Therefore, whereas vulnerability as a category deals with tangible exogenous disturbances, vulnerability as an identity deals with developing countries having a victimised perception towards themselves as well as towards external and internal shocks. This in turn drives approaches stemming from a mindset conditioned by historical events. Payne believes that as a result, these nations remain in a steady state of fragility with respect to their outer relations, to which policy approaches of both local and global resilience should be composed (Payne, 2009). Vulnerability as a result envelops not just the likelihood of immediate harm or theoretical damages of the far off future but also harm that occurred in the past (Fineman, 2010). While a few nations have developed monetary specialties utilising strategic techniques and attention to training and innovative frameworks in order to diminish these features of powerlessness; nations that subscribe to the vulnerability theory have adjusted in a significantly more impromptu—or even opportunistic

way (Cooper and Shaw, 2009). This opportunism was found to be the case of both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago as it pertains to their relationship with China:

I think the word you are missing from that question is opportunistic alright. If money is falling there, we are going to throw our purse. If they were to ask us if we want funds, whether loans, etc., we'll hold out our hands because we will get it. And then when you receive it, you give some to a few people, and you keep the change in your pocket. It's opportunism. Do you see anyone going to beg Rwanda for aid or anything like that? I mean Rwanda have gold and diamond and forest and hardwood. Has anyone gone and beg them for anything? No. Because they are not giving anything away. Sorry to say, but they are also suffering hardship. However, China can give it. So, you put your hand where the money is flowing. If China were to stop and go on a national identity drive and say okay, we are no longer investing in any countries in the world, we are focusing on our people, then that's it. Let's say for example they say that all of their people must be university educated by 2050, that everybody should have a Mercedes Benz by 2050 with no one living on the streets and they put all of their money into that, and you can't get a dime out of China again, is anybody going to knock on China's door? No. So, I think CARICOM leaders are being opportunistic (T&TG3).

When you look at it really, it's an opportunity. Because if it were India giving us that same opportunity [like China] then who is to say that we wouldn't consider that? If it was some small island like the Maldives or Tuvalu just a couple hundred people, we'd say okay yes, we can do this billion-dollar deal with you. Who is to say we wouldn't take it? We would (JN14).

This opportunistic tendency stemming from a vulnerable identity can only be unearthed by analysing the foreign policy approach of each case. In this chapter, I will start with Jamaica.

5.2 Jamaica: The National Context

5.2.1 Jamaica's foreign policy approach: A history of being acquiescent, transitional, promotive and dependent

Jamaica's foreign policy like most other small nation-state is dominated by its quest for economic development. In the first decade of independence, the strong allegiance of Jamaica to the West was well exhibited, although the conceptualisation of a western centre and the focal point of allegiance did shift. The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) government made it known that it was not interested in 'traditional aid', but instead was seeking foreign investment. Looking to the government's Five-Year Plan launched at independence, this attempt highlights the emphasis that was placed on securing foreign capital which made Jamaica's foreign policy largely *acquiescent*, at least to the extent to which it was oriented toward creating favourable conditions for foreign investors while perpetuating inherited ties of economic and political

dependence (Cumper, 1975). This meant a model that was based on promoting the investment of Direct Foreign Investment (DFI), as a fuel to the engine of advancement. Welcoming DFI however, meant that this was not a policy in isolation. First, the matter of 'image' and what it meant for Jamaica was of grave importance. It wore the mask of being pro-West and anti-Communist. This was regularly placed on a pedestal in international institutions like that of the United Nations and was garnered through appropriate voting systems. Second, the local image was supplemented by the global image which promotes one of social and political stability, of a 'good investment climate' to attract and encourage foreign investors (Biddle and Stephens, 1989).

Traditionally, Jamaica had trade and economic relations predominantly with the US, Canada and Europe and it is only in recent times that there has been diversification in the country's relations with other players. However, changes in the global economy have led Jamaica to increasingly engage in economic relations with the emerging BRICs economies (in particular Brazil, India, China) and Venezuela. This has resulted in Jamaica's increased engagement with these new players, which has implications for both the country's foreign policy and its relations with more traditional partners like the US and Europe. The sustained economic growth of the emerging players and their increasing engagement with Jamaica have led the latter to divert its attention away from relations with traditional partners. The fact that the emerging players are seen as fellow developing countries has also contributed to this shift. The diversity of Jamaica's economic engagement with new partners has provided the country with greater confidence in its foreign policy relations with other players. This engagement with new players, however, also has consequences for Jamaica's development and even the regional integration process.

The transition of this nation's foreign policy can be traced back to the start of the 1970s wherein the nation found itself in turbulence both at the domestic level and in its external relations. For many analysts, this period was considered the transitional moment in Jamaica's political history. According to George Cumper, it was *transitional* in that, the state's foreign policy was becoming more venturesome in seeking new diplomatic relations and exploring a broader conception of alternative possibilities within the context of a growing sense of national identity (Cumper, 1975). This period is distinguished by two major factors. First, a policy of economic transformation; second, and closely related to the first, a radicalisation of Jamaica's foreign policy. At the centre of the dramatic shift in both internal and external policy was Prime Minister Michael Manley, whose People's National Party (PNP) had won the elections of 1972

(Stephens and Stephens, 1986). After a decade of quiet diplomacy, he launched what he described as a more open foreign policy, which propelled Jamaica onto the international stage and was to have consequences for its relations with the West, particularly the United States. To correct the economic imbalance in the country and diminish the economic domination by external interests, the Manley government attempted to institute far-reaching social and economic changes. The government's programme of reform placed great emphasis on self-reliance and self-help while at the same time promoting big government and state control of the economy (Persaud, 2001).

Massive social and economic adjustment programmes were introduced, among them: the establishment of a minimum wage, worker participation in industry, compulsory recognition of trade unions, the establishment of community councils to democratise community life, free tuition at the tertiary level and nationalisation of public utilities (Stephens and Stephens, 1986). This agenda of political change was packaged under the ideological label of Democratic Socialism. Prime Minister Manley's philosophy was that national independence and economic growth and development could not be achieved without an examination of foreign policy. For him, the structure of the international system into developed and developing world profoundly affected countries such as Jamaica given the sharp dichotomy of interests between the two groups. He contended that Jamaica should expand its economic relations by participating in a trading bloc on a regional basis. He also saw regionalism as the natural avenue through which Jamaica could enter and influence the stream of world politics (Payne, 1994a). In an attempt to deepen regionalism, Mr. Manley embraced the wider geopolitical Caribbean Basin, and also envisioned broadening CARICOM to include non-English speaking mainland states. This vision of expanded cooperation was perhaps premature in the context of the English-speaking Caribbean's effort towards regional integration at the time. Jamaica, nonetheless, attempted to pursue the extension of cooperative relations, focusing in the first instance on relations with Venezuela and Mexico (Henke, 2000).

Prime Minister Manley's government also began to pursue a non-alignment agenda that was extremely different from that of its predecessors. It expanded diplomatic, trade and economic relations with the Soviet Union, the Socialist Republics of Eastern Europe, and developed closer links with Cuba. Jamaica became deeply involved in the North-South issue and pursued with fervour the call for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) and other Third World issues (Jefferson, 1972). Prime Minister Manley played a leadership role, bringing him into

close collaboration with radical leftist leaders in the Non-Aligned Movement who were also committed to socialism and non-capitalist development strategies. These leaders included Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi of Libya, Colonel Boumedienne of Algeria, and Fidel Castro of Cuba (Kaufman, 1985). These ties and the anti-capitalist rhetoric of the governing party created a profound political crisis in the country and set Jamaica on a collision course with the United States.

The increased role of the government in the economy, its egalitarian and far-reaching social policies, perceptions of threats to private property among other factors, led to disaffection among foreign and local business interests. As a result, the period witnessed a large increase in external migration and capital flight. US-Jamaica relations suffered severely, and the US responded to Jamaica's domestic and external policies by withholding much needed financial assistance and trade credits. There were accusations about the US's policy regarding the destabilisation of Jamaica through the use of the Central Intelligence Agency (Bell, 1964). The factors that contributed to the demise of the Manley government are evident. There was, of course, the economic crisis, which was attributed to both domestic policies and the international economic crisis. Abroad, the government's pro-Third World and especially pro-Cuban foreign policy alienated the United States which resulted in a reduction of US's aid accompanied by the absence of any viable alternative source of funding due to the hegemon's influence and pressure. Additionally, negative press reports in North America about a communist take-over affected tourism and eroded investor confidence.

5.2.2 Jamaica under the Seaga Administration: A period of being promotive and dependent with a rise in the 'bargaining model' and the 'vulnerable identity'

Due to the events of the seventies, October 1980 witnessed the government of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) sweeping into office with a landslide victory in the general elections. As were to be expected, the priority of the government led by Prime Minister Edward Seaga was to contain the perceived tide toward communism. This meant the repudiation of the socialist doctrine of its predecessor both in terms of domestic policy and external relations. The foreign policy of the nation quickly became *promotive*, aimed at creating a new equilibrium between domestic and international demands by changing both environments (Cumper, 1975). As a result, it was no surprise that one of the first official acts of the government was to expel the Cuban Ambassador who had become quite visible in domestic affairs. After declaring that there

was evidence of Cuban spying, diplomatic relations were terminated with the communist regime in 1981 (Sherlock and Bennett, 1998). Prime Minister Seaga's immediate domestic priority was the recovery of the Jamaican economy, placing emphasis once again on the free market economy and limiting government intervention. His associated foreign policy priority was to restore Jamaica's traditional friendly and non-threatening relations with the United States. It was certainly fortuitous for Mr. Seaga that his election coincided with that of US President, Ronald Reagan. Mr Seaga's repudiation of the communist ideology and his anti-Cuban stance were warmly received in Washington (Persaud, 2001).

Within its first nine months in office, the new government was able to secure an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on terms that were far more generous than those offered to the previous PNP government. By all indications the US was very instrumental in getting the IMF package approved. This opened the door for financing from other sources, including commercial banks that had denied loan facilities to the Manley administration. This rapid and positive reaction contrasted sharply with the treatment of the previous regime and sent a clear message that the US government was prepared to sanction those it deemed anti-American and anti-free market but that it was, however, willing to reward those it considered friends and allies.

The ideology of Mr Seaga's government was not only different from its predecessor; in pursuing its goal, the Jamaican government understood the geopolitical realities of being a small state within the sphere of influence of the United States and thus operated in that context. This did not indicate that the nature of Jamaica's foreign policy was moving away from being *promotive*, but more-so it became heavily *dependent* and entrenched in the '*bargaining model*'. This was quite noticeable in Seaga's use of his anti-communist credentials as leverage for economic assistance from the West. In terms of the wider Caribbean, he was credited with persuading the US to act on a proposal for a special programme of economic assistance for the Caribbean, a kind of mini-Marshall plan. The Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act or the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) which was introduced in 1983, emerged out of this proposal (Seaga, 2010b). According to Persaud (2001), 'there was such an increase in direct aid to Jamaica that the island was among the highest recipient (in per capita terms) of American Assistance'. The re-emphasis on Jamaica's relationship with the US and other western countries naturally meant a diminishing interest in the Third World. The country retained its membership in the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77, but the government's attitude

lacked the strong position and conviction of the previous administration toward Third World issues (Seaga, 2010a).

Even within CARICOM, Jamaica displayed less enthusiasm for regional integration and during that period tensions among the English-speaking countries reached a particularly high level. Jamaica broke ranks with other Caribbean countries in its swift and strong support for the US invasion in Grenada in 1983 and later in its support for the outcome of the questionable election of Jean Aristides in Haiti in 1986 to replace the Duvalier dictatorship (Morris, 2008). President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado of Mexico visited Jamaica in August 1987 but it was clear that the importance that the previous government attached to forging relations with Latin America had diminished (Morris, 2008). As indicated, in the early part of the Seaga's administration, the US was very responsive to the Jamaica Labour Party. A paternalistic or client-state relationship developed between the US and Jamaica and the latter was able to reap within the early years, certain economic and political benefits. Underpinning this beneficial relationship was a shared anti-communist ideology.

It would not be an overstatement to say that its relationship with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was at the centre of Jamaica's external economic policy. Underscoring the dependence on external resources, the period was characterised by the continuation and even deepening of the relationship with the Fund. Jamaica was to undergo no fewer than five (5) economic stabilisation and structural adjustment programmes during this period. Assistance from the IMF carried with it conditionalities which the government consistently failed to meet. Like those promoted under the Manley government, the programmes emphasised increased private sector involvement in the economy and a corresponding reduction of the government's role. In the end, however, Prime Minister Seaga had not lived up to his reputation as a manager and technocrat. His government's efforts had failed to transform the economy it had inherited effectively. While positive growth was recorded during the initial years of the decade, this was due more so to the level of external financing which had become available, rather than any fundamental changes in the economy. In keeping with IMF conditionalities, adjustment measures were adopted. These included systematic devaluations, cuts in public sector employment, reductions in the fiscal deficit as a percentage of the GDP, and the removal of price and import controls. This period of adjustment coincided not only with the sharp downturn in the bauxite/alumina industry brought on by the world economic recession but also a vulnerable identity which the government of Jamaica, to this day, is unable to deconstruct.

5.2.3 Period of modernisation through an identity of vulnerability

The JLP government subsequently lost the general elections in February 1989 and was once again replaced by the People's National Party, still headed by Michael Manley, this has brought us to the fourth stage of political evolution in Jamaica since independence. It was almost a decade since the People's National Party was out of power and for most of that period it did not even have a seat in Parliament, having refused to participate in the snap elections called by Prime Minister Seaga in 1983 (Payne, 1994a). The new government came into power in an international political and economic environment that had previously changed significantly and dramatically. The Cold War had ended and with it the geopolitical and geo-strategic importance of Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean. The reality was that Jamaica needed to adjust its internal and external economic policies once again. The new government was immediately faced with the prospect of the establishment of the EU in 1993 and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. This signalled the erosion of trade preferences under the Lomé Convention, the Caribbean Basin Initiative and the Caribbean-Canada Trade Agreement. All of this has meant a decade of adjustment and transformation in order to take advantage of, and capitalise on, the promise of globalisation. Through a process of economic reform and institutional strengthening, the government over the last decade concentrated on achieving macro-economic stabilisation as a necessary condition for growth.

The main objectives of the stabilisation effort included reduction of fiscal deficits, reduction of inflation, maintenance of exchange rate stability and the rebuilding of the country's foreign reserves. A crucial achievement was the termination of the borrowing relationship existing with the International Monetary Fund in 1997, while retaining the IMF's seal of approval for the government's macroeconomic policies (Cumper, 1975). The government also embarked on a massive privatisation programme in the different sectors to encourage investment. Economic transformation also meant taking account of the profound technological revolution. Emphasis was placed on promoting and developing the information technology sector and strengthening indigenous technological capacity. Coupled with this, was the liberalisation and expansion of the crucial telecommunications sector and heavy investment was made to improve the nation's infrastructure.

To comply with the new rules of the game in international trade, the government progressively liberalised trade to enhance export growth and secure old and new markets. Globalisation and

economic liberalisation pushed the Jamaican economy to increased external competition in line with the emphasis on reciprocity reflected in the new international trade regime. Making the transition from full preference to full competitiveness and reciprocity proved quite challenging. Economic policies were aimed at placing firms in a position to trade and compete successfully on a global scale. Policy measures designed to offset the negative effects of this transition also came in the form of deepening regional integration in the Caribbean Community and the move toward the creation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). Regional co-operation with its CARICOM partners is, in fact, a key component of Jamaica's foreign and trade policy and the current government places great emphasis on CARICOM as a framework for functional cooperation and a collective approach to dealing with the complex international, political and economic developments.

The last decade has seen tremendous strides toward the improvement of governance through public sector reform and modernisation. However, with the failures of the Seaga administration and the globalisation era that followed closely on its heels, the 'vulnerability identity' took its root in the nature of the nation's foreign policy. With the emergence of globalisation and a dramatic decrease in its preferential trade agreements, the nation was faced with increasing insecurity at the national, regional and global level. This was due to the effects of the complex social, economic, political and environmental effects of the globalisation process, which deepened its vulnerability and threatened marginalisation (Northover and Crichlow, 2005). Soon the foreign policy efforts of the Jamaican government was focused on facilitating strategic global repositioning to manage the cross currents of globalisation (Bernal, 2003).

These conditions, as well as Jamaica's historical development, led the Jamaican government to conclude that Jamaica could not sustain itself solely based on internal production and this necessitated a return to banks and institutions for assistance (Weedmark, 2013). Already on a shaky economic ground, the global economic recession hit Jamaica particularly hard, with its currency depreciating by nearly 20% from September 2008 to February 2009 (Johnston and Montecino, 2011) thus forcing it into another round of IMF loans and dependence on foreign assistance. It turned out that the government's efforts to finance its recovery were too small to counteract the large shocks to the system. This understanding of 'development aid' is the reason for Jamaica receiving €46 million under the 11th European Union Development Fund (EDF)

(2014-2020).⁶³ This is accompanied by the nation's heavy reliance on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that aids in poverty reduction from its largest trading partner, the United States (Weedmark, 2013). Although these grants claim to have assisted conditions on the ground in Jamaica, the fundamental problem and issue of concern for my study is that this 'aid' essentially perpetuates the vulnerable identity. This is because Jamaica has always been kept on a steady diet of external assistance and as a result, is unable to deconstruct the vulnerable identity it possesses. This further exacerbates its inability to develop the internal dynamic necessary to sustain itself. It is dependent on both 'development aid' in the form of grants and 'development aid' in the form of loans, which is why it sees alliance with more powerful states such as China as a matter of need/necessity.

5.3 FINDINGS: Jamaican elites and the nation's 'vulnerable identity' in relation to China

5.3.1 How Jamaica's vulnerable identity plays out in its relationship with China: The Economic dimension

The first task of a study on Jamaican governmental respondents' perception towards possessing a 'vulnerable identity' requires an examination of their attitude toward the very notion of subscribing to the vulnerability concept. On a whole, interviewees readily admitted that their country does indeed see itself as vulnerable. Although different sectors explain how this identity might create actions that vary across different areas of the society, the chapter will establish later, that entanglements are also present in the political dimension though it is mainly played out in the economic realm:

We are small, what choice do we have but to align with China? None! Frankly, the United States has abandoned us, and we do need to keep our economy afloat. If it weren't China, it would be someone else. China is not asking for nearly as much as the US (JG6).

It is time we start looking out for ourselves. China is offering us aid, so why shouldn't we take it? Our economy needs it, and even if we were to say no, China would find other small states like us to form ties with (JG3).

We didn't go searching for China. China came to us wanting to help us to develop like them. They are offering aid and investments, and at the moment, we do need

⁶³ See The European Union External Action Service 'Jamaica and the EU' sub-section 'Development Cooperation' URL: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquartershomepage_en/1347/Jamaica%20and%20the%20EU (Accessed December 5, 2017).

that. Our economy is not the most stable, and we need whatever aid we can get to help build ourselves (JG10).

Let us recall that as Anthony Payne expressed in the theory of vulnerability, countries form a vulnerable identity when they remain in a steady condition of fragility with respect to their outer relations. With this sort of identity, states come to view their alliance with more powerful nations as a case in which there is little to no choice, given that they are so aid-dependent and therefore a state of 'in-dependence', as pointed out in the previous chapter, continues to be perpetuated. This proves to be particularly true in the case under consideration here. Besides the country's colonial past, the devastation left behind by the Seaga administration of perpetual dependency coupled with the crippling effects of globalisation, fuelled a foreign policy steeped in a vulnerable identity. This crossroad has not allowed government officials and policymakers to steer away from such a conundrum and has instead spurred them to believe that the only way towards development is one where the road is paved with external assistance.

As far as economics is concerned, the world is currently a global village. We cannot compete with foreign markets which are much stronger than us. We can develop yes, but we certainly need help to do so (JG4).

We don't have access to preferential trade like we did in the past. With a level playing field for everyone, we cannot match the competition on the global stage. This is why we have accepted preferential trade agreements and assistance from the EU and the US all these years. We need to move towards development, but it's quite uncertain as to whether we can do so on our own. Now, China is here to help (JG1).

In answering questions 14, 23 and 25, it was found that 100% pointed to the fact that Jamaica was small, but only 58% of the respondents (11 of 19) admitted that their nation was vulnerable. A whopping 9 of the 10 interviewees existing in the governmental sector accepted that Jamaica was vulnerable and cited reasons similar to those presented in chapter 3 having to do with being a small nation and the hinderances therein, as the reason for their relationship with China. This indicates that for the majority of these respondents, vulnerability is essentially a category in which the nation falls. On the other hand, (6 of 9) in the non-governmental sector and the (1 of 10) in the governmental sector that rejected the vulnerability concept, stated that despite being small, there is a consistent reliance on aid by the nation's leaders which they considered to be detrimental to the country and the country's ability to have stronger negotiations with more powerful states such as China. As a result, it was evident that those existing in the governmental and non-governmental sectors that rejected the concept of vulnerability rested their arguments on the fact that vulnerability for Jamaica has transcended being just a category and has become

more so of an attitude and mindset that was continuously bolstered by the nation's governing elites. For these respondents, vulnerability was no longer a category but an identity:

What we keep doing when it comes to these powerful states, whether the US or China, is that we tell ourselves we are small and that we should just be grateful, and that is my problem with the framing of that kind of perspective. It's like that is what we have become, and it is a mindset that many of our politicians and scholars have that we need to get rid of (JN11).

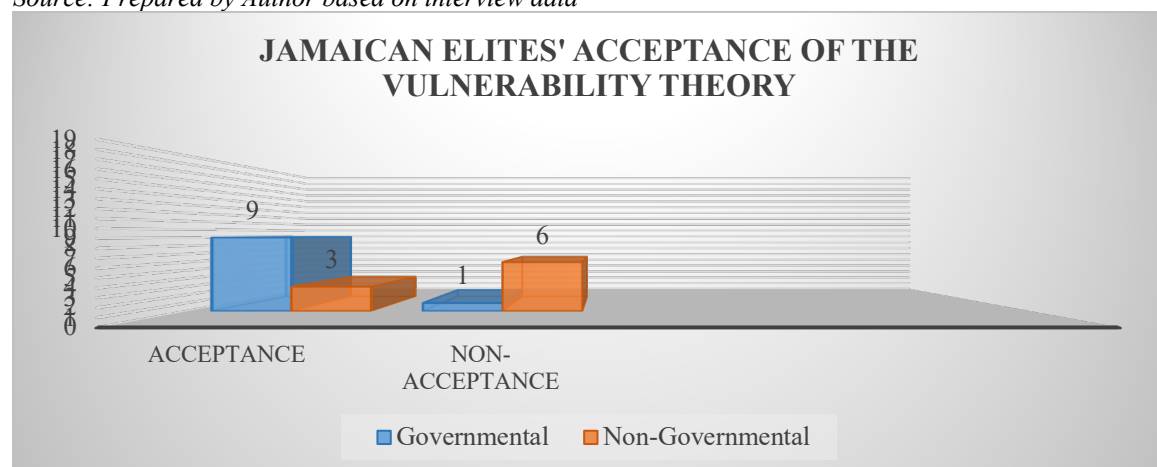
This is going to sound cynical, but our leaders tend to like to ask for money a lot. By now everyone knows this about us. We just cannot lift ourselves up. They are always in need of aid and it's really just a mindset that they [the leaders] have (JN18).

I have had serious issues with some of my colleagues where this is concerned. We look to the US, for example, like they are our saviour. It's the same thing we are doing with China. Yes, Jamaica is small but so are other countries like Singapore, yet we just cannot seem to reach that level. And it is not because we can't, it is because we are stuck. We are stuck in the notion of we need help. It is a constant we need 'saving' mentality, and it just upsets me at times (JG2).

From the above data findings *Figure 5* was created to illustrate respondents in each sector that accepted the vulnerability concept. Adapted from Czarnecki et al., (2008 p 360) and modified, the 'acceptance graph' presents a deterministic transition where states are associated with their acceptance sets which can also demonstrate their conformance relation (Czarnecki et al., 2008). Those who fall into the non-acceptance side rejects it as merely a category and attributes it to being that of an identity.

Figure 5: Chart outlining Jamaica's Governmental and Non-Governmental Elites' acceptance of the vulnerability category and the 'vulnerable identity'

Source: Prepared by Author based on interview data



There were stark differences between the sectors represented in the interviews. Most working in the governmental sector accepted that the concept of vulnerability does apply to the Jamaican case with only a few of their peers in the non-governmental sector agreeing to this. Those in the governmental and non-governmental sector that rejected the vulnerability concept cited corruption, greed and a short-term view to development as the main driving forces behind the nation's reasons for aligning with China. Only one (1) respondent in the governmental sector clearly stated their awareness of the fact that there exists a vulnerable identity but credited it to areas in government that were too rife with corruption and greed to engage in innovative and strategic foreign policy approaches towards China:

Yes, corruption does form the basis of some negotiations with China. When you have corruption and even if you want to oppose it, you can't. It runs all the way to the top. So, at the end of the day, when you're getting what you want, then you tend to not care about much else (JG8).

Honestly, details of some of these deals are unknown, and I must admit that I do believe that there are government members that are benefitting financially (JN13).

Even if policies were to be implemented, they would solely be beneficial to the politician's pockets. All we care about is the here and now, how we will win the next election. Years from now, generations will have to be dealing with the mess created here because our politicians have absolutely no long-term view (JN13).

5.3.2 The Economic Motivations

The economic motivations behind Jamaica's alignment with China consists of far more than the motivations given as it relates to the social or political. As stated in chapter 3, the economic motivations are usually the fuel used to drive the foreign policy processes of small states. When it comes to the IR discourse reasons such as domestic stability, the pursuit of western policies and economic and military support are usually cited as reasons for small nations to align with more powerful ones (Uslu, 2003). However, in the case of Jamaica, infrastructure development was cited more so among respondents in the sectors—showing up 74 per cent of the times (14 out of 19 respondents), as the top reason given for the answer to question number 26. The other alternatives were that of China offering better deals than the US, access to China's market, aid and investment, soft loans, workmanship and a more equitable relationship offered by China. *Figure 6* provides a visual representation of these reasons.

Our main concern is infrastructure investment and development (JG10).

Both countries are just trying to improve their infrastructures (JN19).

The whole point of our search for FDI is really to drive economic advancements and infrastructure development (JG3).

To get more economical and infrastructure deals from China (JN2).

Well, infrastructure is the prime reason. However, China is also offering us better deals than the United States. The conditionalities attached are not as harsh as that of the US (JG1).

Yes indeed, aid and infrastructure development but China does provide a large market that we have access to and that we can import from (JG6)

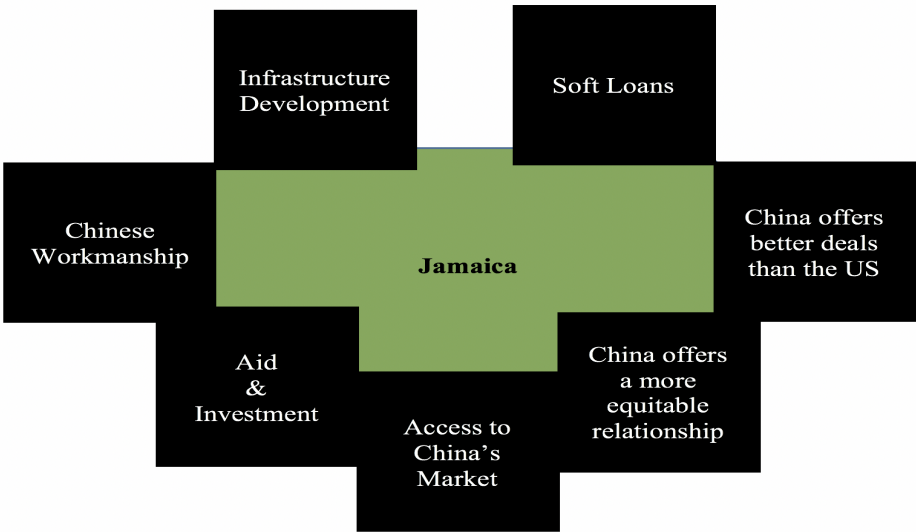
It would be the aid and investment and the soft loans that we are getting. China is giving more than any other country, or any other region would give, and that is why we are choosing China over everybody else (JG4).

It will give us a chance to pivot away from what I would define as dominant relationships and give us the chance to have some more equity in the relationship (JN17).

If I can be honest, the Chinese are much better and faster workers than our own labourers. They spend day and night on a project, whereas our own workers want to leave at 5 pm. The workmanship is just better (JN15).

Figure 6: Listed Reasons Given by Jamaican Elites for their Nation’s Engagement with China.

Source: Prepared by Author based on interview data



Notwithstanding that, economic motivations do not translate to a vulnerable identity. It is ‘the ability of leaders to meet and draw upon these perceptions of vulnerability’ which forms a

conduit for development strategy, coupled with intentions to form partnerships in this regard, that essentially forms the foundation of a vulnerable identity (Campbell and Hall, 2017). This means that the manifestation of vulnerability has to first translate into actions that depict a perception of self-victimisation before it can be viewed as an identity. My investigation argues here, that for nations such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, the identity itself did not begin with actions but with conditions. This conditioning stemmed from both nations' historical era, which in turn translated into weak foreign policy actions towards powers such as China.

How we operate obviously comes from our past. We apply the same construct of 'help, help, help' it's like we are programmed like that. I don't know if you realise that no matter who is in power it's the same thing. Only Michael Manley stood up and pushed back and said we can stand on our own. But you realise what they've done to him. They said he was a communist and he had to go (JN 2).

I think right now we are desperate for funds, so our nation is in preservation mode. Most of the Caribbean debt to GDP ratio is in triple figures. What that means is every money that you borrow is to pay other debts, so it's extremely bad. And of course, hurricanes like this⁶⁴ don't make it any better. So yes, we are in a place of extreme vulnerability that forces us to have to look for preservation. To be honest, our desperation has made the passage of China through here much easier (JG10).

A common view was that aid was needed if Jamaica or any CARICOM nation were to survive US's abandonment and the regression of EU aid which elites perceive was sure to come with the finalisation of Brexit. As a result, Jamaica's unique history was feeding right back into its present 'objective reality' as it pertains to China.

5.3.3 The Political Motivations

The present economic motivations of Jamaica cannot be understood without an examination of administrative miscalculations steeped in its colonial past. This legacy has mostly contributed to perceived impotence in governance over the years that has resulted in an expectation of aid from external sources to determine the country's direction. Moore (2006) argues that Jamaica's politics has always been tied to its economics wherein it is plagued with an export-import orientation straddled by a trader mentality. Michael Manley contends that this lack of political innovation and crippled domestic productivity has led to 'a paralysis in [government] attitudes' (Manley, 1990). That means there exist a collective attitude of dependency and impotence that continues to permeate the political and economic aspects of the Jamaican society. This attitude

⁶⁴ Interviewee is referencing hurricane Irma that passed through and devastated Florida during the period of this investigation's data collection.

is one that exists as a common thread between the two-party system characterised by which Jamaica's political system is characterised. The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the Peoples' National Party (PNP), as Donaldson (2018) points out, 'have been the only two parties to ever win seats and alternate power' in the society. *Table 10* below offers a visual representation of the rigid competitiveness between the two parties for over sixty-seven years.

Table 10: Electoral results showing the competition between JLP and PNP, 1944-2016

Source: Adapted from (Donaldson, 2018 pg. 59)

YEAR	VOTER TURNOUT (%)	JLP VOTES (%)	JLP SEATS	PNP VOTES (%)	PNP SEATS	OTHER PARTIES AND INDEPENDENTS VOTES (%)	OTHER PARTIES AND INDEPENDENTS SEATS	TOTAL SEATS
1944	58.7	41.4	22	23.5	5	35.1	5	32
1949	65.2	42.7	17	43.5	13	13.8	2	32
1955	65.1	39	14	50.5	18	10.4	0	32
1959	66.1	44.3	16	54.8	29	0.8	0	45
1962	72.3	50	26	48.6	19	1.4	0	45
1967	81.5	50.7	33	49.1	20	0.2	0	53
1972	78.2	43.4	16	56.4	37	0.2	0	53
1976	84.5	43.2	13	56.8	47	-	-	60
1980	86.1	58.9	51	41.1	9	-	-	60
1983	28.9	89.7	60	(Boycotted)	(Boycotted)	0.6	0	60
1989	77.6	43.3	15	56.6	45	0.1	0	60
1993	66.7	39.4	8	60	52	-	-	60
1997	65.2	38.9	10	56.2	50	0.1	0	60
2002	59.1	47.4	26	52.1	34	0.6	0	60
2007	61.5	50.3	32	49.6	28	0.9	0	60
2011	53.2	46.3	21	52.9	42	1.2	0	63
2016	47.7	50.1	32	49.7	31	0.2	0	63

This competitiveness between the two parties continues to play out even in their engagement with outside states, China being no exception. The aim of each party since their implementation was to out-do the other. Each administration's intention has always been to boost the island to that promise of modernity that their party will eventually be credited with. Wesson (1984) maintains that both parties have always used the promise of economic development to achieve their overall agenda. The difference, however, is that previously 'while the PNP [was] more concerned to use the state to advance directly the interests of Jamaica's lower-income groups while restricting foreign investments with its "dependency" connotations, the JLP [tried] to structure a system of assurance and guarantees appealing to foreign investors' (Wesson, 1984), today both parties 'have committed themselves to attracting foreign direct investments' (US Department of State, 2016).⁶⁵ This commitment and a push towards being the party to be

⁶⁵ See: The US Department of State Report. Jamaica Investment Climate Statement 2015. Published April 18, 2016. Available at: <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/241819.pdf>. (Accessed: January 16, 2017).

credited for doing so has seen an increase from the current JLP administration to roll out the red carpet for China:

Anyone in power just wants to be able to say that they are the ones responsible for all these infrastructure developments put in place by China (JN18).

The aim of the current administration is to accelerate the country's development, and right now, China is one of our best partners (JG10).

The economy is tied to politics, so I believe that the government aim is to secure investments and soft loans from China (JN16).

We are getting economic resources and support from China, and we also have a partnership that is based on reciprocity (JG2).

To acquire infrastructure which they perceive to be beneficial to our development (JN11).

Jamaica's political motivations which are evidently tied to its economic motivations has meant a heavy reliance on an external supporter to boost its development status. This means an attempt to also bolster its stagnant economy. Since its alignment with China, Jamaica under the current JLP administration has boasted a GDP jump from 0.89% in 2005 to 1.38% in 2016.⁶⁶ The country with a population of 2.9 million, boasted an annual GDP of \$USD 15,718 million⁶⁷ and was ranked by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as having an HDI value of 0.732 which has placed it in position 97 of 189 nations in the high human development category.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, Jamaica's debt has risen since 2007 which at that time was \$USD 17,703 million with a slight drop in 2016 where it stood at \$USD 16,290 (debt percentage of GDP 113.64%).⁶⁹ *Figure 7* below illustrates the evolution of Jamaica's debt in millions:

⁶⁶ Information taken from the World Bank national accounts data. Available at: <https://www.worldometers.info/gdp/jamaica-gdp/> (Accessed August 7, 2017).

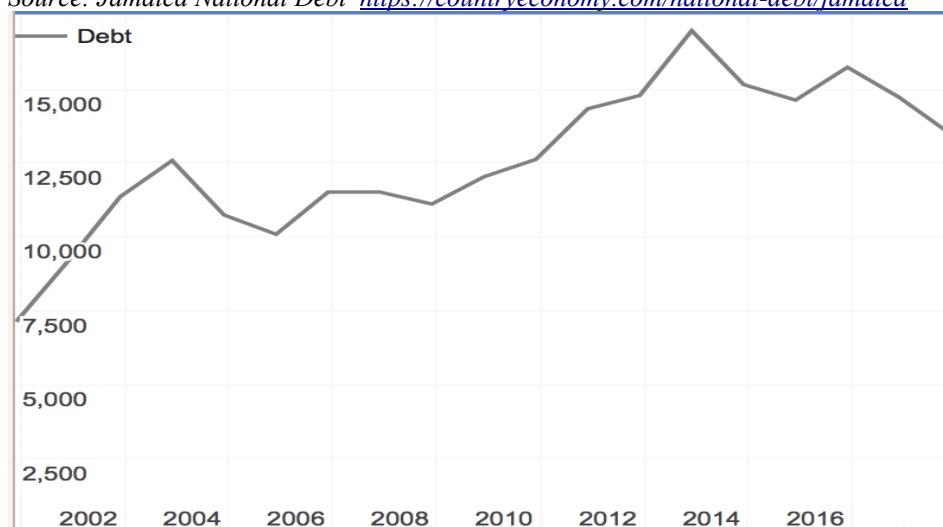
⁶⁷ See: Country Groupings data for CARICOM nations: Available at: <https://countrystatistics.com/countries/groups/caribbean-community> (Accessed August 7, 2017).

⁶⁸ See: The UNDP Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update. Available at: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/JAM.pdf (Accessed December 12, 2018).

⁶⁹ See: Country Groupings data for CARICOM nations: Available at: <https://countrystatistics.com/countries/groups/caribbean-community> (Accessed August 7, 2017).

Figure 7: Chart illustrating the evolution of Jamaica's debt in millions

Source: Jamaica National Debt <https://countryeconomy.com/national-debt/jamaica>



This increase in the nation's debt has worsened to date and is currently listed at position 171 in the list of debt to GDP ratio out of a published 186 countries.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, within CARICOM it still sits as a middle-income nation, it is exceeded by the Bahamas, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Grenada, the Cayman Islands, Saint Lucia, Suriname and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It therefore comes as no surprise that governing elites in the nation would seek to push for an alliance with China to raise the nation's economic profile. However, it is this heavy reliance on external funding in order to boost the economy and to break the barriers from developing to developed, that has been bolstering an already established vulnerable identity. Though we can now understand Jamaica's motives given the country's history and perpetual economic stagnation which lends no surprise to its perpetuation of a vulnerable identity, how is this same vulnerable identity present in Trinidad and Tobago which sits as one of CARICOM's wealthiest member?

5.4 Conclusion

Stemming from the evidence presented in chapter 4 to this point it is indisputable that Jamaica is much more blasé in its dealings with China when it comes to safeguarding the nation from the many challenges China's motives present. This we have come to realise stems from the nation's strong construct of its vulnerable identity, which has spurred governing elites in the nation to believe that the only way towards development is one where the road is paved with

⁷⁰ See: Country Groupings data for CARICOM nations: Available at: <https://countryeconomy.com/countries/groups/caribbean-community> (Accessed August 7, 2017).

external assistance. Although different sectors explain how this identity might create actions that vary across different areas of the society, it was found that it mainly played out in the economic realm although entanglements are also present in the political dimension.

Such a vulnerable identity which has Jamaican elites concluding that their engagement with China is one borne out of need/necessity stems from its history. The construct of the identity itself did not begin with actions but with conditions. Chapters 3 to 5 has established for us that this conditioning stemmed from a historical era which translated to the implementation of weak foreign policy actions towards powers such as China even in the present.

Chapter Six: Reasons for Trinidad and Tobago's Economic and Political Relations with China

We told them [China] we need your investment and you need our location in the Caribbean— The Hon. Dr. Keith Christopher Rowley.

In exploring the perception of Trinidad and Tobago's elites surrounding the reason for their nation's economic and political engagement with China, a similar approach to the preceding chapter is taken. My investigation has established that Jamaica's increasing economic and political relation with China stems from the nation's construct of a 'vulnerable identity'; and also found that this identity was more pronounced among its governing elites. In this chapter, I provide the correlative evidence from Trinidad and Tobago's elites. I commence by mapping the country's roots as it pertains to its adoption of a dependency outlook in its foreign policy strategy, before addressing its general attitude towards dependency in more recent times. I then identify the specific reasons given as to why, despite the awareness of the challenges stemming from China's motives on their nation, they have still opted to forge forward with a relationship with the PRC. My conclusion here is in consideration of the importance of the findings as it relates to the primary research question, thus providing a backdrop for juxtaposing between the reasons given by Jamaica for aligning with China as opposed to those given by Trinidad and Tobago.

6.1 The Domestic Backdrop

Before exploring current patterns that point towards—or away from—a vulnerable identity in Trinidad and Tobago, it is pertinent to uncover the role that numerous elites and principles of development have played in the nation's past. Trinidad and Tobago, one of the most studied nation in the Caribbean discourse, have been the centre of Caribbean development deliberations since its independence on August 31, 1962. Much like its Jamaican counterpart, imperialism, various ethnic groupings and labour formed the basis of its economic and political structures post-independence. However, while Jamaica has always demonstrated more interest in the international scene than the regional, Trinidad and Tobago have always maintained a stronger commitment to regionalism while simultaneously representing Caribbean's interest on the global stage (Braveboy-Wagner, 1989). As a result, as much as the nation's foreign policy has always been pro-West, after independence in 1962, Trinidad and Tobago placed some distance

between itself and the US on political grounds. Braveboy-Wagner (1989) maintains that this was as a result of an exasperated relationship ‘soured by a long campaign to reclaim a naval base that was leased to the US by Britain for 99 years during World War II’. This naval base was located in Chaguaramas, in Trinidad. Eric Williams who became the Chief Minister of the nation in 1956 led campaigns and demonstrations with placards bearing the slogan ‘Uncle Sam, we want back we land’ which later saw the return of the base in 1967 (Mawby, 2012b). When the US invaded Grenada, another point of contention arose between the hegemon and Trinidad and Tobago who outrightly denounced America’s action in Grenada. This contention was formed on the grounds wherein the US strongly cautioned the Grenadian government under Maurice Bishop to refrain from maintaining relations with Cuba. The Grenadian government responded by stating, ‘we do not recognise the right of the United States of America to instruct us on whom we may develop relations with’ (Bernal, 2015b). The United States in response launched a military coup and Bishop, and some of his government comrades were slain (Bernal, 2015b). However, since then, the relationship has been amicable between the two and over the years they have both found themselves in major collaborations surrounding investments, trade, nautical matters and taxation (Anthony, 1997).

Trinidad and Tobago are a two-party system republic with a Westminster parliamentary. The country has a long history of democratic transformation which saw the nation either ebbing away from the democratic ideal or flowing towards it. The implementation of the bicameral parliamentary system was a stark change from the unicameral model that dominated the period of 1925-1961 (MacDonald, 1986). Up until this point, the territory has always been valued by Great Britain for its sugar and cocoa which helped to sustain the boom during the Great War but whose production started to plummet in 1917. Although oil was discovered in 1866, it wasn’t until the 1900s wherein Winston Churchill announced that the British Navy will be using oil, that Trinidad’s oil industry witnessed major transformations. MacDonald (1986) affirms that from then on especially during 1914, Trinidad became Britain’s leading oil supplier moving ‘from 125,122 barrels in 1910 to 2,0003,027 in 1920’.

By the end of the war, anti-white sentiments began to emerge. Seeing that the immigration pattern to Trinidad and Tobago follows the trend of Europeans, Africans and East Indians, it came as no surprise that the push against European domination was led by Afro-Creoles who demanded higher wages due to increased inflation. By 1925 this same group became the predominant middle class of Trinidad and Tobago. From 1956-1962, the feeling of nationalism

was rife coming off the back of the Pan-Caribbean trade union movements in 1945 and the rise of Eric Williams in 1948, which saw the emergence of a nation tired of mis-governance and domination (Kiely, 1996).

6.1.1 Trinidad and Tobago under Eric Williams: The road to independence and domination of colonial politics (1962-1981)

PEOPLE'S NATIONAL MOVEMENT

ELECTION MANIFESTO

General Elections – – September 24, 1956

VOTERS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO:

You have had six years of

- CORRUPTION
- MISGOVERNMENT
- MALADMINISTRATION
- EXTRAVAGANCE
- IGNORANCE
- INEFFICIENCY
- INDIVIDUALISM
- PARTY ACROBATICS

in Public Affairs

We know you are tired of the mess, therefore you must vote

P olitical Education
N ationhood
M orality in Public Affairs

PNM is *THE ONLY PARTY* in Trinidad and Tobago which is

- ★ NATIONAL IN SCOPE
- ★ DEMOCRATIC IN STRUCTURE AND PRACTICE
- ★ DISCIPLINED IN METHODS
- ★ DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF THE GENERAL WELFARE
- ★ BASED ON A CLEAR CUT PROGRAMME
- ★ PROUD TO ADMIT ITS INTELLIGENCE AND CAPACITY FOR THE SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT

VOTE PNM

on Emancipation Day, September 24, 1956



Source: Image taken from The Institute of Current World Affairs: Doctor Politics: Eric Williams and the P.N.M.

Eric Williams opens his autobiography by stating that Trinidad has become a nation that ‘fostered and promoted British interest at the expense of Trinidadians’ (Ramcharitar, 2012). He further maintains that; the larger population was one plagued by destitution and was embroiled in a ‘system of immorality’ stemming from ‘the slave system’ (Ramcharitar, 2012). Upon his return in the 1950s from schooling at St. Catherine’s Society, Oxford, Williams founded the People’s National Movement (PNM) which was established to secure instantaneous self-government for Trinidad and Tobago and immediate support for the West Indian Federation by the nation. At its launch in 1956 the PNM secured as its major supporters, the black working class while the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) was supported by the East Indian working class (Palmer, 2006). Williams then set in motion his strategy of rallying Pan-

Africanism and anti-colonialism which saw the PNM emerging to its first victory that year. After the PNM victory in 1956, Williams began outlining his economic goals which involved the emergence of a new economic policy dubbed '*Industrialisation by Invitation*'.

This policy was one that was first pushed forward by Caribbean economist Arthur Lewis in the wake of the decline of the British Empire and the growing labour force in the British colonies, since slave trading ended. Industrialisation by Invitation meant 'the export of labour-intensive manufactured goods to metropolitan markets' (Farrell, 1980). Building upon and altering the policy in some ways, Eric Williams saw to the implementation of the industrial development corporation in Trinidad and Tobago in 1959 and by 1961 the PNM was re-elected to power once again (Carrington, 1968). According to Theodore (2003), from that point forward, what became important to Williams was 'economics, the West Indian Federation and foreign policy'. Williams' foreign policy was one entirely centred around the interest of Afro-Trinidadians with a pledge to anti-colonialism in an attempt to be free from foreign direction. The West Indian Federation provided such an avenue and Williams held strong to the belief of an authentic West Indian identity. The beginning of the end of such a regional attempt, however, came about as I discussed in chapter 3, when Jamaica voted against the federation in a national referendum. Nevertheless, such a strong intention on the creation of regional pride, never left the structure of the nation's foreign policy.

By the 1960s majority of the investments in the nation was from external sources. Both the public and private sector was accounting for 53% of Trinidad's domestic savings since the government's mantra at the time, was to increase national savings and channel those savings into investments so as to grow the country's economy (Ramsaran, 1999). However, in 1963 the PNM found controversy with its foreign investors when the then Minister of Finance Mr. F.C. Prevatt quoted in (Ramsaran, 1999) declared that 'one of the most serious disadvantages from which developing countries suffer, and from which we in Trinidad and Tobago have not escaped has been the nature of the policies of the banks and other financial institutions operating in the country, which have tended to siphon domestic savings for investment abroad even while the country itself is desperately in need of capital'. Ramsaran (1999) affirms that from then on, Williams stance was that all foreign banks were only permitted in the nation if they included local participation. The theme became increase self-determination and internal growth. Nevertheless, as much as Williams was assertive in not allowing foreign interests to use and abuse the nation's economy, welcoming foreign investment meant that there began a

relationship characterised by dependency associated with an attempt to secure ‘an export-dependent capitalist economy’ (McPeanne, 1991). The PNM found that a favourable measure of dependence characterised by economic and trade assistance, could assist in boosting its industrial and agricultural sectors as well as mitigate the unemployment rate (Ryan, 1968). However, Williams’ declaration of the need for foreign capital and investment to be joined with local participation culminated in what McPeanne (1991) describes as an ‘advanced phase of dependency’ or ‘new dependency’. This meant that dependent markets controlled by foreign investors had a more adverse effect on the prices of raw commodities which existed at a more reduced level, than the apparatus needed to secure industrialisation. Eventually, this would culminate in a decline in trade and the resulting problem would become that of a lopsided balance of payments, which means the government will have to remain heavily dependent on external investment.

Coming out of this heavy reliance on foreign investment, the 1970s under Williams witnessed a boom in the petroleum industry especially during the Middle East Crisis of 1973-1986 which saw Trinidad and Tobago’s GDP jumping in 1974 from 22.3% to 47.4% (Anthony, 1997). This resulted in the nation becoming remarkably wealthy, which was further characterised by developments in its education, health and construction sectors. However, when the 1980s came around, not only did the nation witness the death of Williams in 1981, but with the depression caused by the plunge in oil prices in 1986, Trinidad began facing a harsh economic downturn and as a result, had to start looking abroad again for aid. Weissman (1990) affirms that although the government’s first attempt was to attract foreign bankers from abroad, it only managed to attract from these bankers ‘\$100 million of the more than \$600 million it needed’. Having not diversified its economy, imports were flowing in, but exports were hardly flowing out.

6.1.2 A cry for help and a trap for dependence: The switch from the PNM to the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) (1986-1991)

With this economic downturn, the PNM lost the elections to the NAR led by Arthur Napoleon Raymond Robinson who captured the hearts of the people under the banner of ‘One Love’ while representing all the ethnic groups in the nation along with the interest of the middle class (Wilson, 2012). Wilson (2012) maintained that with the decline in the economy, the population had become dissatisfied with the PNM. However, under the new government unemployment was soaring and as a result, the new party felt it was left with very little choice but to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for help. Turning to the IMF meant that like all other

nations, Trinidad and Tobago had to abide by the conditionality guidelines set out by the international organisation. Pemberton et al., (2018) maintains that the IMF austerity measures involved the ‘consequent retrenchment of workers’ and ‘a 10 per cent cut in the salaries of public servants and the 15 per cent value-added tax to most goods’.⁷¹ Additionally, in keeping with these austerity measures, the nation in 1985 ‘devalued its currency, 50 percent to TT\$3.60 per US dollar’ and then ‘upped the prices of food and medicine, which were previously available at the old exchange rate, to the new rate’, all in a bid to dissuade import and improve exports (Weissman, 1990). Such move by the government skyrocketed standards of living, and the strain on the nation’s economy was in full swing. Still, the government was urged that to secure the funds they so desperately needed, they had to cut their deficit from 20% of the GDP at which it stood at the time, down to 9% of the GDP (Weissman, 1990). However, when the government took it down to 6%, the IMF requested a further cut (Weissman, 1990). By 1987, the nation’s reserves were registering at a negative value, and its external debt stood at \$USD2 billion which accounted for 44% of its GDP (Ramsaran, 1999). According to Birth (2008), the handing over of the nation’s large economic components to the IMF crippled the economy to the point where the patterns continued long after the PNM (in 1991), and the United National Congress (in 1995) came into power later on.

6.1.3 A return to the PNM under Patrick Manning: Structural Adjustments and a turn to Western aid (1991-1995)

With the stepping in of the IMF and its harsh restructuring of the nation’s economy, the NAR was again sidelined in the next elections. Talks leading up to the elections was surrounding Manning’s rhetoric of the need for a ‘caring regime’ which would not see the alienation of the blacks as it was under the NAR. Robinson on the other hand, argued around the condemnation of the ‘dependency syndrome’ citing the PNM practices that resulted in blacks being dependent on government subsidy for survival, as opposed to securing dignified advancements (Premdas, 2007). Despite that, Manning still won in a landslide victory bringing home 10 of the 14 seats (Banks et al., 2016). The focus of the government became remedying the structural damage done by the IMF and to decrease unemployment levels. By 1992 the Manning administration ensured that Trinidad and Tobago had an open-door policy on investment. To achieve this, the government removed almost all restrictions around investment, and as a result, US investment

⁷¹ See Pemberton, R., McCollin, D., Matthews, G. and Toussaint, M., 2018. Historical Dictionary of Trinidad and Tobago. Published by Rowman and Littlefield.

in Trinidad and Tobago began to increase. Additionally, the Cold War had ended, and Manning assumed a pro-American stance which saw the promotion of democratic norms. Shortly after, Manning signed into effect the Atlantic LNG Train 1 which supplied Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) to American buyers. Figueira (2004) affirms that the administration was quite aware that from a geopolitical standpoint, it was pertinent to ensure 'secure energy supply to the US'. Additionally, at around this time, US aid to the Caribbean was witnessing an increase and preferential trade agreements surrounding specific textile products were extended to Trinidad and Tobago (Piehler, 2013). Soon, official loans and grants to the island were flowing in, and the private sector began booming once more. Foreign direct investments at this time were registering a rise from \$USD134 million in 1992 to \$USD398 million in 1994 (Webb, 1997).

Due to the implementation of economic liberalisation, US firms were investing heavily into the petrochemical and gas sector and soon Trinidad and Tobago found itself to be the principal beneficiary of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). Subsequently, the nation immediately entered into the signing of the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) with the hegemon. With all things in place, Manning's next move was to float the Trinidad and Tobago currency which the previous government had moved to devalue. Manning's position was that Trinidad and Tobago were primed to be the business hub of the region and so in 1993 the Central Bank maintained slight management but a stable flow of the nation's currency against that of the US dollar (Edwards, 2007). On a more intra-regional note, Manning, also known as the 'Caribbean Man' like Williams, believed in a closer integration on a more regional level and so he launched the 'Manning Initiative' which called for closer ties between his nation, Barbados and Guyana (Braveboy-Wagner, 2018). Manning intended to formulate an economic integration between them that could transcend the borders of CARICOM. However, despite these achievements, the administration was rocked with allegations of corruption surrounding the mismanagement of public funds which resulted in a snap election being called in 1995.

6.1.4 Passover to the United National Congress (UNC): Basdeo Panday and an extension of Manning's policies (1995-2001)

The unseating of Patrick Manning in 1995 brought an abrupt end to Afro-Trinidadian 30-year rule over the nation and for the first time an Indo-Trinidadian moved to take control. Campaigns up to this point were largely around the issue of structural adjustment and the reduction of unemployment. The election as it was in the past, ran along ethnic lines, with the majority of those who were black throwing their weight behind the PNM as they have in past times while

the East Indians turned over their support to the UNC. Both parties, in the end, secured the same number of seats (17) with the NAR retaining its two. In exchange for a ministerial position for former Prime Minister Robinson, the NAR agreed to a coalition with the UNC and handed its two seats over thus pushing the UNC into power.⁷² Nevertheless, Trinidad under the UNC with its current finance and foreign ministers who were previous members of the cabinet, built upon the policies of their predecessors. In doing so, the nation continued to witness strong economic growth. In 1988-1999 however, serious concerns surrounding petroleum prices on the world stage became a matter of grave worry. This uneasiness was founded as the prices on the global arena began affecting exploration activities and production output led to the nation experiencing redundancy in the sector (America, 1985). Steel prices fell which offset a mirage of challenges pertaining to investments, thus threatening the closure of the nation's dominant plants. By mid-1999, the industry recovered when prices rose again thus positively affecting government revenues which were followed by a decreasing unemployment rate registering at 12.1% (America, 1985). The Manufacturing industry also saw a great rise when Trinidad and Tobago found itself in the year 2000, as the region's largest methanol and ammonia exporter. Nevertheless, the boom of the energy and manufacturing sector was not translated to that of the agricultural whose main export product was sugar. Exports were going directly to Europe thanks to the preferential agreement of the Lomé Convention, but still, the sector was only able to employ 8.8% of the nation's labour force and was contributing merely 1.7% to the GDP (America, 1985).

The positives of the nation's economic performance, however, was seriously undermined by accusations of 'sweetheart' deals involving contracts and jobs levied against the Panday's Administration. The government was also heavily criticised on the international stage when it swatted away concerns from international human rights advocates and allowed 10 death row inmates to be hanged over matters surrounding the nation's increasing drug trade.⁷³ Hot on the heels of that disaster, was the murder of the chairman of a regional corporation who criticised the government for corruption. This was accompanied by the government's withdrawal from the American Conventions on Human rights. Permeated by all these issues, the government was also facing dire inefficiencies in its law enforcement which saw the deposition of criminal cases. By December 2000 Panday openly admitted that something was 'fundamentally wrong'

⁷² See: Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2001 - Trinidad and Tobago, 2001, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5278c90214.html> (Accessed December 9, 2018).

⁷³ Ibid.

despite government efforts to reform its law enforcement.⁷⁴ Elections were called the following year, and the nation witnessed the readmission of the PNM under Patrick Manning.

6.1.5 Back to Patrick Manning: A nation seeking to reduce expenditure and maintain international ties (2001-2010)

By the time Manning regained Trinidad and Tobago, the prepping for the EPA negotiations between the EU and ACP countries had to begin. This started the year after, following the implementation of the Manning Administration (September 2002). Since Trinidad and Tobago was already benefitting from preferential trade agreements in the European markets, the extent of the negotiations stretched to the level at which non-tariffs on trade would be eliminated further, the extent to which the EU was willing to allow their service markets to be accessible and a set time frame around trade liberalisation which would enable the nation to have enough time to prepare for increased market competitions, as well as, how charitable the EU's financial assistance would be (Jessen and Vignoles, 2004). One of the main issues the administration was facing was the inability to maintain growth in its exports as it was reliant solely on the energy sector and had failed to diversify its export.

Nevertheless, according to the International Monetary Fund (2003), Trinidad still managed to record its 'ninth consecutive year of economic growth in 2002' despite the negative impact on trading due to the 911 attacks. The nation's GDP grew to 2.7%, and unemployment fell to 10% (International Monetary Fund, 2003).⁷⁵ On the heels of the attack and with US's attention diverted elsewhere, Manning became frustrated with US's lack of interest in Caribbean security issues which he voiced publicly (Braveboy-Wagner, 2014). In his speech, Prime Minister Manning points out that 'Trinidad and Tobago have offered to patrol the eastern Caribbean; we will acquire the assets to do that, but we cannot afford to finance it. The security that will be provided ... is as much the security of the United States as it is the security of the Caribbean' (Manning, 2006). Braveboy-Wagner (2014) maintains that this lack of finances for security

⁷⁴ See: Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2001 - Trinidad and Tobago, 2001, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5278c90214.html> (Accessed December 9, 2018).

⁷⁵ See: International Monetary Fund Report: Trinidad and Tobago: 2003 Article IV Consultation-Staff Report; Public Information Notice on the Executive Board Discussion; and Statement by the Executive Director for Trinidad and Tobago. Available at: <https://www.bookstore.imf.org/books/title/trinidad-and-tobago-2003-article-iv-consultation-staff-report-public-information-notice-on-the-executive-board-discussion-and-statement-by-t> (Accessed: January 1, 2019).

measures and the ending of trade preferences that followed, pushed the Manning administration to suggest diversification of ‘LNG exports away from the United States’.

6.1.6 Trinidad and Tobago Post 2010-Present: A nation battling economic decline and a turn towards Unconventional Donors

After Manning’s declaration that Trinidad and Tobago would have no choice but to diversify its exports away from the US, the Caribbean Basin Initiative which was slated to expire was extended by George W Bush until another trade preference agreement could be reached. In 2010 under the Obama administration, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) was launched with a promise of funding (Frederick, 2010). Although Trinidad and Tobago can be considered the ‘father’ of CARICOM and is ranked as the largest Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA) nation based on its GDP, which in 2016⁷⁶ stood at \$USD21,722 million, the nation still faces some enormous economic challenges. Still highly dependent on its energy sector, any downturn in oil prices on the world stage, depresses the nation’s economy immensely. Regional Trade Policy Advisor, Sheldon McLean in his Trade Policy and Strategy Report on Trinidad and Tobago, maintains that ‘weak performance in extra-regional markets such as Colombia and Venezuela; and the limited success of local exporters in exploiting market access opportunities negotiated under several CARICOM trade agreements are some of the constraints’ that Trinidad and Tobago faces.⁷⁷ As a result, the nation under Prime Ministers, Kamla Persad Bissessar and Keith Rowley to date, has sought to forge alliances and deepen engagement with the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Of all of these, China emerged as one of the dominant players where the PRC is engaging CARICOM’s founding father on the highest level. Trinidad on the other hand, is engaging the PRC in hopes of using the investment to diversify its export base, stimulate its agricultural sector and secure development initiatives.

Consequently, my argument is that despite its exceptional economic growth with what would seem to be no indication of a country characterised by a vulnerable identity, this dependency of the country on a single sector, has provided a breeding ground for an established vulnerable identity in the face of self-determination. Turner (2009) surmised it best by stating that ‘few

⁷⁶ See: Country Groupings data for CARICOM nations: Available at: <https://countryeconomy.com/countries/groups/caribbean-community> (Accessed January 1, 2019).

⁷⁷ See: McLean, S., Trade Policy and Strategy, Trinidad and Tobago 2013-2017 Report. Available at <https://www.ttbizlink.gov.tt/trade/tnt/cmn/pdf/Trade%20Policy%20and%20Strategy%20for%20Trinidad%20and%20Tobago,%202013-2017.pdf> (Accessed January 1, 2019).

have benefitted from the wealth created by oil and gas which employs only 5% of the population. Thus, social indicators are similar to other countries in the region despite an outstanding economic performance'. Braveboy-Wagner (1989) in agreement, points out that, if petroleum were to be extracted from the trade balances equation, then what would seem to be surpluses would translate to deficits. It is true that at the turn of independence, the nation struggled with foreign policy measures which were mostly centred around the Prime Minister and a handful of advisers (Braveboy-Wagner, 1989) but it later became extremely personalised. The nation, however, did manage to formulate a more institutionalised form of foreign policy. On this account, Trinidad and Tobago has advocated for regional and national development initiatives, and even though the nation is a leading example of a 'strong' small state, making it an oxymoron in a sense, it still has issues with vulnerability. Fernández Leal (2016) affirms that Trinidad and Tobago still 'is a state faced with locational, bureaucratic and resource vulnerabilities' which has caused it to be quite dependent on much wealthier external sources. China being no exception.

6.2 FINDINGS: Trinidad and Tobago's elites and the nation's 'vulnerable identity' in relation to China

6.2.1 How Trinidad and Tobago's vulnerable identity plays out in its relationship with China: The Economic dimension

My analysis of the perception of elites in Trinidad and Tobago as it relates to the vulnerable concept, revealed them to be similar to their Jamaican counterpart. That is, very much aware of their country's vulnerability. Trinidad and Tobago's strong economic performance over the years, however, unlike its Jamaican counterpart, has left many of its elites with the perception that despite their vulnerability they have the ability to not allow their nation to be overrun by other powerful countries. The held belief is that although they are dependent on aid, they also have the opportunity to either extract benefits or emerge from the equation with a loss. Elites maintained that benefits could be extracted from a domestic level through the reformation of some of their domestic policies and strategies (some of which has already been undertaken). Trinidad and Tobago's elites also maintained that benefits could also be garnered at a regional level if all CARICOM leaders agreed on formulating and operating in a concerted effort which would reap benefits for them all. Consequently, the 'vulnerable identity' that Trinidad and Tobago possess was found to be present at a much lesser degree than that which is existing in the Jamaican case:

If you look back at recent history, you will see that the government of Trinidad and Tobago with those soft loans from the government of China, the amount of I think it was 3 billion dollars, 3 billion TT dollars that we had available to us and we actually didn't take it up at all. It expired right there. I mean in the older Trinidad and Tobago we would have taken everything and built white elephant roads everywhere and buildings that had no purpose. But there has been an evolution, and I think there is a general acceptance on both sides of the political coin and absolutely in the bureaucracy itself, that not all free money or not all cheap money is good money. And the conditionality that comes with China's money, we have to understand whether it's something that we want to accept or not. So, I mean the most recent example of that would have been the announcement by the former government, that E-Tech would build seven new industrial parks in partnership with Beijing Construction. However, the government of Trinidad and Tobago, understanding their debt ceiling and so forth as well as their borrowing allowances, basically cancelled that contract with Beijing Construction. So yes, we are learning that we can't be that dependent and that we have to ensure that we are in the long run, reaping long-term benefits. So, we are changing our approach and some of our strategies (T&TG9).

A change, however, in strategy and approach does not completely erode a vulnerable identity. Consequently, like Jamaica, in the context of Trinidad and Tobago, the fact remains that it does exist therein:

Honestly yes, I think we are sort of—to put it in a nice term—bandwagonist. In that, we jump onto whoever is willing or whoever is able. It could be the US, and it could be China, whichever one is capable of helping. So, we are no different from any other Caribbean country in that regard (T&TN15).

It's not necessarily that we have an anti-US outlook as such, but it's just that China offers a better and more lucrative way forward. So, yes, we need them (T&TG1).

We need help to expand mostly away from oil, so we are not unique in that way. Are we doing a better job at it? I don't know that we are, but we have benefited from the Chinese relationship to date, and right now we need that (T&TG7)

So, infrastructure development is high on our list. We have had a number of buildings built and a lot of infrastructural work done, as well as a lot of cultural shows and yes, we have also received a lot of financial support from them [China] (T&TN21).

In answering questions 14, 23 and 25 likewise, as in the Jamaican case, 100% mentioned that the nation was small at some point in the dialogue. Similar to chapter 3, it was no surprise that 43% (9 of 21) of the interviewees maintained that due to reasons that are associated with being a small nation, their nation needed to ally with external sources for help, thus indicating that vulnerability here is also considered to be a category. 64% (7 of 11) was from the governmental sector that retained this view accompanied by another 20% from the non-governmental sector

(see Fig. 8 for a chart outlining the acceptance of the vulnerability concept). Similar to the Jamaican case those who rejected it did so on the grounds that it was just the natural order of leaders who from the past, had developed a tendency of relying on external aid. Vulnerability here, is therefore viewed as a mindset that is conditioned by historical events and as a result, has become a natural element of the foreign policy process of governing elites. What is vastly different from the Jamaican case, however, is that a high 4 of the 11 governing elites in the Trinidad and Tobagonian context holds this latter view, while only 1 of the 10 in the Jamaican context admitted to having that same perspective:

Simple things like building a runway or building a school, for that money we have to look abroad. So, yes, we've become broken into an aid recipient mentality, a mendicant mentality. And that's something we just can't seem to shake (T&TG3).

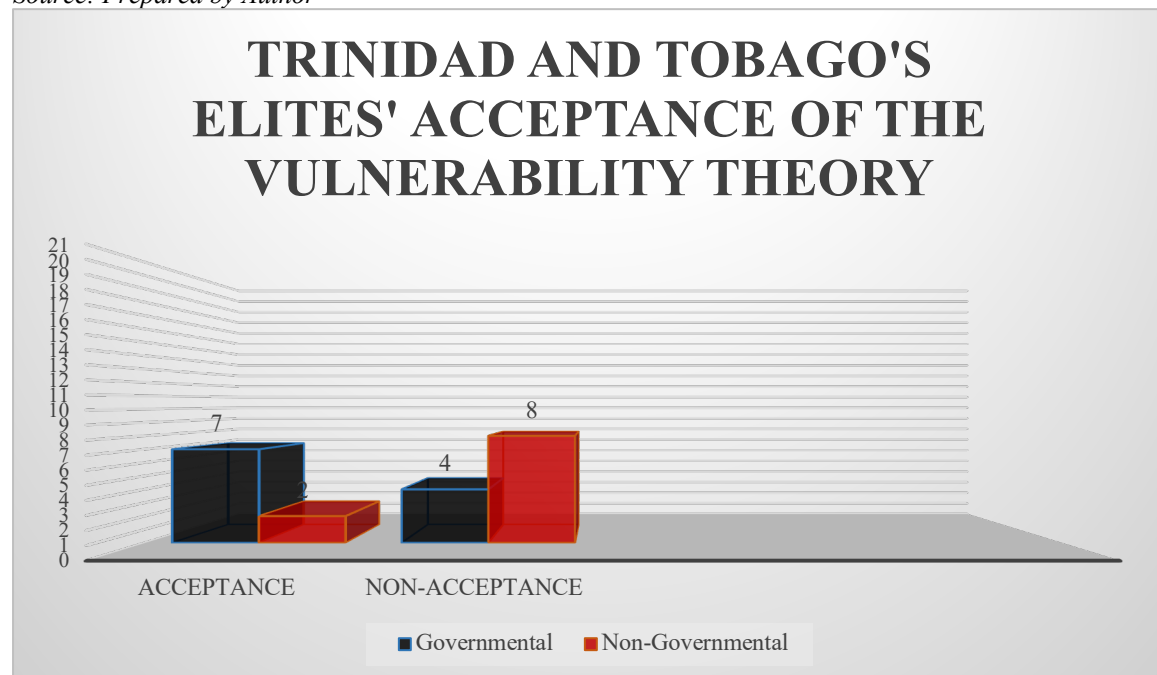
I don't know that the Caribbean has ever tried to identify its strength or power. Even us here in Trinidad and Tobago. The US determines its power which is why they have issues like energy security and food security. We're not looking at power like that. The Chinese defines what is known as Comprehensive National Power. They look at 66 different power matrices. What do we do when we talk about power? How much money do we have in the bank? What does our import cover? How long can we withstand a global depression? How many months are we likely to survive? We don't look at power as a practical or meaningful metrics. So, we are conditioned to dependency (T&TG6).

We need to find more innovative funding sources and work out non-traditional ways of doing that, other than just trying to go to the existing China which runs the IMF, the World Bank, and the IBD. We also need to stop seeking aid from the US. There are other ways we can approach funding that is much more innovative, but we can't have that conversation within an old mentality. It's a real challenge to shift the Caribbean's view away from dependence and vulnerability. Vulnerability has been given too much power in our lexicon and we're stuck in it (T&TG11).

Yes, we depend heavily on them [China]. Nonetheless, I think we depend heavily on anyone that wants to support us. What that means for us is that in several different countries, even with the US, Great Britain, and now with China, we are racking up debt. The result of that is, to some degree we will always be in this constant state of development or undeveloped or underdeveloped. If we continue to have deficits with several nations, we will never reach the status of developed (T&TG5).

Figure 8: Chart outlining Trinidad and Tobago's Governmental and Non-Governmental Elites' acceptance of the vulnerability category and the 'vulnerable identity'

Source: Prepared by Author



Differences between the sectors represented in the interviews showed stark distinctions. Most working in the governmental sector accepted that the concept of vulnerability does apply to Trinidad and Tobago, with only a few of their peers in the non-governmental sector agreeing to this. Those in the governmental and non-governmental sectors that rejected the vulnerability concept, cited a short-term view of development and an old mindset conditioned by the nation's colonial past, as the main driving forces behind the nation's reason for alignment with China. Only four (4) of the respondents in the governmental sector stated clearly their awareness of the fact that there exists a vulnerable identity in this case. Nonetheless, as noted in the previous chapter, motives do not automatically translate into a vulnerable identity, but rather it is the behaviour resulting from these acts that is then placed in a perception of vulnerability which contributes to identity formulation (Campbell and Hall, 2017). Such an identity must however, first deal with the motivations from which these actions stem.

6.2.2 The Economic Motivations

The economic motivations behind Trinidad and Tobago aligning itself with China were found to be very much in keeping with the nation's 2020 vision of *'Investing in Sound Infrastructure and Environment'* and *'Enabling Competitive Business'*.⁷⁸

I visited the Shanghai Children's Hospital which was the model for building the hospital in Couva [Couva Children's Hospital] that is sitting empty⁷⁹ and they [Shanghai Children's Hospital] see something like 8,000 patients a day or something like that. I mean it's astonishing and very efficient, and then when you stop and look, there are five ways to enter the hospital, there are kiosks, desks, mobile phone apps and online. You go, and you do it all, and you schedule your appointment. The computer then picks that this room is available at this time and it matches the patient to the doctor. So, the rooms are utilised all the time. China is very good at what they do in terms of efficiency and systems. So, from a health care perspective, they are not going to come here and treat our patients, but they can help with infrastructure and hospital management. I think they have a lot to teach us in that area. Infrastructural development is important to us here, and it's very hard to debate not partnering with them because if you have ever been to China, you'll see that they know what they are doing (T&TN19).

Invest in innovation. That is what we are hoping partnering with China will yield. And what I mean by this is, innovation, incubators, business and Tech Parks. We hope to get Chinese companies to come and sit down alongside Trinidadian companies and create joint ventures rather than just selling us products. The current formula is it's a one-way street, and it's very clear. But these are the things we want from them (T&TG7).

We know that it's agriculture that allowed China to transform its entire economy and its global position. It's because they are using the agrarian economy to generate wealth, domestic capacity and to expand. And we have a lot to learn from them, and yes, we should learn this with caution and with scrutiny not just going blindly in and getting hurt. Nevertheless, it's paying dividends for us, so we are establishing an agriculture and innovation partner across the highway from Twin City Mall on the other side of the highway. That alone has a Chinese investment of \$TT5 million which has greenhouses gifted by the Chinese government. And those greenhouses have in them new varieties of fruits and vegetables from China that we don't have here and that can be beneficial to us. So, for example, our collaborator was the China Agricultural University which is at the heart of the Chinese Agriculture Revolution. It's the number one university in China for

⁷⁸ See Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2020 Operational Plan 2007-2010. Available at: https://www.cepal.org/iyd/noticias/pais/9/31469/Trinidad_y_Tobago_Doc_1.pdf (Accessed: August 6, 2019).

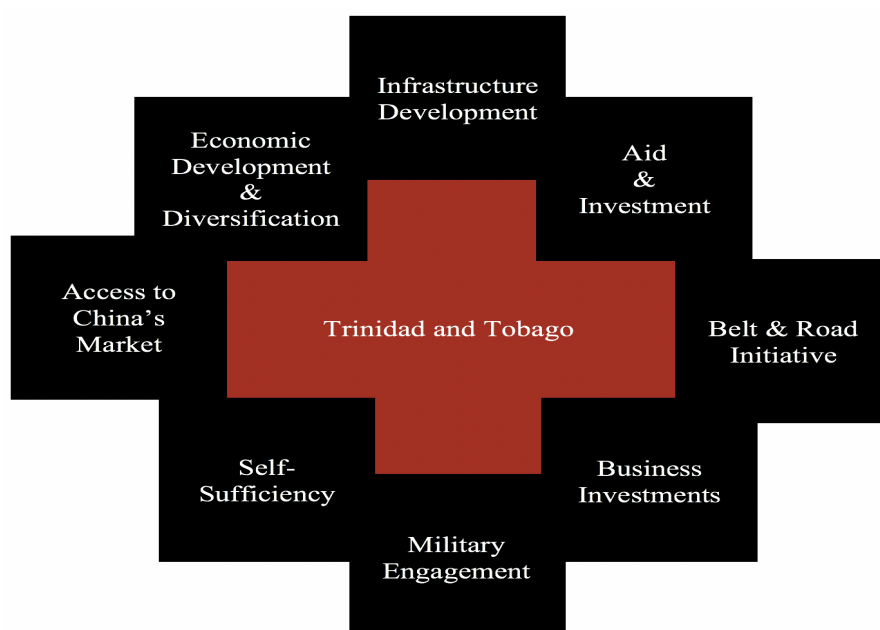
⁷⁹ Referring to the Couva Children's Hospital and Training Centre that is located in Couva Trinidad, that was built by UDeCOTT and Shanghai International Limited. It was designed to use the environment to aid in human wellness and consists of a 3-story tower with walkways, canopies, vegetated roofs etc. However, the facility as impressive as it is it was never commissioned and so at the start of the year a petition was started by Trinidad nationals urging the Trinidadian government to open the facility. The government has since declared that it will roll out the facility in four [phase with the 1st phase slated to commence July, 2019.

agriculture and number three in the world. Why would we not want to collaborate with them in agriculture? And they have, for example, cucumbers. They have given us varieties of cucumbers that would be very interesting to pilot into the market here. Short ones and long ones like this and fat ones and skinny ones. So, we are piloting them here. They also have tomatoes that are just like our tomatoes, but they are more disease-resistant, and the yield is better, and their taste is stronger. Obviously, we also pay attention to GMO [Genetically Modified Organism] and those kinds of things (T&TG9).

Coming off the status held by the sound design of infrastructure development in the nation's vision for 2020, it was no surprise that infrastructure development was cited 86 per cent of the time (18 of the 21) as one of the main reason for the answer to number 26 on the questionnaire. Other reasons included: aid and investment, Belt and Road Initiative⁸⁰, economic development and diversification, market access, business investment, military engagement and aid in making the country self-sufficient. *Figure 9* below provides a visual of the economic motivations.

Figure 9: Listed Reasons given by Trinidad and Tobago's Elites for their Nation's Engagement with China.

Source: Prepared by Author



Coming from the previous chapter, it is evident that Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago converge only on 3 motivations when it comes to China. The top of which is infrastructure development.

⁸⁰ At the time of the interviews, Trinidad and Tobago had not yet signed on to the Belt and Road Initiative but did express interest and stated this as one of the reason why they were engaging with China though it was also expressed that it was not extended to the region as yet. The invitation to sign on to the Initiative wasn't extended by the PRC until January 22, 2018 and Trinidad and Tobago signed on in May 2018. The Belt and Road Initiative will be touched on further in Chapter 9.

The matter of aid and investments along with access to China's market follows behind that. What was striking was that Jamaican elites made no mention of the Belt and Road Initiative during the course of the interview, which they later signed on to on April 11, 2019 (a year after Trinidad and Tobago). This tells us that at that time, unlike Trinidad and Tobago, that was not one of the country's motives for aligning with China.

Similar to the case of Jamaica, economic development was also viewed as the prime reason for Trinidad and Tobago's engagement with China. Most interviewees, as has also been noted in the literature, acknowledged that the country has an economy linked to the performance of the international market which faces major highs and lows in terms of energy prices. As a result, like all other CARICOM nations, Trinidad and Tobago became largely dependent on aid and uses this aid as a way of diversifying their export base. This indicates once again that Anthony Payne is correct when he argues that the pure pursuit of external assistance to improve internal industries, although it may be admired is not equal to power (Payne, 2009). He argues that this is just one factor that 'grows out of a fundamental vulnerability, even if [it] contributes for the moment to a greater resilience' (Payne, 2009). On the topic of greater resilience, there were many cases in which Trinidad and Tobago exhibited policies that showed that their vulnerable identity was of a lower calibre than that of Jamaica. Even in cases having to do with their political motivations for aligning with China.

6.2.3 The Political Motivations

As stated earlier, the political motivations of Trinidad and Tobago, like their Jamaican counterpart, are linked to their economic motivations. Nonetheless, the political reasons for Trinidad and Tobago are found to be similar to their vision for 2020, which is a pillar expounded upon in their vision for 2030. This main pillar is '*Putting People First: Nurturing Our Greatest Asset*'.⁸¹

So, the understanding is what we want for them [China] to do, is invest in our country, and not come here and take work from our locals. This will always be our priority. And if you look at how we interact with them, particularly their MOFCOM [the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China] in addition to their

⁸¹ See Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2030 National Development Strategy 2016-2030. Available at: <http://www.social.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/V2030-as-at-August-29th-2016.pdf> (Accessed: August 6, 2018).

organisation CCPIT [China Council for the Promotion of International Trade], it's that we keep pushing the narrative of investment over contract work (T&TG9).

When looking at Chinese investment, we are looking at high tech manufacturing, so things like solar panels and solar panel R&D [Research and Development]. We are also looking at utilising their manufacturing and engineering expertise to implement larger scale or mechanised manufacturing in Trinidad, or to serve as sort of OEM [Original Equipment Manufacturer] or third-party manufacturer for Trinidadian design and also services. So, there is a lot of areas in which there'll be a future partnership with China. Especially as [Intellectual Property] IP begins to become more commercialised out of UTT [The University of Trinidad and Tobago] and UWI [University of the West Indies]. Our aim is to make our own people innovative (T&TN19).

On a broader, more strategic global level, it [China] also presents an opportunity for private enterprises, not just here but also in the region, to tap into the type of global value chains that dictate how global commerce is taking place. China is a hub for the production of cheap raw materials, and so on, it gives us the opportunity to rearrange our manufacturing structures so that, as a source market, it could be more cost-effective for many of our people in the private sector, to have that relationship with China, where they can source raw materials and where they can source intermediate goods for finished products. Overall, that will make our production processes more competitive. Globally competitive (T&TG4).

Nevertheless, this does not mean that political motivations are free of party competition in Trinidad and Tobago, as in Jamaica's case:

There was an election coming up, and they really wanted to complete NAPA as a finished project, and as a legacy of the then prime minister before the election and they called an early election and it [NAPA] ended up being delivered afterwards. I think it was still open before, but I remember when I walked in, I thought this is the largest building in the country actually (T&TG3).

The elections in this part of the world are predicated on financing and funding. If you can get a huge grant the year before an election, (and in our part of the world things are still visual) and you fix roads and schools, and you do all kinds of things based on Chinese funding, the outcome of the election could be based on that. So, there is a direct correlation between funding, investment and power continuity. So, in those things, there are direct correlations (T&TG6).

Oosterveld et al. (2018) argues that, there is a tendency for political leaders to exhibit notable projects in an attempt to boost electoral votes. This has resulted in these nations being very susceptible to the PRC's financial appeal. For example, when the previous Trinidadian government acquired Chinese patrol vessels, they were viewed as appealing in light of the fact that it was delivered before the start of elections (Oosterveld et al., 2018). This is no surprise as it applies to parties in small nations like these, since they 'tend to run less on ideological

differences...and more on the practical platform of how they could do a better job' (Ott, 2018). However, competition between the opposition and the ruling party in terms of who can deliver the big projects is not the only form of political motivation existing in the nation. Each party in power is trying to find a way to penetrate the Chinese market which would reap a significant amount of revenue:

It would be awesome if we could get a part of their market. Imagine 1 out of 10 Chinese tourists opting instead of London, to come to Trinidad or even Jamaica? You'd be in big business! You will then have a real tourist market because there's many of them (T&TG2).

I mean it's a huge market just think of it. Even if you just took the middle class in China it's at least the size of Europe's total population. So, I mean, if you can sell anything into China, then you are well on your way. We absolutely would want to do that (T&TG7).

That is a big market, and it's not only a big market, it is a big, wealthy market. Not like Haiti, Haiti is a big market in terms of numbers. Haiti is 8 million people, but it's only about 1 million people that you would be really targeting. Even then, you are talking about a population that is as big as Trinidad and Tobago. And that is why Haiti is of such great interest to people. It's not the general poverty in Haiti, it's the relative wealth of the 500,000 or so that are there. But in China, it is much more widespread. There's an inequality in income and so on, but the Chinese are very, very well off generally. If we could get into their market, then we would be in business (T&TN21).

Additionally, the exchange of people and the hope of obtaining scholarships for students is another area, albeit to a lesser extent, surrounding the nation's political motivations:

So, in addition to the 500 Confucius Institutes (CI), there are another 500 Confucius classrooms. The funding is very generous. And what you'll find is that in the Latin American region, every country I can think of has at least one. Brazil has several, and they're well supported by China in terms of teaching grants and scholarships in general. So, they allow academics to have the possibility of going to China and there are lots of student scholarships which we would like to take advantage of (T&TN16).

Trinidad and Tobago's political motivations are closely aligned with what they want from China, which they believe will improve their economy and provide them with a redress for the life-long plague of being dependent on a single market. The aim of the nation is to pivot towards 'the stabilisation of the Trinidad & Tobago economy [and] to shift to the transformation of an economy over-reliant on one sector; operating with an inefficient tax system and dependent

upon transfers/subsidies provided by a patriarchal state'.⁸² This should come as no surprise as Thorhallsson and Steinsson (2017) argues that economic security is always important for small states, even in cases where their foreign policy is less informed. Their survival will always be an over-reliance on trade to prosper.

6.3 Conclusion

Trinidad and Tobago's political and economic motivations converge in a few areas with that of Jamaica. My research findings also indicate that due to the economic prowess of Trinidad and Tobago, which outstrips that of Jamaica, elites in this case are more likely to be steadfast in what they want from China when going to the negotiating table. This indicates that while Trinidad and Tobago recognises that it has no choice but to rely on aid given by the PRC, its ability to set guidelines to ensure that its needs are also met; demonstrates that the vulnerable identity held by the nation is weaker than in the case of Jamaica.

This does not mean that the governing elites in Trinidad and Tobago are better than those in Jamaica. Nor does it mean that the scourge of corruption that was much more of a concern regarding Jamaica's relationship with the state of China, is excluded from the case of Trinidad and Tobago. In fact, if we were to visit the political past of Trinidad and Tobago, we would find quite the contrary. As Oosterveld et al. (2018) affirms, 'where Jamaica is a primary school, T&T [Trinidad and Tobago] is the university of corruption'. The difference lies in their economy where unlike Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago was lucky enough to possess an asset that could launch them for many years to come (Barclay*, 2004).

Nonetheless, although Trinidad and Tobago's motives are unique to itself in certain respects (hence my initial argument in chapter 1 that in evaluating nations in the sub-region, one must be careful in applying a general conclusion to all nations therein), they are in line with actions small countries usually exercise to ensure economic security. As a result, the actions are the same though the recipient that it is directed towards, might be different.

⁸² See Trinidad and Tobago Budget 2019 Policy Statement. Available at: [https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/EY-focus-on-the-trinidad-and-tobago-budget-2019/\\$FILE/EY-focus-on-the-trinidad-and-tobago-budget-2019.pdf](https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/EY-focus-on-the-trinidad-and-tobago-budget-2019/$FILE/EY-focus-on-the-trinidad-and-tobago-budget-2019.pdf) (Accessed August 7, 2019)

PART III: THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHINA'S RISE IN THE REGION: THE PERCEIVED EFFECTS AND IMPACTS

Chapter Seven: China's impact on the Intra-regional aspect of CARICOM countries

The Caribbean Political discourse contains a relatively large body of literature on the issues surrounding CARICOM integration. There is a widespread perception that regional integration, in general, and CARICOM in particular, is in something of a state of crisis. Most people are deeply pessimistic about the future of integration as it is presently composed in the region. However, there is an equally strong consensus that integration in the region is important to the development of the Caribbean. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen if this sentiment extends to these nations' partnership with China. It is pertinent to note that the relations existing between CARICOM nations and the PRC, are strictly bilateral in nature as China has no trade agreement with the regional organisation itself. CARICOM does not trade as a bloc with any nation, and so, my dissertation intends to reveal whether elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago would have preferred an integrated approach to China as opposed to a bilateral one.

Seeing that CARICOM does not trade as a bloc with other nations, there exist no discussion as it relates to CARICOM countries with regards to whether these nations have ever considered an integrated approach when dealing with China. In order to determine whether China has any impact on how these countries relate to each other since the rise of the PRC in the sub-region, the chapter begins by addressing the issues affecting the political and economic relations of CARICOM nations along with factors contributing to the weak intra-regional cooperation that exists between these countries. In line with the purpose of the overarching research question, the chapter moves to map whether there have been any changes in these relationships since the launch of the 2011 Forum. This was done so as to uncover the different ways in which China's engagement with CARICOM countries has influenced how these nations relate to each other. First of all, the chapter starts by addressing the factors that have plagued the formation and the development of political relations between CARICOM countries since the bloc's inception. In keeping with this aim, the chapter examines the trade and economic collaboration between CARICOM countries and their transition to the Caribbean Single Market Economy (CSME).

To determine whether there is any perceived impact on these intra-regional relationships from the Beijing Consensus, the evidence is drawn from the cognitive frameworks of the two groups of governmental and non-governmental elites in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. My investigation found that as it relates to the issue of integration versus non-integration, most of

the respondents opted for an integrated approach not just towards China but also towards every other powerful nation that intends to interact with these nations, including the US. Respondents from both sectors holds the view that though they are small, together, CARICOM nations could pack a much heavier punch when dealing with foreign states. However, this is a contentious position. As previously argued in chapter 3, the insularity factor fuels a significant absence of nationalistic Caribbean spirit in the region. This has led to a higher number of respondents, particularly in the case of Jamaica, opting for a non-integrated regional approach. However, Jamaica, particularly those in the non-governmental sector, argues for an integrated approach to China. Although my findings show that China has no positive or negative impact on the intra-regional relationship of these nations, it has also been discovered that they are concerned about the possibility of a complete diplomatic isolation of Taiwan, which CARICOM countries believe could lead to them having to woo China. This held belief is that, this would breed even more competition against each other which could further aggravate the issue of integration. The chapter closes with reflections from participants in both cases on the regional shortcomings of CARICOM nations.

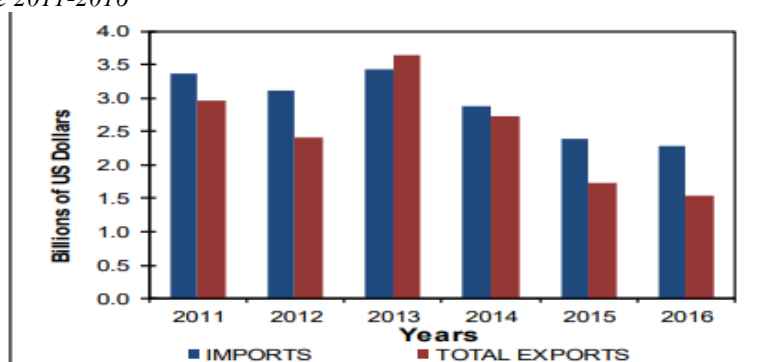
7.1 Factors affecting the formation and development of political relations between CARICOM countries

CARICOM was faced with a harsh external environment from the outset. The 1970s was a period of oil price shocks, rising interest rates, and growing ideological extremism in the Caribbean that slowed growth, increased debt, social unrest, and political division in the 1980s, albeit to a lesser degree than it was in Latin America (Jessen, 1999). The excesses of this period discouraged an even deeper integration. CARICOM remained tied to Europe through unilateral preferential trade arrangements and would take up, with some controversy, the conditional US offer of unilateral trade preferences defined in the 1983 Caribbean Basin Initiative (Hornbeck, 2008). These preferences enhanced selected trade opportunities but were ultimately limited and proved to be weak foundations for diversifying economic activity, as had trade dependence during the colonial period. By the 1990s, the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean rebounded, but CARICOM began to experience a declining growth in output and productivity in many cases, with collective GDP growth on average falling from 3.9% in the 1970s to 2.2% in the 1980s and 1.9% in the 1990s (Pollard, 2003). In addition, by the turn of the 21st century, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) pressed the European Union (EU) to eliminate its unilateral preferences towards CARICOM exports (e.g., bananas and sugar), which also saw the United States entering into a string of bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with countries

in the Western Hemisphere (Bourne and Attzs, 2005). This, of course, led to the relative erosion of the benefits afforded by the CBI preference programs (Bourne and Attzs, 2005). As the benefits of trade preferences continued their decline, the natural structure of CARICOM's trade patterns began to shift, as did incentives to move beyond a customs union. In line with this inward-looking strategy that was typical of the 1970s integration efforts, CARICOM was constrained as a trade-related development strategy. The result of this was a Community that attempted to stretch, protect and integrate on a deeper level, but was still unable to enhance intra-regional trade to the degree expected. An examination on the publication of CARICOM's intra-regional trade from 2011-2016 by the CARICOM Secretariat, found that intra-regional exports experienced a steady decline, moving from \$US3.0 billion in 2011 to \$US1.5 billion in 2016.⁸³ Intra-regional imports during this period experienced a stark decrease moving from \$US3.4 billion in 2011, to \$US2.3 billion in 2016.⁸⁴ The trends suggest that CARICOM trade policies are severely limited in advancing intra-regional integration. Notwithstanding year-to-year fluctuations, intra-regional imports and exports, which accounted for 10.7% of the total imports and 12.5% of total exports in 2016 respectively, have remained relatively stagnant (Fig. 10).

Figure 10: CARICOM Intra-Regional Trade US\$ Billions

Source: CARICOM Secretariat report 2018: Snapshot of CARICOM's Trade Series 1: CARICOM'S Intra-Regional Trade 2011-2016



Some of the respondents cited the lack of deeper integration and the need for CARICOM governments to maintain power, which led to the lack of progress, as factors that hindered the growth of intraregional trade:

⁸³ See the CARICOM Secretariat report: CARICOM's Intra-Regional Trade: 2011-2016. Available at http://www.caricomstats.org/Files/Publications/Snapshot/Series_1_2011-2016.pdf (Accessed October 17, 2018)

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Intra-regionalism is a challenge, but having said that, I believe that our leaders are still committed to maintaining their own concept of sovereignty that has severely affected our intra-regional trade (T&TG3).

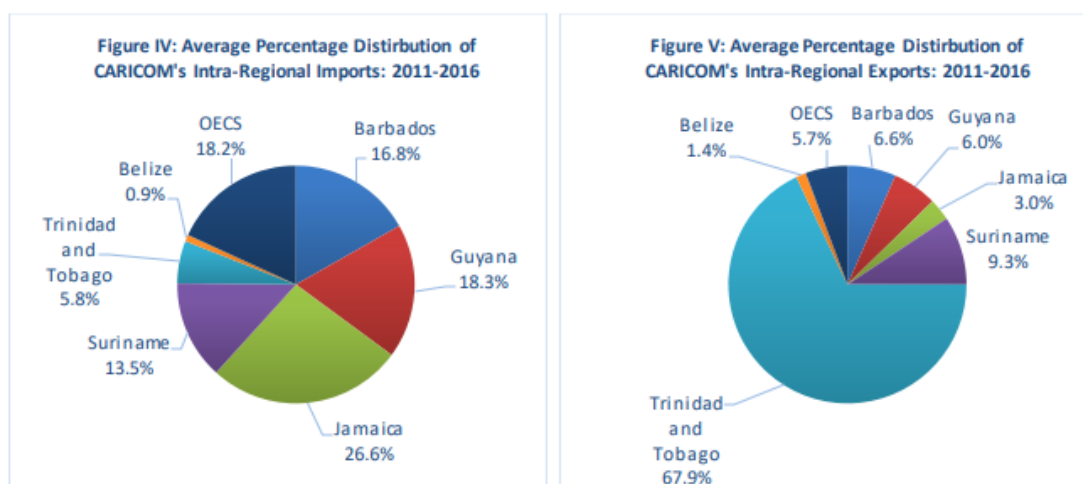
Again, our politicians are all about personalities. It's not about integration on a deeper level. It's more about who can make the biggest stride. Neither is it about how to help the weakest ones to get up to where the rest of us are—and God help us if we can actually agree on something. You should see us at (*)⁸⁵ in Barbados. I mean you want policy direction from these ministers, and they are looking right back at the Secretary and saying well, what do you want us to do? I mean it's amazing, and I am frightened because how then can this lead to a regional approach to trade or anything for that matter? (GRG1).

It should also be noted, however, that structural factors, especially economical similarities and high concentration on export products, also limits the potential trade effects of CARICOM's regional market for goods. This would mean that, future growth in trade should be expected to come from exchanges done outside of CARICOM. This will require careful management of the volatility that is inherent to a small-state, given CARICOM's highly concentrated export base, which in turn increases vulnerability to external shocks and erratic shifts in terms of trade (Bank, 2005). It is also important to note the asymmetries in trade performances among countries. Trinidad and Tobago possess the most substantial growth in exports, while smaller countries such as Jamaica and Belize, plagued by a diminished agricultural output, has resulted in a much smaller growth in their exports of merchandise (*Fig. 11*). Jamaica has experienced a marked decline in its exports while becoming the largest intra-CARICOM importer of goods. This is a trend that can be largely attributed to its macroeconomic instability that has hurt the manufacturing sector. This consistent decline can be linked to Jamaica's considerable political and economic volatility and weak macroeconomic policies.

⁸⁵ Name of meeting omitted to maintain anonymity

Figure 11: CARICOM Intra-Regional Trade—Imports and Exports

Source: CARICOM Secretariat report 2018: Snapshot of CARICOM's Trade Series 1: CARICOM'S Intra-Regional Trade 2011-2016



7.1.2 So, what are some of the factors contributing to this weak intra-regional collaboration among CARICOM countries?

If CARICOM nations create a natural market for each other's goods and services, then what could be the factors preventing extensive collaboration and deeper integration? After all, as I previously argued in chapter 3, these countries share a similar history, most, a similar market size and a common geographical space. When it comes to integration and effective economic development, the comparatively small size of CARICOM markets are usually attributed to contributing to this insurmountable obstacle (Braveboy-Wagner, 2003). Other scholars have argued that the broadening of the Community to engage with other Caribbean countries that are non-English speaking, could be at the heart of the problem (Coard, 1974). Nevertheless, my thesis argues that it is more the public fear of migration that has led to the rhetoric of other CARICOM nationals 'coming to take our jobs' and the failure to see beyond the fact that deeper integration does not mean a loss of sovereignty, that is instead, the binding thread of anaemic collaboration and deficient integration practises between these CARICOM countries.

I think for a set of countries that have a common thread of historical, cultural and economic ties; we seem to can't get this thing called integration right. If we just commit ourselves to effective integration, then we wouldn't even have to be choosing between China and Taiwan, then having to worry about the implications that siding with Taiwan over China will bring or vice versa (JN11).

If you look at it, you'll realise this disunity is killing us. Nobody wants to relinquish control over their island, not even a bit (T&TG6).

Jamaicans come here [Trinidad and Tobago] and work and then when you listen, everybody walking around saying ‘see they come to take our jobs’. I mean mind you; they are doing jobs that a lot of us Trinidadians don’t want to do. Security guards, taxi drivers, cashiers etc. How can we then call ourselves CARICOM nationals? It’s just in theory and nothing more (T&TN17).

Though Trinidad and Tobago were more inclined to have a deeper integrated approach adopted by CARICOM nations, their Jamaican counterpart was much less eager to do so. For those who opposed the integration and collaboration process, in the case of Jamaica, it was found that most of these respondents were in the non-governmental sector. It ought to be noted, however, that elites in the governmental sector came close to splitting down the middle (6 of 10) on the issue. This outlook was stemming from a powerful sense of nationalism and a belief that Jamaicans could excel at anything if they were determined to do so. Also adding to this point of view from both sectors was the mention in the press earlier in the year of the possibility of a ‘*JamExit*’ from CARICOM and even a departure from the Caribbean Single Market Economy (CSME) if a reasonable programme and authoritative sense of duty to have it fully operational within five (5) years remained absent.⁸⁶ Additionally, in 2016 Prime Minister Andrew Holness, commissioned a report around Jamaica’s engagement with the regional bloc with instructions for the commission to provide recommendations as to how the nation should move forward. Upon completion, one of the recommendations suggested that Jamaica was not benefitting from the CSME. In this regard, respondents cited that withdrawal would not be either here or there, since Jamaica hardly benefits from being a member of both CARICOM and the CSME:

We are bringing in peanuts from CARICOM, even as our own product lays waste in St. Elizabeth.⁸⁷ The impoverishment of Jamaica is not to the greatest benefit of either the people of Jamaica or CARICOM. Something needs to give (JN16).

CARICOM is only beneficial to Trinidad. The reason they are a powerhouse in the Caribbean today is that they keep selling their goods here in Jamaica. They’ve been doing that to us since the 1960s. We are haemorrhaging economically as a result. So, I say no to integration. Jamaica needs to withdraw from Trinidad and Tobago (JN11).

Don’t get me wrong, but I personally think that CARICOM is no longer a fit for Jamaica’s growth agenda. Let us clarify here, yes, the aim of CARICOM is noble when you look at the steps taken towards the implementation of the Single Market

⁸⁶ See Jamaica Observer Article: Time for JamExit from CARICOM. Published May 16, 2017. Available at: http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/opinion/time-for-jamexit-from-caricom_97465?profile=1096 (Accessed April 13, 2018)

⁸⁷ St. Elizabeth is considered the ‘Food Basket’ of Jamaica.

Economy (SME). But when you look at the article in the agreement that calls for the free movement of skilled labour, this is not the case (JG4).

There were some significant differences between the two cases and their sectors. While a bit over half (60%) of the governmental sector in Jamaica and the majority (100%) of the same sector in Trinidad and Tobago called for effective integration; in the non-governmental sector, the numbers for the Jamaican case opposing integration remained strikingly higher than that of Trinidad. 67% (6 of 9) in that sector in Jamaica said no to integration, while only 20% (2 of 10) in Trinidad existing in the same sector said no. Despite that, evidence in the literature has shown that CARICOM nations have indeed attempted trade and economic collaboration in the form of the CSME.

7.1.3 Trade and Economic Collaboration between CARICOM countries: Transition to CSME

On the inauguration of the CSME Prime Minister of Barbados the Rt. Honourable Owen Arthur said,

Prime Minister Patterson, you must allow me this last opportunity in your presence, on Jamaican soil, in your capacity as Prime Minister of Jamaica, to salute the contribution you have made to Caribbean unity and development. The thirty (30) years you have devoted to the service of the Caribbean integration, dealing with some of its most demanding matters, have not to date been exceeded by any Caribbean citizen, and it is hardly likely to be exceeded by that of any citizen of the future. It is in fact that such monumental efforts can come from a citizen of the Caribbean that gives us the confidence to believe that we can make the CSME work— Rt. Honourable Owen Arthur (Hall and Benn, 2005).

After years of preparatory work, on January 1, 2006, the CSME was formally established and adopted by 12 member countries by year-end: *Belize, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines* (Hall and Benn, 2005). Calling for a formal framework to be in place by 2008, the completion wasn't implemented until 2015.⁸⁸ The CSME was initially proposed by CARICOM in the 1989 declaration of Grand Anse and then formalised in the 2001 Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.⁸⁹ At that time, Belize, Suriname, and Haiti joined CARICOM.

⁸⁸ See the Trade Policy Review published by the Government of Jamaica September 29, 1988. Available at <http://www.nlj.gov.jm/MinistryPapers/Government%20Document%20First%20Edition%20FINAL.pdf> (Accessed July 6, 2018).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

The Revised Treaty also included provisions for new institutions, such as the Caribbean Court of Justice.⁹⁰ In the drive to make the region internationally competitive, the CSME's vision was one of a much deeper economic integration than a single market. The transition to a 'single economy' requires significant new commitments to the consolidation of national policies in support of CARICOM's long-term goals which have so far proved hard to achieve. Distributive issues continued to rekindle debates over controversies around sovereignty, and it was found that without some convergence in economic performance and policy coordination, the CSME was bound to struggle to expand beyond the original intra-regional trade regime (Mohammed, 2008). Specifically, the Revised Treaty proposes to transform CARICOM from a limited trading regime into a common economic space.⁹¹ The plan called for a fully market-oriented approach to the regional economy along with deeper macroeconomic policy coordination, increased harmonisation of functional areas, the free movement of goods, services, investment, and labour, and eventually a currency union. Parts of the scheme were intended to unfold over an extended period of time.

The CSME's objective was to follow an economic 'competitiveness' model, aimed in particular at overcoming the disadvantages of small companies operating in countries facing economic restructuring in the face of declining trade preferences (Ince, 1974). Jamaica implemented the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) as of the first of January 2005, along with Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. Following this, in Jamaica, eligible CARICOM nationals were deemed free to establish farmer's markets as well as wholesale and retail agricultural operations without the need for a work permit and on the same terms and conditions as their Trinidadian counterparts (Hall and Chuck-A-Sang, 2007). However, the goals of the CSME also highlight lingering challenges to deeper integration. These included a high level of reliance on tariff revenues, hindrance of full commitment to the CET, strong resistance to relinquishing national decision-making authority to a regional institution, diverse priorities among countries with high concentrated export sectors in tourism, agriculture, energy along with incongruous macroeconomic policies and economic growth performance. Within CARICOM, developing the institutional, financial, and technical capacity to manage multiple needs in domestic and

⁹⁰ See the Trade Policy Review published by the Government of Jamaica September 29, 1988. Available at <http://www.nlj.gov.jm/MinistryPapers/Government%20Document%20First%20Edition%20FINAL.pdf> (Accessed July 6, 2018).

⁹¹ See the CSME Mission Statement available at <https://caricom.org/our-work/the-caricom-single-market-and-economy-csme/> (Accessed July 7, 2018).

international contexts, even to this day, remains an ongoing challenge. Capital markets are more closely integrated but intra-CARICOM investments remain small. Labour mobility has increased as indicated by my research data findings, but this mobility remains geographically constrained for all but a limited number of certified skilled workers. In a comprehensive analysis of the Caribbean's development prospects, the World Bank identifies five important issues for the CSME: 1) increase productivity 2) expand trade openness 3) improve public investment in infrastructure and education 4) reduce size of government, and 5) maintain macroeconomic stability (Bank, 2005).

Considering the highlighted integration issues, difficulties, and the challenges of cooperation, is it likely that the rise of China in the sub-region has exacerbated the intra-regional relations between these CARICOM nations? Would they see an integrated approach as the best way to deal with China?

7.2 FINDINGS: Is China affecting CARICOM countries' current intra-regional relationship? Elites' perspectives from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago

7.2.1 *The China-CARICOM relationship*

Although the link between China and CARICOM is provided in the form of the China-Caribbean Business Council (CCBC) and China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum (CCF), as previously stated, these cannot be regarded as regional as they are merely institutional. It is important to recall that the partnership that exist between the PRC and CARICOM countries are strictly bilateral in nature. China has no agreement with the regional organisation itself. With that said, since China's increased involvement within the Latin American, Caribbean and CARICOM regions over the past decade, there has been no evidence present that my thesis is aware of, that indicates that China's involvement has any negative or positive bearing on these CARICOM nations' intra-regional relationship. There are, however, concerns that it would be best if CARICOM nations who recognise the 'One China' policy opted for an integrated approach to the East-Asian powerhouse. Again, this sentiment was shared more-so in the case of Trinidad and Tobago and to a lesser extent in Jamaica.

In the Jamaican case, less governmental elites were inclined to integrate when dealing with China (7 of the 10 says no) while more non-governmental elites thought it would be better to integrate on this particular front (8 of the 9 says yes). This resulted in 58% (11 of the 19) saying yes while 42% (8 of the 19) said no. In Trinidad and Tobago, the number remained the same

as those who wanted deeper regional integration as was stated in the previous section. As a result, 90% (19 of the 21) opted for an integrated approach towards China. The total number of interviewees from both country cases that agrees on an integrated approach to China turned out to be 75% (30 of 40).⁹² In the end, those who converged on adopting an integrated approach, mentioned that it should not be just an approach towards China but towards any powerful nation that seeks to interact with countries in the sub-region. In most cases, the US was not exempted from this treatment.

On the other hand, for those opting for a non-integrated approach, outside the strong sense of nationalism, some believe that a singular approach reaps more benefits. (JRG7) surmised it best by affirming that, ‘I don’t know if there will be any benefit of a CARICOM policy towards China because at the end of the day even if there is a CARICOM interface with China, China has an interface with individual countries. Also, the other thing about it is, let’s be very clear, all of the countries are investment hungry, and we are all competing with each other. So, the extent that coming together robs me of an individual benefit is also a consideration, and that’s a consideration that always come up. I remember with Petro-Caribe, that a lot of the countries went into the Petro-Caribe relationship with Venezuela, not to the detriment, but to the execution of Trinidad which is a member nation of CARICOM that is also an English-speaking country’.

The area of concern that elites find to have the potential to further aggravate the process of integration in both cases, is Taiwan’s utter diplomatic isolation in the sub-region. The concern was that this could lead to increased competition for China’s coffers between these nations, thus adding to the division between them. As a result, they would prefer to be allowed to trade in principle with the ‘two Chinas’.

⁹² It should also be noted here that in Barbados and Guyana that held the 3 respondents from the regional organisation, the consensus among them was that integration would be the best option when dealing with China. Though they admitted that CARICOM does not trade as a bloc with any nation they shared the sentiment that an it would be in CARICOM nation’s best interest to adopt an integrated approach when dealing with any powerful nation.

7.2.2 The Diplomatic Isolation of Taiwan: Forced to Pick A Side

China's emergence in the sub-region over the past decade much like the Cold War era, has created a similar condition wherein those CARICOM nations that recognise Taiwan is being wooed away to achieve China's aim of complete ROC diplomatic isolation. According to Erickson and Chen (2007), Beijing's usurping of Taipei's remaining allies in the Community brings the PRC's 'dream of enforcing the global recognition of the "One China" policy one step closer to reality'. The use of dollar diplomacy to achieve this means that those nations who choose to remain with Taiwan, cannot reap the abundance of rewards China is offering those who subscribe to the 'One China' policy. Taiwan, for the most part, has been playing an increasingly important commercial role of a trader, aid provider, and direct investor to some CARICOM nations for decades.⁹³ Economic and aid relations were and still are pillars of Taipei's diplomacy as it relates to CARICOM countries, and is surely a pillar that will collapse if China succeeds in wrangling its 'renegade' province. While this tug-of-war between Beijing and Taipei is ostensibly a rivalry that will favour these economically depressed CARICOM nations, elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago believe that being forced to declare full loyalty to the PRC in order to benefit from China's engagement, is essentially an infringement on their sovereignty and a set-up for increased competition between CARICOM islands. The concern is that they will now be placed in a position where they are no longer wooed by China but instead in them having to now woo the East-Asian powerhouse. Consequently, they would prefer having the freedom to deal with the 'two Chinas' without consequences rather than being placed in a position to essentially 'pick a side':

Well, we know about the China-Taiwan rivalry that is taking place. It is either you are associated with Taiwan, or you are associated with China, but you cannot be associated with both of them. What does this mean for the Caribbean? On one side it means that you have to pick which side you are going to be on, who is going to benefit you more, who is going to give you more and who can take you further as we look into the future. On the other side of it though, you have this tension taking place and it's not like they [China and Taiwan] are giving Caribbean nations that opportunity or the sovereignty to deal with both. Yet we are supposed to say okay. Well, why is it we can't trade with both partners? Why does it have to be either/or? (T&TG3).

⁹³ St. Lucia, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines are among such CARICOM countries. It should be noted that during the course of this investigation the Dominican Republic among these nations but pivoted away from Taipei towards China on April 30, 2018.

There is a genuine concern surrounding the loss of autonomy because your funding is coming from China. And I am in no two minds that if the UWI program were to be funded entirely by China, Taiwan doesn't exist. The dilemma doesn't exist. It would mean one China, which means Tiananmen Square doesn't exist if China is my funding stream. That is not right that we are placed in this position (T&TN16).

I will go back to the Cold War a little bit because we were in a situation where it was either the west or the east. That's where we found ourselves. So, you were either against or for, one or the other. The Taiwan and China question is similar, and to me, it's a false narrative because both Taiwan and China are asking you to choose, it's either them or us. And as a region I think we need to insist that it doesn't necessarily have to be China or Taiwan, because Taiwan is also a vital economy in the world, they are not as important as China, but they are important, nonetheless. And as countries who have to fight for self-determination, we understand what the struggle is. I think that's why countries like Saint Vincent have not switch because they see it as adopting a very principled foreign policy stance, that we are standing with you because you are seeking self-determination and we support that. We support your independence (JRG7).

I have no doubt China will win this diplomatic war against Taiwan. Truth is Taiwan does not have as much to offer. But what that means for us is that now we all have to compete for China's attention. So, we'll be fighting against each other even more to capture China's attention. I am telling you, if Taiwan loses entirely, we are going to be affected (JN13).

Since Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago maintained diplomatic ties with China from 1972 and 1974 respectively, it would seem somewhat strange that the above-mentioned rhetoric are sentiments shared by elites in both countries. So, why is this? My research was able to uncover that these nations want to maintain a similar political condition that existed throughout the Cold War era. Much like the Cold War era, CARICOM nations aim to play the 'two Chinas' off each other so as to negotiate for preferential trade, financial and other assistance. For the elites of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, having Taiwan as a thorn in China's side ensures that China will continue its benevolence towards these nations until the issue of double recognition is put to bed. An issue they hope will never be resolved. (T&TG6) affirms this by contending,

The implications are to me again right for opportunity, because then, you can have countries that are aggressively negotiating for benefits from China and countries that are aggressively negotiating for benefits from Taiwan, and both China and Taiwan recognise how important it is to say yes because they recognise that one can be used against the other. So, we talked about China as a counterbalance to the US, China is a counterbalance to Taiwan, and Taiwan is a counterbalance to China, and that's our opportunity as well. So, it's like a smaller asymmetrical relationship inside of the larger East-West-South (T&TG6).

It is this tactic of maintaining the danger of a possibility of switching allegiance that feeds back into Bell's and Waltz's theories, as mentioned in chapter 3. China is aggressive in its diplomatic isolation of Taiwan presenting a more powerful influence and a wealthier approach, which means Waltz was correct in maintaining that these small nations will more likely bandwagon with an aggressive great power than balance against it. Likewise, this rhetoric from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites proved Bell's theory regarding small nations being in a constant search for new alliances within which their interests can be served. *Table 11* below illustrates from both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' perspective, how many of its elites wish to have the ability to bargain with both China and Taiwan.

Table 11: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites on having the ability to bargain with both China and Taiwan

Source: Prepared by the author from interview data

	Governmental	Non-Governmental	Total
We should be able to engage with both China and Taiwan	Jamaica: 7 out of 10	Jamaica: 7 out of 9	Jamaica: 14 out of 19
	Trinidad & Tobago: 8 out of 11	Trinidad & Tobago: 7 out of 10	Trinidad & Tobago: 15 out of 21
We need to just engage with China	Jamaica: 3 out of 10	Jamaica: 2 out of 9	Jamaica: 5 out of 19
	Trinidad & Tobago: 3 out of 11	Trinidad & Tobago: 3 out of 10	Trinidad & Tobago: 6 out of 21

Outside the concern of being forced to pick a side and the implications that might present, there was no other perceived impact that China could have had on the sub-region's intra-regional relationships. However, regional shortcomings perceived by participants in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago that has nothing to do with the emergence of China in the Community, was attributed to having a direct and immediate adverse effect on the region's intra-regional political and economic system:

The Caribbean ought to think beyond CARICOM to identify joint areas of cooperation with Latin America and leverage its strategic interest to build our economies (JG6).

We don't stand for a policy or vote against one based on policy reasons in CARICOM. Instead, we vote on what is economically beneficial, thus giving away things without considering the long-term impact of it. We sell thousands of hectares of land in a region where land is like gold. We give things away and then we purchase it back at such high premium without even asking why we can't just build our own factories? (T&TG2).

I can never understand how it is that some of the biggest markets are literally next door to us, and we have very little engagement with them. Latin America is our neighbour yet look at who is trading with them more? China. All the way from the other side of the world while we are here stretching out our hand for aid. With CARICOM countries, we are stuck in that dependency mindset (JN17).

Respondents in both country cases, as well as the ones existing outside, converged on issues surrounding regional shortcomings as the main reason for the lack of regional integration:

We have individual countries who are foregoing what the benefit of regional integration is and forging ahead in terms of what is best as an individual state. So, we will always be in a position of loss (GRG1).

Well at the end of the day, if you are trading individually, you are not a regional bloc which can benefit all states as opposed to some individual states. And I mean with the way things are situated, we are better off being regionally integrated as opposed to being separate. However, I don't think that most Caribbean countries are at that point where they can think about everyone as opposed to just themselves (T&TG6).

I don't think CARICOM nations are interested at this stage because CARICOM nations don't trade with no one in the world as a bloc. Almost all of their trade is still bilateral, and it has to do with the same weaknesses we have in CARICOM with regard to the CSME's function. Such issues would have to be dealt with (BRG1).

All we talk about is our smallness and that is a wrong perspective. That is the perspective that feeds into the real China threat. The real China threat is that they have come, and they have gotten exactly what they wanted, and now we are no better off. I doubt we ever knew what they wanted, but whatever it is, they have it and we're still here focusing on who our next benefactor is going to be. That is a real threat (T&TG6).

Well like Doctor Eric Williams, the first Prime Minister of Trinidad said, I believe that a United Caribbean is a powerful force to reckon with. A United Caribbean is a virtual wall that will even protect America, but we are so petty, and there is so much inside fighting. In Williams' days when there was the Federation, I think all of the Prime Minister pulled out and then say 1 from 10 is zero. It shows that we as Caribbean people are still highly distrustful. And another Trinidadian prime minister told who it was; I think it was Jamaica, that Trinidad is not an ATM [Automated Teller Machine] (T&TG3).

The issue is what have we always had that they saw, and they've come and gotten for free because we didn't recognise that there was a value that we should have attached it? What have we given away so cheaply that they are laughing all the way to the bank right now and we are still wondering what just happened? What are some of the things that we have given away that we never put a price on? Even our sovereignty, we flip, and we flop on our sovereignty issues (JG4).

I know the late Patrick Manning had laid out a plan for vision 2020 it was like a 15-year plan or something like that to move us to developed nation status. That's the longest vision I have ever heard of. 15 years. I never hear any Caribbean leaders staying for more than 15 years. No, in 5 years we go back to the polls, and so that is how we live. It's like a man who has no ambition. He will wake up in the morning and live his life until he has to sleep at night. If he wins \$1,000,000 during the day, by night come, he will spend the million dollars because he's not planning for tomorrow. Caribbean leaders are exactly like that in that sense (T&TN15).

It is quite evident that effective integration remains a challenge for CARICOM nations, but when asked explicitly what implications the emergence of China has had on the intra-regional system of the region, in both cases all participants admitted that they could not conceive of any, outside the given concern regarding Taiwan's complete isolation. My research finds that intra-regional issues are more of an internal concern than an external one for these interviewees. The question of the role of China in its inter-regional relations, however, was a completely different case as discussed further in chapter 8.

7.3 Conclusion

Although there is a genuine concern about China's success in diplomatically isolating Taiwan in the region, which could result in a turning of tables where CARICOM nations will now have to woo China for investments; the lack of deeper integration and the need for CARICOM governments to maintain power were found to be contributing factors inhibiting intra-regional trade growth. The public fear of migrants that has contributed to the rhetoric of 'coming to take our jobs' and the inability to see beyond the fact that deeper integration does not mean a loss of sovereignty, are the real causes for anaemic cooperation and deficient integration practises among these CARICOM nations. While the plan for a fully market-oriented approach to the regional economy has been adopted and has taken the form of the CSME, there are lingering challenges to deeper integration such as high tariff revenue, hindrance of full commitment to the CET and strong resistance to surrendering national decision-making authority to a regional institution that still plagues CARICOM nations. My research findings show that these regional

shortcomings had more bearings on intra-regional relationships than China's emergence in the Community.

Chapter Eight: China's impact on CARICOM countries' Inter-regional relationships (US & EU)

Within a relatively short period of time following on the heels of the strengthening of China's economy, a foray of attention was paid (Ikenberry, 2008, Lotta, 2009, Golley and Song, 2011, Shambaugh, 2013, Dollar, 2015) particularly to China in the studies of rising power and global power transitions. Morrison (2013) established that since the 1990s China was boasting one of the world's fastest-growing economies, an achievement that Bachman and Bachman (2006) refers to as the nation's 'great leap forward'. Growing at an exponential rate of double-digit percentages over the past decade, Kuwayama and Rosales (2012) contend that it wasn't until recently, that China was set on maintaining a small Outward Foreign Direct Investment (OFDI) portfolio. It was, however, the early 21st century that China's rapid emergence, growth and openness made it a key player in the global arena (Zhang, 2005). Since then, researchers (Dittmer and George, 2010, Maxwell, 2014, Lanteigne, 2015) argued that China's position is that of 'an alternative' for developing nations. This means an alternative in the form of a new trading partner including that of aid and investment wherein the US's influence in these regions may be undermined for years to come (Locatelli, 2011). Other arguments such as that of (Sörensen, 2010) points out that, China is also a trading partner that does not have the strings of 'liberalisation' or 'good governance' attached to it, like that of the Washington Consensus. China's message, instead, is that it is also a developing nation seeking to help countries like itself. This has created the idea of a shared purpose and camaraderie with other developing nations (Quarterly, 2012). It is for such reason that it is argued that though the US still remains the preferred economic partner of especially CARICOM nations, their market share in the region since China's rise, has witnessed a marked decline. China's finance has instead grown and overtaken the region's main influencer since its rise in the Community.

Though such findings are well evidenced, what is investigated to a lesser extent is the perspectives of CARICOM nations' elites on the emergence of the PRC in the Community. My research found that elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago believed that China's motive for engaging with them have moved beyond just the need for raw materials and the 'Taiwan factor', to now involve the use of the sub-region's geostrategic location to mostly undermine the US's hegemonic influence in the Caribbean. It is a situation these leaders fear might create a backlash for CARICOM. This chapter looks at the perceived impact of China's emergence

on traditional partners such as the US and the EU. It examines the US's and EU's foreign policy towards CARICOM nations before the rise of China and whether policies towards these nations have shifted since China's rise. It also examines the evolution, as well as, possible devolution of foreign policy towards these nations since the implementation of the Trump Administration and the announcement of Brexit from the EU. The chapter moves into providing an overview as to whether China is contesting the US in the region and the challenges and opportunities elites from both country cases perceive this will bring. This section of the chapter closes by looking at whether elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago would be willing to accept China as the new hegemonic influencer. Following a similar format, the next section looks at whether China has had any impact on these nations' relationship with the EU since its emergence and ends with elite's perspective of these impacts—if any—and final thoughts of their nations' position in the shadow of Brexit. The perspectives are garnered to not only situate these within these nations' development model as discussed in previous chapters, but also to answer the overarching research question.

8.1 US's foreign policy towards CARICOM nations: Before the rise of China in the sub-region

The Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), established in 1983, was a unique programme geared towards Caribbean development by the US government. The core of the initiative entailed what was known as the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA) which much like China's 'going out' policy, encouraged CBI enterprises to bolster their production and sought penetration of the US market. Not only that, but the programme also provided developmental aid to the private sector as well a duty-free access for manufactured and agricultural goods that could be sold in American markets (Schrunk, 2008). This was viewed as a legal preferential instrument seeing that the US was confined to offer such preferences only to nations⁹⁴ falling within the CBI. With its foundation stemming from the Reagan Administration, the intent was to positively influence these nations' trade flows especially in the area of textile and apparels. Merchandise exported to America from these nations must always consist of '15 per cent US content' (Webb, 1997) which would result in their tariff-free access. However, the unilateral offer, was not able to bring about export diversification and as a result, the US moved to bolster the Initiative with FDI and infrastructure development. Reserved only for countries in the

⁹⁴ These nations include Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Aruba, St. Lucia, Bahamas, Barbados, Montserrat, Costa Rica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Belize, Panama, Netherland Antilles, Guyana, British Virgin Islands, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Grenada.

Caribbean not possessing a communist political system, the region export to the US remained quite significant, totalling over 50% (Abbott, 2005) and covering approximately 0.5% of the US's imports in 2012.⁹⁵ Benefits are provided on conditions, and as a result, the President can at any time choose to inhibit or suspend treatment received by beneficiaries if such conditions are not met. These include infringement on workers laws or intellectual property rights. As a result, failure to fulfil the criteria always culminated in compliance in the end. Ingco and sh (2004) maintains that the case of Guatemala provides an excellent example of non-adherence to criteria which ultimately gave way to compliance. They establish that 'in mid-2000, the US government conducted an extensive review of each beneficiary country. It suspended its review of Guatemala's labour practices [and] in May 2001, the Guatemalan government passed important labour law reforms' (Ingco and sh, 2004).

Similarly, there is a condition relating to the withdrawal of preferences that can potentially cause CARICOM to lose eligibility due to being members engaging in Free Trade Agreements (FTA). A specific criterion states that any country that 'affords preferential treatment to the products of a developed country, other than the United States, which has, or is likely to have, a significant adverse effect on the United States commerce...' ⁹⁶ will be deemed an ineligible beneficiary. However, the European Partnership Agreements (EPA) does provide preferential treatment to these nations that could easily be seen as a breach of this criterion. The US, however, is yet to hold this against these CARICOM nations. If viewed as a breach, CARICOM nations would no longer be able to benefit from the CBI and their exports would be adversely affected. To date, none of these nations has been disqualified as a beneficiary.

The Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA)

The Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act signed into law in 2000 and amended in 2002, extended additional benefits to commodities that were previously not covered under the CBERA. These included, leather-based apparel, watches, petroleum products and footwear (Commission, 1997). Under the previous CBERA programme, these commodities were prone

⁹⁵ See the Tenth Report to Congress on the Operation of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act. Published December 31, 2013. Available at: <https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/CBERA%20Report%20Final.pdf> (Accessed July 16, 2018).

⁹⁶ See the Office of the United States Trade Representative Report: Request for Comments on Operation of the Caribbean Basin Initiative. Published April 5, 2010. Available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2010/04/05/2010-7513/trade-policy-staff-committee-public-comments-regarding-granting-suriname-eligibility-for-benefits> (Accessed July 16, 2018).

to positive duty rates. Set to expire in September 2008, the intention of the United States' towards nations falling under the partnership was to afford them benefits until a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was formed with the hegemon (Hornbeck, 2010). Although eligibility for CBTPA was extended to all those who also fell under CBERA (Hornbeck, 2010), several CARICOM nations failed to fulfil their criteria for eligibility. The United States International Trade Commission (USITC) maintains that to benefit from CBTPA, both a fulfilment of CBERA criteria plus that of US's custom laws, need to be met. Of the 26⁹⁷ countries in the regional bloc only 7 satisfied both requirements: Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Haiti, Guyana, St. Lucia and Belize.⁹⁸ For those fulfilling the criteria, CBTPA afforded them an unlimited duty-free access on imports including preferential access to regionally produced apparels. Since its set expiry date of September 30, 2008, several attempts have been made to get the Act extended. This was not achieved until 2012.

All of these programmes, acts, initiatives and agreements geared at the Community by the US is an attempt to ensure the security of what Hannigan (2013) describes as the hegemon's 'centre of gravity' which represents for it, an area of 'wealth and greatness'. Control and access to the region's transshipment lanes and waterways gave the US a launchpad to pivot its interest beyond North America and into the Pacific. On top of all its programmes and initiatives geared towards economic stability for these nations, along with a continued rule of democracy, the US has ensured that it also maintained a military presence in the Caribbean through the set-up of bases in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Hannigan (2013) affirms that this was done to ensure that no external or greater power was 'invited by locals to play a greater role in the region'. As a result, each administration sought to follow through with policies that illustrated to Caribbean leaders what their expected behaviour should be in this regard. However, if this was the case, how did China come to have such a strong foothold in the Community? And what did the US do to try to put its 'backyard' back in line?

⁹⁷ Inclusive of active members, associate members and observer members.

⁹⁸ See U.S. International Trade Commission, *The Impact of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act*, 19th Report 2007-2008, Inv. 332-227. Dane Publishing. pg.1-15.

8.1.1 US's foreign policy towards CARICOM nations: After the rise of China in the sub-region

The George W. Bush Administration

When China started its rapid rise in the CARICOM in 2005, the Bush Administration was at the helm of US's foreign policy. Previous to this in 1994, at the first Summit of the Americas, President Clinton had declared relations between Washington and the region as a 'partnership for prosperity' (LeoGrande, 2007), after having continued to successfully stave off, like many of his predecessors, any major powers from planting a foothold in the region. However, when the Bush Administration was implemented, it struggled tremendously with moving forward with the promise of an increase in trade and not just aid. This surprised many leaders in the region, seeing that the President during his campaign, criticised the Clinton Administration for neglecting the region (Valenzuela, 2004). By the time the wars of Afghanistan and Iraq rolled around, the President became so engrossed with issues in the Middle East that the matters of the region was placed in the hands of 'conservative cold warriors', who reduced US's bilateral assistance to the region, cutting it by a third in 2005 (LeoGrande, 2007). Additionally, exports to the United States from the region fell, especially for the Bahamas and Haiti, while exports from the United States to the region increased, moving from \$8.9 bn. in 2001 to \$10.1 bn. 2004 (Sullivan, 2005).

Still, the Community being as important as it was, could not be left entirely neglected and so Bush implemented what was known as the Third Border Initiative (TBI) to improve areas of health, economy, diplomacy, security and education in the region (Bacchetta et al., 2018). The lion's share of the funding under the TBI was to be used to battle the issue of HIV/AIDS in the region (Sullivan, 2005). However, following the 9/11 attacks, the matter of the region's potential vulnerability as it relates to the US's security became the prominent concern under the Initiative. On this account, the TBI was extended to focus on the intensification of security and justice 'and the adoption of anti-terrorist resolutions and legislations in the Caribbean' (Bacchetta et al., 2018). The Initiative, therefore, extended to include Economic Support Funds (ESF) to boost these nations' airport security, strengthen immigration control and to implement stringent measures surrounding maritime regulations (Sullivan, 2005). These security measures extended to these nations' ports and so the introduction of the Nelson Bill came about in 2005, which aided in anti-terrorism regulations at port entries (Linket, 2001). Nevertheless, with this preoccupation with security, the Bush Administration was not too concerned about China's rise

in the region. As much as there were talks of the ‘China threat theory’ making its way into policy debates and academic discussions, the Bush Administration affirmed, that it did not view China as a threat but instead a ‘strategic competitor’ (Al-Rodhan, 2007). As a result, seeing that the PRC was picking up the slack in areas of investments geared towards development and economic rejuvenation with which the US was not too concerned, the East-Asian giant was left uncontested. During this time, what the Bush Administration failed to realise, was that the architecture of security when it comes to the region was also hinged on its developmental needs (Ward, 2010).

The Obama Administration

While Bush’s Administration was about securing the United States through its ‘third border’, Obama’s policy towards the Caribbean was one of partnership geared towards humanitarian assistance and development (Johnson, 2013). With their economies taking a hard hit with the onset of the 2008 financial crisis, external debts rose, and unemployment hit an all-time high of 14% in nations in the region (Bernal, 2013).⁹⁹ At this point, the Obama Administration saw it best to reset US’s policy towards the Community. The rhetoric now became one surrounding partnership to bolster investments and strengthen fiscal institutions. Recognising the distinct differences between economies in the region, the Obama Administration shifted its approach by first taking responsibility of US’s role in some of the issues such as drugs and illegal arms that plague these nations, and moved to implement tailored approaches as opposed to a general regional approach towards high risk issues (Lowenthal et al., 2009). His pronouncement in Port of Spain Trinidad when he declared, his intention to ‘develop a new relationship without senior and junior partners’ (Lowenthal et al., 2009), allowed his stance on the Community to be seen as one that was different to those who came before.

The framework for US’s policy towards the region rested on four pillars: a) advancing financial and social opportunity, b) guaranteeing citizen security, c) reinforcing viable foundations of fair governance and d) verifying a sustainable energy future (Sullivan et al., 2012). Following this framework, the Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN) was launched with the objective to encourage trade of data among nations on social approaches, encounters, projects, and best practices tailored to decrease social incongruities and disparities as well as to lessen

⁹⁹ See Bernal, R., A Caribbean Policy for the Trump Administration. Published April 13, 2017. Available at: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/caribbean-policy-trump-administration> (Accessed May 17, 2019).

severe destitution (e Silva, 2017). On its heels came the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECP) which fostered partnerships with all nations in the Western hemisphere on the issue of renewable energy and climate mitigation (Nilsson and Gustafsson, 2012). Not only that, but Obama sought to increase development assistance to the region. For example, the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) which was a collaborative programme implemented to solve the region's drug and gang issues (Perkins and Nealer, 2016) was allotted \$362 million from 2008-2011 (Sullivan et al., 2012). While the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBI) whose objective is to strengthen maritime regulations and information sharing (Schaefer et al., 2009) was allotted \$139 million from 2010-2011 (Sullivan et al., 2012). The Administration's aim was maximum support for the region in an attempt to reverse the policy of neglect (Akram, 2017).

However, despite Obama's efforts to engage the region on a more collaborative and multilateral level, the neglect to 'contain' China's engagement with the region from the Bush-era seemed impractical despite policymakers under the regime, calling for a close eye on the PRC. The worry was that China would seek to change the power balance in the world, thus undermining the US as a hegemon (Al-Rodhan, 2007). However, containing China would not have been easy, for, at that point, the PRC was too much of an important trading partner to the United States for it not to accept China's promise of a peaceful rise in its backyard. President Obama himself affirms that 'the relationship between the United States and China is the most important bilateral relationship of the 21st century' and later at the G-7 and G-20 Summits expressed that 'the United States welcomes the rise of China' (Li, 2016a).

Evidently possessing such a complex relationship that requires many checks and balances meant that it was in the best interest for both nations, especially the United States, to avoid a military confrontation. Although publicly the Obama Administration seemed to be welcoming of China's rise in its backyard, it was certainly far from comfortable with the possibility of the implications that might arise from its engagement with nations in the region. Li (2016a) maintains that this distrust of China was not emanating from Obama himself, citing the President's promotion of policies geared towards global peace. However, although not entirely distrustful of the PRC, the President wanted to ensure that countries in the Community were cautious in their dealings with the East-Asian powerhouse. This was evident in his visit to Jamaica at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in 2015 where he was asked about China's rise in the US's backyard. He cautioned the island by stating:

Now, with respect to Chinese investment in the Caribbean or in the Americas, in the Western Hemisphere, my response is the same one that I gave when I was asked this question in Africa, which is, if China is making investments that are building up infrastructure, or improving education, or helping the people, then we welcome that. We think that's great. The only thing is you got to make sure you look at what strings may be attached. If the investments are made, and it's solely to build a road to a mine, to extract raw materials that are going to be immediately sent to a port and shipped to China, and if Chinese workers are shipped in to build the road and if you don't know exactly what the deal was with the government that led to China getting the contract, in those situations, it may not be, in fact, serving the long-term interests of the country—President Obama¹⁰⁰

Since then, China has ramped up its activities in the region, promising these nations economic prosperity in exchange for their geostrategic location.

8.1.2 China contesting the US in the sub-region



The Trump Administration

Today, US's attitude towards China is very different from that of the Bush and Obama era wherein China was seen as a competitor whose peaceful rise was welcomed. With China's engagement now consisting of a military dimension, the US have started to argue that China is too close to its third border. As a result, the United States-Caribbean Strategic Enhancement Act of 2016 came into effect covering the areas of a) security (fighting terrorist organisations

¹⁰⁰ See: The White House Office of the Press Secretary Release: Remarks by President Obama in Town Hall with Young Leaders of the Americas. Published April 09, 2015. Available at: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/04/09/remarks-president-obama-town-hall-young-leaders-americas> (Accessed May 11, 2019).

and ensuring citizen security) b) enhancing engagement between the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the United Nations (UN) c) promotion of economic development and private sector advancement d) renewable energy e) promoting the exchange of students, teachers and professionals and f) eradication of diseases.¹⁰¹ Additionally, the CBSI was granted a total of \$115.4 million from 2017-2018 and \$23 million for relief effort towards hurricane Irma which devastated nations such as St. Kitts, Bahamas, Antigua and Barbuda and Dominica in 2017.¹⁰²

Later on, in February 2018, the Trump Administration put forth its policy towards the region which rested on three columns: democratic governance, financial development and security.¹⁰³ Although this was a build on from previous administrations' policies towards the region, the policies not only did not seem in keeping with Trump's rhetoric on the region, but its budget for foreign aid also conflicted with such policies. Sullivan (2019) maintains that the foreign aid budget towards CARICOM from 2018-2019 was cut by a third with a proposed further reduction of 30% by 2020 which would have brought it to the lowest it has ever been.¹⁰⁴ This contradiction between policy and rhetoric created a turbo charged China's engagement in the sub-region, which in turn enabled the extension of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to these CARICOM nations.

A Belt for the Community and a Road through its Plaza: The rise of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the Caribbean Community



Caribbean Nations that have signed on to China's BRI¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ See: The Congressional Research Service Report by Sullivan, M. et al., Latin America and the Caribbean: Issues in the 115th Congress. Published October 4, 2018. Available at: <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=817565> (Accessed June 2, 2019).

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ See: The Congressional Research Service Report by Sullivan, M., Latin America and the Caribbean: U.S. Policy Overview. Published March 28, 2019. Available at: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/IF10460.pdf> (Accessed June 2, 2019).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ See Devonshire-Ellis, C., China's Belt & Road—The Caribbean & West Indies. Published by the Silk Road Briefing on May 24, 2019. Available at: <https://www.silkroadbriefing.com/news/2019/05/24/chinas-belt-road-caribbean-west-indies/> (Accessed September 29, 2019).

On May 14, 2018, Trinidad and Tobago became the first CARICOM nation to sign on to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)¹⁰⁶ and was since, thereafter, followed by Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Suriname, Barbados, Grenada, Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana, Dominica and Cuba. A strategy towards global advancement adopted by China, the BRI focuses on the areas of infrastructure investments, enhancement of developmental policies, promotion of education through social and cultural exchanges, strengthening of trade relations and the development of sustainable power grids (Johnston, 2019). Seen as the launch corridor of China, the BRI is deemed as the PRC's latest attempt to undermine the US's influence in the region. Nations in the region coming under the Initiative were granted a \$600 million loan to upgrade their power grids¹⁰⁷ as well as President Xi Jinping's promise of his nation's commitment to advance these islands' socio-economic development.¹⁰⁸

Pushing back against this move, former American Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson before his visit to the region, affirms that the Community 'does not need new imperial powers that seek only to benefit their own people' while further maintaining that the Munroe Doctrine which affords the US all rights over the region, still stands.¹⁰⁹ However, the US has cut its aid assistance to nations in the sub-region and championing its 'America First' slogan has left CARICOM nations with no choice but to turn to China. The sentiment is best expressed by President Granger of Guyana who maintains that 'we [CARICOM nations] cannot develop without infrastructure and we just do not have the capital to do it on our own. So, whether it comes from America, China or Britain, we have to have it, and of course, we have to look for the best deal'.¹¹⁰ China being the region's largest investor and creditor with its recent BRI move, received nothing but positive utterances from the Community's leaders. They, in turn, pledged to the PRC that not only will they offer Beijing their 'government's full collaboration

¹⁰⁶ This was not surprising since it came up in the interview that this was one of the nation's reason for aligning with China (*See Chapter 7*).

¹⁰⁷ See Devonshire-Ellis, C., China's Belt & Road—The Caribbean & West Indies. Published by the Silk Road Briefing on May 24, 2019. Available at: <https://www.silkroadbriefing.com/news/2019/05/24/chinas-belt-road-caribbean-west-indies/> (Accessed September 29, 2019).

¹⁰⁸ See the Caribbean Council's Report: China's Rapidly Advancing Caribbean Role. Available at: <https://www.caribbean-council.org/chinas-rapidly-advancing-caribbean-role/> (Accessed October 2, 2019).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ See Ward J., Caribbean Countries turn to China's Belt and Road. Published by the East Asia Forum on July 23, 2019. Available at: <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2019/07/23/caribbean-countries-turn-to-chinas-belt-and-road/> (Accessed September 30, 2019).

with China in the implementation of this ground-breaking Initiative’ but also maintained that they ‘will not let this unique opportunity slip from [their] grasp’.¹¹¹

In a show of good faith in trumpeting China’s BRI, Jamaica secured talks of investment for its manufacturing and logistics hubs, while Trinidad and Tobago secured promises to finance its industrial parks and tourism sector.¹¹² The worry, however, for policymakers in the US, is not the flurry of investments that the BRI brings, but also the increased influence and foothold it will afford China. Ward (2019) maintains that nations in the sub-region have become landmarks for new discoveries of bauxite and petroleum. Citing for example, that Guyana has only recently emerged as a soon-to-be oil producer, after 4 billion barrels of the substance was discovered off its coast, 25% of which belongs to The China National Offshore Oil Corporation.¹¹³ Notwithstanding that, China’s investment into Panama totalling \$268 million has seen the expansion of the Panama Canal with not only the capabilities of accommodating large ships ‘carrying up to 13,000 containers’ but also, provides a medium for the BRI to connect to North, South and Central America (Peery, 2018). This illustrates that there are already some dramatic geopolitical shifts underway. R. Evan Ellis who is a Professor of Latin American Studies at the US Army War College, maintains that in so doing, not only is China rethreading the world, but it is ensuring that it has secured a genuine political footing through these ventures in every one of these nations (Belt and Road News, 2019).¹¹⁴

Since then, the United States have scrambled to remedy the situation with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, warning nations in the region of the corrosive nature of China’s investments, stating that they fuel corruption and undermine good governance.¹¹⁵ While Trump, in turn, called for a meeting with the Prime Ministers of Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St. Lucia

¹¹¹ See Devonshire-Ellis, C., China’s Belt & Road—The Caribbean & West Indies. Published by the Silk Road Briefing on May 24, 2019. Available at: <https://www.silkroadbriefing.com/news/2019/05/24/chinas-belt-road-caribbean-west-indies/> (Accessed September 29, 2019).

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ See Ward J., Caribbean Countries turn to China’s Belt and Road. Published by the East Asia Forum on July 23, 2019. Available at: <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2019/07/23/caribbean-countries-turn-to-chinas-belt-and-road/> (Accessed September 30, 2019).

¹¹⁴ See Belt and Road News Article: Caribbean Islands Becoming Hotspots for Chinese Investments. Published March 27, 2019. Available at: <https://www.beltandroad.news/2019/03/27/caribbean-islands-becoming-hot-spots-for-chinese-investment/> (Accessed October 4, 2019).

¹¹⁵ See the Caribbean Council’s Report: Jamaica joins China’s belt and road initiative. Available at: <https://www.caribbean-council.org/jamaica-joins-chinas-belt-and-road-initiative/> (Accessed October 2, 2019).

and Bahamas to discuss matters on trade and security (The Jamaica Gleaner, 2019).¹¹⁶ It is evident that the US is now taking China's presence on its doorstep a little more seriously. The question is, however, is it too late? After all, the importance of the gains that can be reaped from the dragon being a thorn in the talons of the Eagle is not lost on CARICOM nations such as Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, as it is with the Taiwan-China case. Likewise, it's not lost on them, the chaos it could cause for both their nations and the region if the US gets frustrated with China being so close to home.

8.2 FINDINGS: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites on China's challenge of the US hegemony in the region

The issue of China's challenge to the US hegemon and whether America does indeed view the East-Asian powerhouse as a threat, has always dominated debates and discussions by mostly those in Washington and Beijing. The first task of divulging Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' outlook on China's challenge to the US hegemon called for an examination of their perception around the notion of hegemony and the rise of a new one in the international system, as well as, whether they believe the US is concerned/uneasy about the phenomena:

Well, the United States often has narratives about the Chinese threat, and they want to limit Chinese expansion, and they're trying to use Taiwan and Japan as a counterweight. The United States is vested in maintaining the status quo but then any power that is at the top would want stability. I guess it's like a microcosm of how individuals are. For example, you can always tell what side a politician is on if you listen to their narrative. Politicians who want law and order and stability are generally those who are going to gain the most by having law, order and stability. Theoretically, that should be everyone but those with the most to lose are those at the top of the system. Political leaders, especially in our Caribbean context, who are clamouring for people to cry out and not to accept this and vote, are those who are vested in interrupting the status quo in the search of sanctions that will benefit them. And that's something going on globally (T&TG3).

The US, of course, will be concerned and have all right to be because they don't want the interruption of the status quo. However, that to me doesn't represent a threat, it just represents their desire to hold on to the power that they have in a declining hegemonic space, that they can no longer afford to accept. And I think that is part of the challenge they can't afford to maintain it (JG3).

¹¹⁶ See: The Jamaica Gleaner Article: Trump to meet with Holness and C'bean Leaders. Published on March 20, 2019. Available at: <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20190320/trump-meet-holness-cbean-leaders> (Accessed October 7, 2019).

Although majority of the respondents argued that the US is indeed concerned about China's rise in the region, they were more so of the perception that China's rise as a hegemon would not be a peaceful one:

If you are talking about China's rise, it will be similar to what Donald Trump said about fury and whatever the likes that the world has never seen. So, even if the world is willing to accept China, those transitions won't happen peacefully. There has been no change in the global order that has happened peacefully as far as I remember. From the Dutch Empire to the Spanish Empire (T&TG6).

The world accepts the Dutch, and it wasn't an issue of are you willing to accept it? The issue is, can you fight them? War determines global power. The United States won after Europe was economically bankrupt at the end of the Second World War, and they had infrastructure and military might that the Europeans didn't. Since then their military has continued to expand, and they've shown that they are willing to use it. For example, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. War is what changes global order at least in our current context, and of course it's entirely possible that there could be a peaceful transition from one to the other by a decline of one in terms of economic resources or some other means. But I don't see how China could rise outside the context of war (JG2).

These views are in keeping with Graham Allison's argument surrounding the Thucydides Trap which maintains that 'when one great power threatens to displace another, war is almost always the result' (Allison, 2017). For Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites, their perception is that this is particularly true given the current situation. For them, like Graham, if China seeks to rise as a hegemon on the international arena, it will be a 'Trap' neither the PRC nor America can avoid. This has prompted elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago to ponder upon the possibility of all the outcomes if such an event were to occur. For now, despite China's growing influence in the sub-region, the United States for the moment remains the dominant actor. On a whole, given the perception of war to secure world dominion, respondents showed more concerns around the challenges as opposed to the opportunities, that might befall the sub-region if America were to deem China a threat. The majority felt that in this regard, China as a threat would not only apply to the US but also CARICOM nations:

It's like a psychological threat more than a physical one in a number of cases. Although it will impact a number of businesses which is massive, and in the case of Trinidad at least we have had, for some time, the preservation of oil—but what about the rest of the Caribbean? Yes, the US can destroy this area very easily and is China willing to purchase from us? I don't know that they are. China is vested in exporting their products. So, I don't know that we are in a place to withstand a US backlash, but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't try to continue to seek our own interest East and West (T&TN15).

I don't know that we see it as an opportunity. I think we have mixed reactions to it. I think we see it as a threat as well in some cases because we have a lot vested in trade agreements with the US as well as certain kind of funding, grants, technical support, aid and joint security operations. The whole gamut (JN13).

Well absolutely! This is a risky game. What will happen for instance if the Chinese are giving us grants and loans in some areas for certain kinds of infrastructure projects and other kinds of technical cooperation, and the US were to say you know what, this relationship here that you all have with China, if you all continue that we will cut off certain kind of support. At the end of the day, the US still maintains a structural advantage in terms of the architecture of foreign relations with the Caribbean that's stronger than that which we have with China (T&TG3).

If it comes down to a battle between China and the US, and you have to get all of the other nations involved, then I think China is going to say well okay we have been supporting so many Caribbean countries, so you have to be on our side. That would now place us in a very compromising situation and so China would not only be a threat to them [US] but also to us. The backlash coming off such an event would be catastrophic for us (JN14).

We have a number of things that would be destabilised. So, China wouldn't be just a threat to the US it would play out as a threat to us too. And then of course you have the fact that leaders are vested in the preservation of US relationships, and not to oversimplify but most of our leaders themselves have been educated and raised in an era where the US, UK and Canada, are all places viewed with a certain amount of reverence. As a result, they don't want to lose a connection with their own sense of privilege (JG4).

I found that 80% of the total respondents in both country cases in their response to question 9, argued that China was indeed a threat to the US, and that there could be serious backlash to the region if the US considered the PRC as such. This backlash, they argue, could come in the form of a) the US blacklisting the Caribbean, b) no more loans and grants from the US, c) rising unemployment in CARICOM nations, d) a disturbance to export flows from the region e) trade wars and f) rising tensions between Caribbean countries and the US. According to (GRG1), a hegemonic war between the two dominant economies would mean for CARICOM nations, 'a Cold War with more heat'. Nevertheless, some of the participants maintain that China is not a threat to the US and that China's presence in the sub-region should be something America welcomes and instead of fear:

China is not new. The ongoing increase in its presence is not unprecedented. So, then it's this sort of continuation that people are probably using when they think about threats or partners or geographies of power and alliances. So, this is my long way of saying that no, I don't think that China is or even should be viewed as a threat to the US (T&TG2).

No, I don't think so. If that was the case, then a lot of countries would have pulled away from partnering with China. We have seen a lot of partnership coming out between China and several countries. So, I would say no (JG6).

When the Chinese come and start taking the form of setting up a nuclear plant, for example, as the Russians wanted to do in Cuba, that's a big difference. It would become an act of aggression as far as the Americans are concerned. Never mind that they [US] can go and do it elsewhere. I mean, they have things in Guam which is right outside of China. So yes, they [US] are going to be concerned, but I don't think that they should be. We have not reached that stage yet (T&TN18).

The fear of backlash and the forms it might take, as well as the back and forth of whether or not the US should be threatened by China, should not be taken as an indication that respondents do not also feel that, in the midst of this chaos, CARICOM nations could benefit greatly.

8.2.1 Nations willing to use China as a counterweight to the US's 'backyard' imperialism

There has always been a long-standing prediction that since the rise of China, the competition between the PRC and the US would only increase. Given that there is evidence of the PRC and the US throwing economic blows over the Community (albeit China throwing a much harder economic punch), CARICOM nations are seeking to employ a Cold-War-style strategy. It is important to remember that the 'New Cold War' bears similar threads to that of the 'old'. Like China and the US, the USSR and the US belonged to two different international and political systems and is also characterised by the rivalry between two great powers. Although there are strong differences in that, while there was competition between two separate ideologies in the old, there is now competition for development models in the new (Zhao, 2019). Additionally, whereas there was a stark distinction between friends and foes in the old, the situation remains more muddled in the old.

However, what has not changed, is the US's use of money to rebuff external power advances in its third border, or the use of money to gain access to that border (as is the case of China). As a result, and as was discussed in chapter 3, during the Cold War era CARICOM nations sought after their own self-interest through the maintenance of the threat to switch ideological camps at any given time. This placed them in a position to influence both powerful nations to bend to benefit their own self-interest. For example, Park (1975), affirms that the leaders of both blocs 'tended to overlook [these] serious deviations by smaller and weaker alliances partners and were [therefore more] responsive and cooperative with the demands of these nations'. Due to this, Robert Keohane maintained that they were as a result, able to fixate 'on

a narrow range of vital interest and ignore almost everything else' thus taking 'large-scale patterns of international politics for granted' (Park, 1975). Similar to back then, these nations are prepared to employ the same strategy with the rise of this competition on the global stage between China and America:

For us, it is just an economic bargaining chip, at least from our perspective. We are not concerned about one or two China or how the US wishes to feel. All we care about is our own survival. So, anyone that comes with more money and it helps us to pay our public service and finance our loans etc. then we will deal with them (JG4).

I think CARICOM nations have to be creative with their diplomacy. So, I think they, in fact, can and try to in a number of ways use the Chinese relationship as a counterbalance to the US, but that isn't exclusive to China. They have tried to use Libya for funding when they didn't have money, and they have used Venezuela for Petro Caribe. And even inside of CARICOM because China can't recognise CARICOM. So, even the division between the PRC and the ROC shows that there are CARICOM countries that act outside the collective will of CARICOM for their own self-interest (T&TN1).

I don't think that the Caribbean is ignorant regarding the importance of pivoting one [China] off the other [US]. I think that there needs to be a more concerted effort in how it's done though, but I think we are quite well aware that something like this should be done (T&TG3).

I believe we see China as a threat, and we don't see China as an opportunity to not only diversify our relations with the world, but to also serve as a counterweight to major actors like the US. We are so obsessed with China as a threat that we cannot see what we can get in terms of using China for foreign policy, for instance (JN16).

Clearly, these nations are willing to play both nations to the best of their ability to benefit the economy of their nations. But what would be the situation if an emerging hegemon were able to replace an already established one?

8.2.2 Dealing with the issue of Hegemony

The concept of and activities implied by hegemony remain challenged. The critical realist and neo-realist literature are starting points for tracking these challenges. Charles Kindleberger and Robert Gilpin are the two leading proponents within this discourse; however, they do not outwardly utilise the term hegemony (Payne, 1994b). Robert Keohane's definition is the most often referenced. He defines hegemony as a prevalence of material assets (Keohane, 1984). In Keohane's view, the components of hegemonic force, as they identify with the world political economy, include control over crude materials, markets, capital and 'competitive advantages

in the production of highly valued goods involving the use of complex or new technology' (Keohane, 1984). Immanuel Wallerstein, albeit not a neo-realist, defines hegemony as being financial (Wallerstein, 1983). Wallerstein explains how hegemonic authority is acquired or lost through a specific arrangement of prevalence (production, trade and finance), and that it occurs when a favourable position is grounded in one of these three circles of monetary activities (Wallerstein, 1983).

There are many contentions in the literature with regards to measuring/defining the ways by which hegemonic force is worked out. Positions range from a vision of hegemony as the procurement of open products (Kindleberger, 1973), to the burden of actions regarding the self-interest activities intended to shape strategic frameworks to specific favourable positions (Gilpin and Gilpin, 1975). Duncan Snidal conveniently audits this strand in the scholarship. The audit recognises the differences between harmless hegemony practised by persuasion, kind-hearted hegemony practised by compulsion and exploitative hegemony (Snidal, 1985). The issue is that this writing is hypothetically flawed. The meaning of hegemonic authority is based on a constrained scope of variables drawn from selected American post-war encounters negligibly qualified by references to 19th-century Britain. Geopolitical force, rather strangely, was generally precluded and Keohane offers an incomplete case by discussing security as an 'eminent good'.

Other enquiries were likewise prohibited from consideration, such as the matter of why a few states acknowledge the tenets of hegemony while others oppose it. For example, Caribbean nations including those in CARICOM had at some point swung between both, acknowledging and opposing the tenets of hegemony. However, in the end, these small nations settled on the former. As a result, my dissertation posits the following question, in the event that China is successful in eliminating the US's hegemonic rule in the region, are CARICOM nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, willing to accept China as the new hegemonic overlord?

8.2.3 Two Nations unwilling to accept a Chinese Imperium

On the issue of an open embrace to a Chinese imperium that has theoretically displaced the US hegemon in the region, 90% of the 40 respondents from both country cases maintained that China would not be accepted as the new hegemonic overlord in the region, if it were to in fact, do such a thing:

Well, that sounds like something out of a Greek Mythology. My head can't get around a world where China is the new hegemon. A world in which China has to take precedence and most likely by the use of hard power, would not be a world (T&TG6).

It just won't happen. Hollywood would still be there. So, maybe there will be some kind of shift in something like hegemonic relations, but I don't think the basic consolation will transform. Even then, no, they would not be accepted (JN14).

I think the status of the US as a really important space for the Caribbean remains unthreatened because there are so many generations of family networks, for example, that tie this space to New York and Miami and all of those destinations of Caribbean migration. I think the colonial and the migration network that has bound these places together for decades and decades, is not easily overcome. I am not seeing that level of connectedness being built between the Caribbean and China (T&TN20)

I don't believe that China is in the position of actually becoming the substitute of the US, not in the world and not in the region. And that is something that may change in the future. So far, I don't believe that China is actually interested in taking over the US's role in the world. They want to definitely increase their influence, and they want to solidify their influence, but they are not interested in practising hegemony in the same way the US has done it so far. It's another kind of engagement. So, I don't see China eliminating US's hegemony totally, but there will be some sharing in terms of how hegemony is practiced, we can see that already. However, CARICOM nations will not accept China as the new influencer (JN16).

Although the majority contends that China would not be welcomed as a hegemonic ruler, there were those who argued that even if it were to displace the US, nations in the sub-region due to their vulnerability and minimal prowess, might not be able to do anything but accept China even if they are unhappy with the new status quo:

Okay playing the devil's advocate. If China is going to be the new hegemonic overlord, it doesn't matter if the Caribbean accept it or not. It is what it is, so we would need to learn how to deal with that. We certainly may not like it but that's the new way things would be, so it is up to us to learn to live with that. So, it's not a matter of whether we are willing or not. It's something that we'd do better off to think about and figure out how to adapt to that hypothesis, just in case it happens (T&TN18).

The question won't be, can the world accept it? The question would be, if they, in fact, do that then the world won't have a choice. Did we accept slavery? You know we didn't accept it. It was put upon us. As a region, did we accept when they brought us across here and taught us different languages? We didn't accept it. We had no choice until we got enough hard power and we fought. I think if China were to displace the US theoretically, then we won't have a choice. Similar to how it was in the past (JN19).

Those who maintain that the Chinese imperium would be rejected, and that CARICOM nations would likely have no choice in the matter if displacement occurred, argued also, that the US's prolonged abandonment of the region had forced them in a position that gives them no other choice but to align themselves with China. (T&TG3) affirms that, 'it's particularly troublesome that the United States under Trump is simply relinquishing its influence in the region. They have just given up because this mad president is involved in tweeting at 3 a.m. and so on. They have really lost sight of what this case is all about'.

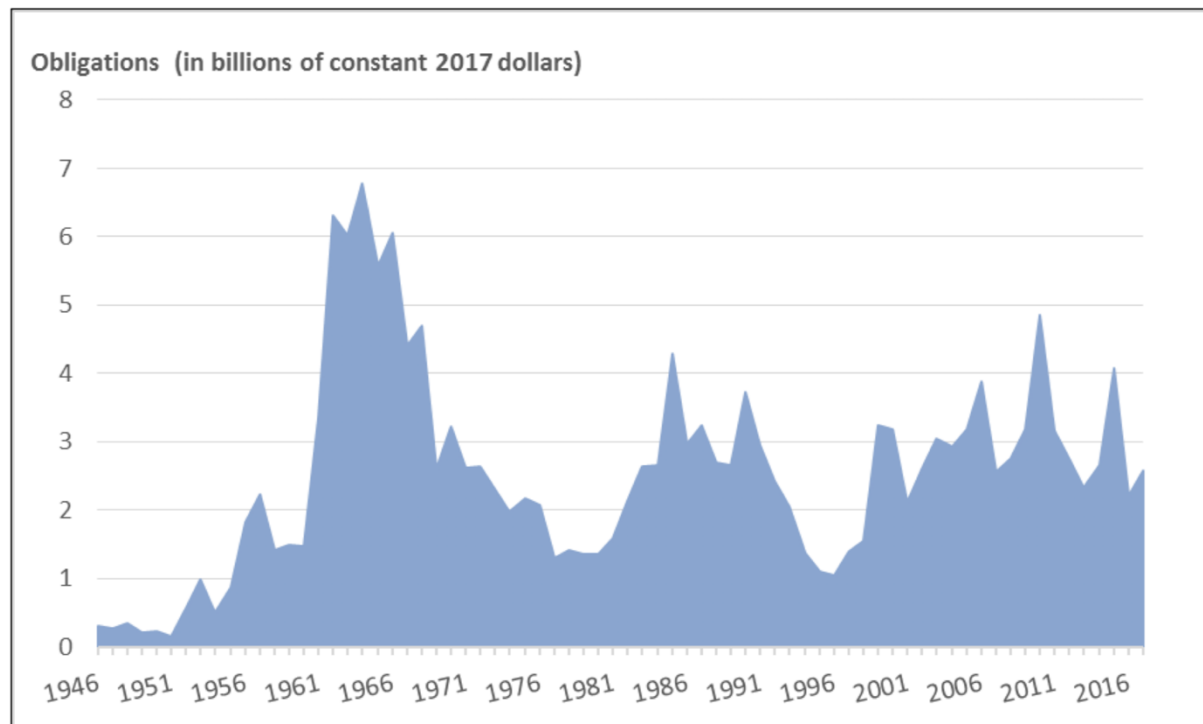
8.2.4 A serious case of US Neglect

Since the decline of European influence gave way to the rise of the US hegemony in the region, Washington's disposition towards its own 'backyard' has always ebbed and flowed between obsession or disinterest. The latter is always the case whenever other world crises emerge, which gives way to the US shifting its natural resources and interest away from the region to rectify whatever issue it has become preoccupied with. If the threat is considered low, then disinterest still stands, and if the threat is deemed high, a protectorate obsession is employed. Before the rise of China in the Caribbean Community, the US position on the region was a waning interest and outright neglect. According to Lake (2009), although the United States adopted an imperialistic form of approach to the region from 1904-1934 under the guise of the Munroe Doctrine, by early 2000, both its interest and efforts waned drastically. This was evidenced in a sharp decline in US's engagement and investment in the region which has only increased under President Trump. While 2017 witnessed \$627.7 million being allotted to developmental programmes in the region (Meyer, 2017), Trump request in 2018 that only \$581 million be given to the region instead of the allotted \$1.7 billion (Meyer, 2019). This left CARICOM nations feeling sidelined. From 1946-2017 the United States has provided the region with approximately \$88 billion (Meyer, 2019). However, this has increased and declined based on whether the United States believes there is a threat to the region or not. According to Meyer and Gracia (2018), US aid to the region increased significantly in the mid-1960s under President John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress. This was a programme geared towards the reduction of poverty and the minimisation of communism in the region. After witnessing a decline for some time, the US interest increased after the radical Sandinistas took power in Nicaragua in 1979. This steady assistance continued through to the 1980s where aid was allotted to prevent the Soviets from gaining a strong foothold in the region and by the mid-1990s it once again declined with the disintegration of the Soviet Union (Meyer and Gracia,

2018). This increase and decrease in aid based on threats has continued well into this day (*see Fig. 12 below*). It is this hot and cold behaviour of interest and disinterest that has provided the space for China to step into the gap left by the US in the region.

Figure 12: America's Aid to Latin America and the Caribbean from 1946-2017

Source: (Meyer and Garcia, 2019 pg. 3)



Not only that, but this flip-flop of interest on the part of the region's main influencer has given way to leaders of these nations experiencing a feeling of abandonment:

Honestly, I don't think that the Caribbean is that important right now to the US and to Europe that they would say well okay, let us consider what China is doing here in the region (JG6).

I just don't see the Caribbean as a major player in US's foreign politics right now. Plus, the United State haven't been able to give us the kind of funding that they had in the past. They have disengaged from us, and that has created a new space for other powers (T&TG3).

I think the United States is only interested in the United States and China is only interested in China. So, from a relationship standpoint, we are interested in us, and as a result, we are forced to act in certain ways in order to seek our own self-interest (T&TG6).

Since then, especially in the mid-2000s, China's investments in the region has moved from \$7 billion in 2009 (Fieser, 2011) to \$35 million by 2010 (Stephenson, 2015) and is expected to

reach a whopping \$1.25 trillion by the next 10 years (Bernal, 2016a). If China is perceived as a serious threat to the US, then that will undoubtedly have very serious implications for nations in the Community. However, can it be said that there is a similar situation in the relationship between these nations and the EU? Is China a threat to the relationship that these nations have with the EU?

8.3 EU foreign policy towards CARICOM nations before the rise of China in the sub-region

The policies of the European Union (EU) in the Caribbean are rather nuanced with distinct programmes carried out by various regional organisations, and at times, with overlapping responsibilities (Sutton, 2012). The EU has, however, always stood by a singular component that has always guided its policy towards CARICOM nations. That is, regional integration and regional cooperation. This has been at the core of its policies since the 1970s and is displayed without exception in all reports on the Caribbean (Sutton, 2012). Playing a much lesser role in the region than the United States, the EU accounts for 10% of CARICOM's trade (Gardini and Ayuso, 2015). Not only that, but these nations much like the agreements and initiatives they have with the US, are also a part of the EU's African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) cohort, established in 1975. The ACP was formed to provide these countries with preferential access to European markets and to engage in the implementation of cooperation agreements between the two regions (Canterbury, 2009). In an attempt to achieve this, the Lomé Convention was signed in February 1975. Its main provisions included a) non-reciprocal access to EU markets, b) monetary stabilisation in the event that there is a reduction in export c) funds amounting to '\$3,000 million from [the] European Development Fund (EDF) and \$390 million from the European Investment Bank (EIB)', d) technological cooperation and e) an agreement to the purchase of 1.4 million tons of sugar from the ACP (Gruhn, 1976). The most important part of the Convention for most ACP countries was the areas of banana and sugar which these nations were producing in large quantities (Robbins, 2003). Montoute and Virk (2017) maintain that 'banana exports, in particular, stimulated growths in several smaller Caribbean economies... and helped alleviate poverty in rural areas'. At times, export in this area would be responsible for over 70% of all export revenues (Montoute and Virk, 2017).

However, by the late 1990s, the Convention experienced criticism for breaching the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) guidelines. Although the Convention came into effect before these guidelines, with the EU arguing that this, therefore, exempted it from GATT's

rules, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) still found it in contempt of the Most Favoured Nation Article (MFN) and the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) (Grynberg, 1998). The GSP which regulates trade relations between the EU and other developed nations ensure that all products from these nations fall under an equal tariff line (Robbins, 2003). This, of course, was not the case with ACP products wherein most were entering duty-free and at a lower GSP rate. Due to this contention and an international outcry that these nations were not competing on a levelled field, the Convention was renegotiated, and the Cotonou Agreement was instead implemented in February 2000. The areas it covered were development, trade, regional integration, respect for human rights and political cooperation. Once again, duty-free access was introduced, but this time with a phase-out period that would culminate in 2009 where Economic Partnership Agreements and trade liberalisation would take place (Langton, 2008). This meant that the markets of these nations would also be open to EU imports.

8.3.1 The rise of EPAs: EU's foreign policy towards CARICOM nations after the rise of China in the sub-region

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are aimed at reintegrating countries back into the global arena through fostering developmental programmes that can lead to poverty alleviation (Patel, 2007). For CARICOM, the first EPA was established between the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) and the EU in 2008 (*see table 12*) with the objective to promote economic growth, increased production, economic diversification, intellectual property, sustainable development and regional integration (Canterbury, 2009). This meant the removal of tariffs and quotas on these nations' export commodities which included minerals, fertilisers, bananas etc. Besides, the Partnership has a non-reciprocity clause and provides tariff-free quotas for these nations' products in EU markets. This has resulted in the EU becoming the region's second-largest trading partner totalling €11.3 billion in 2013 (Schmieg, 2015). Additionally, in the area of service, the Partnership provides momentous concessions with the EU offering 94% accessibility to its service sectors, in most cases going beyond the WTO's General Agreement for Trade in Services (GATS) (Burri and Nurse, 2019). The fundamental areas covered here were cultural cooperation through the efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), professional exchange and training, broadcasting quotas etc. This allows for businesses existing in these CARICOM nations to hone their competitive skill sets across all sectors. Another measure that falls within the scope of the Partnership is its 'Aid for Trade' which is a remunerative scheme that facilitates cost adjustments, industrial aid, trade facilitation, administration reforms and infrastructure investments (Hamilton et al., 2009).

In 2015 the allotted amount under the scheme was €7 million and then it rose to €18 million in 2016.¹¹⁷ This funding under the EPA framework is channelled either through the European Development Fund (EDF) or the CARIFORUM Regional Indicative Program (CRIP). It is aimed at a) enhancing human capacity b) building a competitive private sector in these nations c) export diversification and d) infrastructure development (Bernal, 2013a). The aim of carrying out these initiatives, is to aid these CARICOM nations in increasing their global competitiveness and to reduce their dependence on external revenues. As a result, solutions surrounding the structural reform of the rice, banana and sugar industries are supported in order to devise a progressive approach to export diversification and increase the capacity for trade negotiations. The EU has always in this regard, consider itself a friend of the region and through this ‘aid for trade’, has sought to be proactive on cohesion policy issues (Stavridis and Irrera, 2015).

Table 12: Key Elements of CARIFORUM-EU Partnership

Source: Adapted from (Machinery, 2008) pg. 3

Key elements of the Agreement
<p>The elements below represent the key elements of the CARIFORUM EPA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o CARIFORUM liberalizes 86.9% of the value of its imports with 82.7% within the first 15 years. The Agreement will result in the liberalization of 92% of bilateral CARIFORUM-EU trade; o CARIFORUM applies a general moratorium on its tariff liberalization commitments on all products for the first three years of the Agreement. For revenue sensitive items such as gasoline, motor vehicles and parts, the moratorium is extended to 10 years; o Other Duties and Charges (ODCs) are to be maintained during the first seven years and then phased out during the subsequent three years; o The Sugar Protocol (SP) quotas will remain on a transitional basis until September 2009 when Duty-Free Quota-Free will be introduced. During the transitional period, the SP quotas will be complemented by a Tariff Rate Quota of 60,000 tonnes split evenly between CARIFORUM SP members and the Dominican Republic. In addition, a joint declaration commits both Parties to ensure, within the structures of the SP rules, that shortfalls of any CARIFORUM SP member will be reallocated to another CARIFORUM SP member; o An Agricultural chapter that establishes rules consistent with the objectives of pursuing sustainable development, poverty eradication, enhanced competitiveness and food security. Most notable in the provisions on agriculture is the zero for zero treatment of EU export subsidies. That is, the EU eliminates export subsidies on all agricultural products that CARIFORUM liberalizes; o The EU shall exclude CARIFORUM exports from any contemplated use of a multilateral safeguard measure and consider the use of constructive remedies before imposing anti-dumping or countervailing duties in respect of products imported from CARIFORUM States; o Both CARIFORUM and the EU automatically confer on each other any better treatment granted by one Party to a major trading partner. Such entities are defined as countries or regional blocs garnering 1%, or 1.5% and above, of world merchandise exports. This MFN provision covers both goods and services; o In services, the EU liberalizes 94% of W120 list of sectors while the respective figures for CARIFORUM LDCs and MDCs are 65% and 75% respectively. The Bahamas and Haiti have six months within which to submit their respective liberalization schedules. The commitments also include a standstill clause and provisions for future liberalization; o The rules on investment confer predictability and transparency on market access in agriculture and forestry, manufacturing, mining and service sectors in both EU and CARIFORUM. Both regions have liberalized most areas of manufacturing except for some sensitive areas in CARIFORUM and the EU. However, public services and utilities and other sensitive sectors have not been liberalized to EU investors. CARIFORUM has also maintained special reservations for small and medium enterprises in some sectors; o Finally, regional preference (whatever concession is granted by one CARIFORUM State to the EU should automatically be conferred on all other CARIFORUM States) will be implemented in one, two and five years respectively in CARIFORUM MDCs, LDCs and Haiti.

¹¹⁷ See: The EU Aid for Trade Progress Report 2018: Review of progress on the implementation of the updated EU Aid for Trade Strategy of 2017. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/eu-aftreport-2018-final.pdf> (Accessed November 26, 2018).

8.3.2 China contesting the EU in the sub-region

So far, China has pushed the EU to third from the second place it once occupied behind the US as one of the region's largest trading partner. Nolte (2018) expressed that for some countries in the region, China has even become the most important trader. However, while this is the case, Europe remains the region's largest investor with FDI reaching €505, 700 million in 2013 (Montoute et al., 2017).

I was involved in the EDF negotiations with the European Union, and when the soft loan was signed during the state visit, for, I think, 5 billion, nobody else was able to put that kind of money on the table, and that was a government to government soft loan, so that's large. The European Union under the EDF allocates 200 and something million euros for the Caribbean region. This is split amongst all of the countries and in different countries, there are different programmes. So, you might get a few million here in education and a few million in whatever so it's diluted money. And as a quantum of that 267 million, I don't know how much comes to Trinidad and Tobago. Some might be going to government ministries to fund programs. For example, in Trinidad when the sugar industry was shut down, the diversification of the sugar industry and the farmers was funded through a huge grant from the EU post Cotonou [Agreement] because there were preferential agreements that allowed us to sell our bananas and what not. So, the European Union felt guilty and so they gave us some money to try and change the industry, so you'll get these big gaps. China has never reached that level (T&TN19).

However, there is a growing reliance on China from these nations which adds fuel to the flame of a geopolitical shift in the region that the EU is not used to. As a result, the EU has called for a more reinforced 'regional and bilateral cooperation' with these nations, consisting of a more 'modernised partnership focused on trade, investment and sectoral cooperation'.¹¹⁸ The reason for this was cited to be as a result of the emergence of new challenges due to the 'evolving geopolitical environment' in the hemisphere.¹¹⁹ However, Freres and Sanahuja (2005) maintained that much like the US, the EU's interest in the region had not been predominant especially since the refugee crisis. This has led to a lack of resources being directed towards CARICOM nations, thus forcing them to explore other channels. However, in more recent

¹¹⁸ See the EU-LAC Report: Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean: joining forces for a common future. Published April 2019. Available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/eurolat/key_documents/eeas/eu-lac_communication_april2019_en.pdf (Accessed October 5, 2019).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

times the EU has pushed for a deeper partnership with the region, based on prosperity which would promote a much deeper sustainable trade and investment.¹²⁰

Additionally, the medium through which the Caribbean and the EU engages with each other has many parallels as opposed to intersections. According to Sutton (2012) ‘there is little attempt by the major actors (the EU [and] the Caribbean ACP states...) to seriously engage with each other through the various frameworks despite the rhetoric of regional cooperation that emerges from the Commission and on occasion from the others concerned’. As a result, this has culminated in various meetings being held with very little of their objectives being implemented. This was especially the case after 9/11 wherein aid from the first EDF was still being handed out long after the ninth one had been completed (Griffith, 2004). The technical inability of these nations to facilitate the quick use of the EU’s resources has also impeded the process of effective implementation of projects and programmes that could aid in the economic rejuvenation of their societies.

The case of China and the Caribbean, however, is entirely different. China’s implementation of various mechanisms such as the China-Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum and the Forum of China and the Community of Latin American States (China-CELAC Forum) has so far culminated in quick outcomes on the ground. For example, the China-Caribbean Trade Investment Summit led to the allocation of a \$6 billion fund for infrastructure development in various Caribbean islands (Ellis, 2014). This included the building of national stadiums and highways in Jamaica as well as arts and culture buildings in Trinidad and Tobago which China came in and built themselves. As (T&TG3) affirms, ‘the Europeans are doing it where the Caribbean is a part of a broader agenda, where we get a piece of the overall funding and we get a small project and some millions here or two million there. But the Chinese have a specific agenda for Trinidad and Tobago, and I think that is what sets them apart from others like the EU’.

Nevertheless, the contesting of the EU in the region by China is not held in the same regard as it is with the US. CARICOM nations perceive that China is not contesting the EU in the sub-

¹²⁰ See the EU-LAC Report: Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean: joining forces for a common future. Published April 2019. Available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/eurolat/key_documents/eeas/eu-lac_communication_april2019_en.pdf (Accessed October 5, 2019).

region and almost all participants have explicitly stated that the PRC has had, and will have, no perceived negative impact on their relationship with Europe.

8.4 FINDINGS: Two Nations more concerned about their position in the wake of Brexit

My data finding which indicates that elites of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are of the opinion that China does not have an immediate impact on their relationship with Europe has been contradicted by policy documents which inevitably leads to questions around the validity of my finding. This was evident even in the previous discussion which shows that given China's strong presence in the region, the EU had indeed move to tailor and reinforce some of its policies towards these small islands. This confirms that China's rise in the region does bear some amount of impact on the EU-CARICOM nations relationship, albeit not a negative one. However, what is important to note here is that this Chinese impact is more-so taken from a European perspective as opposed to Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' perspective. For these elites, it is less likely that the EU would move to 'punish' them as America would, for deepening their engagement with China. As a result, for elites in the two country cases, China bears no immediate impact on their EU relationship. Nolte (2018) affirms that this is because China is simply challenging the EU instead of seeking to displace it. This displacement is the underpinning of what these elites perceive to be China's motive for engaging with them. The intention of the PRC to displace a particular power is one solely aimed at the US as opposed to the EU, which both the literature and policy discourse corroborates. As a result, for these elites the impact especially those perceived to be negative is of grave concern in the case of the US than it is in the EU:

Europe places a lot of emphasis on things like proper political relationships, human rights elements, regional integration, and so on. That's a different thing to what China brings to the table which is about infrastructure development etc. I think the impact would be more-so felt in our relationship with the US than our relationship with the EU (T&TG3).

Our relationship with Europe right now is in an interesting phase because the whole framework is up for review in 2020. We are reviewing and we are supposed to be having a new relationship in place. Currently, we are on the 11th cycle of development funds from Europe. After this cycle, we don't know what the future will be beyond 2020. So, I think China's impact on our relationship with them [EU] is non-existent. The impact on our relationship with the US, yes, that is not lost on us, but when it comes to the EU, I am more concerned about what will happen after Brexit (JG3).

The expression of such concern is not surprising, as scholars are debating the possible loss of these nations' preferential access to the EU market. While researchers like (Page, 2016) argue that these CARICOM countries should focus their energy on engagements with the EU and postpone discussions with Britain surrounding the matter at a later date, others like (Sanders, 2016, Gonzales, 2017) maintains that these nations' leaders should seize the opportunity to engage with the UK long before the Brexit matter is settled. The latter argue that these effects could impact trade flows and continuous policy uncertainties as the UK reorient themselves. This is further aggravated by the upcoming review of EU's foreign policy towards these nations as JG3 had previously pointed out. Another issue is that Britain's contribution to the UK's aid programmes will be halted and this could provide serious implications for these nations who wishes to maintain the same level of developmental assistance that was meted out by the EU (Clegg, 2018).

With Brexit coming up, we are not sure how that will affect aid from the EU. Plus, remittances will be seriously affected if the pound is affected. This could have a major impact on our GDP (JG2).

Gowricharn (2006) maintain that CARICOM islands are not only 'remittances societies' but that remittances accounts for 18.3 per cent of Jamaica's GDP (Mayall, 2009), with citizens of Trinidad and Tobago admitting that '70% of their income comes from remittances' (Joseph, 2010). For elites in these nations, the implications that Brexit carries with it, is far worse than a China threat to their relationship with the EU.

8.5 Conclusion

The perceived impact of China on these nations' relationship with the US is more concerning than the PRC's impact on their relationship with the EU. There is a magnitude of evidence to suggest that China is indeed challenging the United States in the region and that the US is concerned about the PRC's displacement of its hegemonic influence in its third border. This does not mean that the concern has not impacted the outlook of these elites in both country cases. The impulse to hold on to China as a medium to development, while at the same time fearing the repercussions it might bring from the US, cannot be fully understood unless the historical context is revisited. In fact, during the Cold War period, these nations were threatened with military might to keep them on the right side of the iron-curtain. While the EU since the decolonisation era had not used an iron fist to ensure CARICOM nations remain in line with Western ideologies, the opposite is true of the US. Such was the case with the US invasion of

Grenada in 1983, which was carried out under the code name ‘Operation Urgent Fury’ in an attempt to curb the spread of communism on the island and to give as an example to the rest of the nations, the consequences of an attempt to defy the ideologies of the US (Stewart, 2008).

Nonetheless, this chapter has found that, despite the fear of a backlash in the US’s case, these CARICOM nations have come to idealise the prospect of using China as a counterbalance to the hegemonic influence of the US to support their own developmental needs. The desire of these nations to use a strong power to balance the other suggests the possibility of CARICOM nations orienting their role in the international arena from a place of non-influence to that of influence. This means that since their vulnerability in many cases have caused them to take stock of the power disparity that exist between themselves and more powerful nations, the ability to utilise the existence of any systemic asymmetries is always thought of as a great tool to place them in a more strategic negotiating position. This is best expressed by Richard Bernal when he wrote, ‘a small country may seek to influence the US foreign policy by its own individual efforts, or by collaborating with other countries that have a common interest in a particular policy issue’(Bernal, 2015b). This is not to say that these nations are in agreement with complete displacement of the US’s hegemony. Democratic values are deeply embedded in the political system of these CARICOM nations, and their historical ties with the US and Europe are far-reaching to the extent where the adoption of communism for these nations is inconceivable. As (T&TG4) affirms, ‘at the end of the day, the US still maintains a structural advantage over the architecture of foreign relations in the Caribbean that is stronger than that of China’.

Chapter Nine: Jamaica & Trinidad & Tobago's elites on the impact of China's foreign policy on their nations since the 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum

Previous chapters have so far looked at the consequences of China's rise from the perspective of elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago since the launch of the 2011 3rd Economic Trade Forum. We have examined how these two country cases have approached their foreign policy strategy through a framework of a 'vulnerable identity' which often culminate in such policies being carried out through predictable stages. Nonetheless, this image is incomplete without first analysing and contextualising whether, given the perceptions so far, the China-CARICOM nations partnership can be called a win-win relationship or one that is more dependent on strategic cooperation. From these elites' perspective has China been delivering on its Forum promises. And if not, then is this a case of trading one neo-colonial power for the next? This chapter offers an insight into what China had promised in the 2011 Forum and to date, what has been taking place on the ground in these societies. It also discusses the ideals of neo-colonialism and attempts to clarify its principles and whether China is adopting any of these patterns. It then offers empirical evidence from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites as to whether the case of China can be deemed 'neo-colonialism by invitation'.

This is important to the overarching question of the dissertation; whose starting point is the 2011 3rd Economic Trade Forum. Research carried out in this chapter helps us to understand what the implications for Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are, after China's declaration of its policy intentions toward these nations in the sub-region. We can also infer whether or not the promises made by China in the Forum have been in alignment with the policies that are taking place on the ground in these societies. In fact, we are able to witness some of the ramifications of the PRC's commitment that were not anticipated by CARICOM nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. From the pledge of the PRC until 2016, can CARICOM countries like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago claim that they are really winning in their China partnership?

9.1 What China has promised, as opposed to what these nations are experiencing

At a time when traditional partners' interest in the region had waned, China's Vice Premier, Wang Qishan set out on a mission on September 12, 2011, in a bid to deepen China-Caribbean

relationship in the areas of 1) *Enhanced financial and investment cooperation*, 2) *Capacity building cooperation*, 3) *Strengthened cooperation in environmental protection and new energies*, 4) *Intensified cultural, educational and health cooperation*, 5) *Promotion of closer trade and tourism cooperation* and 6) *Boosted cooperation in agriculture and fisheries*. This was the promise meted out in the 2011 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Forum that boasted the theme '*Cooperation, Development and Win-for-all*'.¹²¹ The Forum ended on the note that China, being a developing nation itself, had provided assistance to Caribbean nations without attaching any conditions.¹²² China's Vice Premier, Wang Qishan ended by stating that facts had proven that China was eternally a genuine companion and cooperation partner of Caribbean nations and that to help achieve this, these nations would have access to \$USD1 million which was donated to the Development Fund of CARICOM and an infrastructure development loan of \$USD1 billion (Amineh and Guang, 2017). Nonetheless, data results and my arguments so far have shown that, since then, the case has not only been a long way from a 'win-win' situation, but also that increased financial and investment commitment has tended to be more concentrated on providing infrastructure more so than other areas. Eisenman and Heginbotham (2018) affirm that, coming out of the Forum, China has dispatched \$3 billion yuan solely geared towards construction projects. Even then, as my research findings have stated in chapter 4, the efficiency of these infrastructure projects are questionable and, at times, are not suitable for national use:

Well as I said, the agreements we make has to be more equitable. It should not be a one-sided thing where all of the benefits go to China, and we are left with a building. And sometimes they don't even build to our needs. Sometimes they build to suit Chinese people, and it isn't even appropriate. And after 3 years they can't even get it working again because the parts take so long to come and so on. So, that is not in our best interest (T&TN14).

In addition, as was also considered to be the case in chapter 4, the protection of the environment of these nations proved to be the least of China's priorities despite its pledge of *strengthened cooperation in environmental protection*. My research findings indicate that the extractive industries of the PRC have contributed to concerns regarding deforestation and environmental degradation. Again, this is in direct conflict with what was promised at the Forum. However, even though the PRC has delivered on its promise of enhanced cooperation in education by

¹²¹ See: The 3rd China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum <http://tt.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/3rdCNCForum/>

¹²² Ibid.

offering more than 2,000 scholarships, exchange programmes and training courses to Jamaica, for example; with these incentives now extended to Trinidad and Tobago, elites in Trinidad and Tobago has expressed concern about China's establishment of Confucius Institutes (CI) in the region as a way of the PRC gaining a stronger foothold not only in their societies but also in the wider Caribbean Community:

So, we started the project, and we did the initial proposal, and it was approved by Hanban in the Ministry of Education in China that funds the whole network of programmes for the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language. So, they approve it but then there was a little twist, and this is how we in languages know that the teaching of language as foreign languages is never divorced from the broader context. So, it was approved, but at the very end, just about the time the approvals were coming through, it became clear that President Xi Jinping was going to visit Trinidad and Tobago. Therefore, something that had been very academic, very linked to language and culture suddenly became something bigger because it was intended for the visit of the Chinese President to coincide with the formal establishment of the Confucius Institute (CI). The signing of the actual documents to establish the CI was signed by President Xi and Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar (T&TN16).

There is absolutely no question that they are using their relationships with the third world to expand their influence. And they are doing it very interestingly as well because it's not just economic. It is cultural and social in a big way. So, the Confucius Institutes are a very deliberate foreign policy tool and mechanism for China. I will tell you that the woman who runs Hanban, which is the organisation that is responsible for the 450 or 500 Confucius Institutes around the world, her name is Madame Xu Lin; and Madame Xu Lin is one of the most influential people in China. When China is cutting back budgets and foreign policies in other areas, Hanban's budget is being increased, because they are astute enough to understand that you don't just drop money on people and don't build relationships. And so, they are building their communities, but they are also building their relationships. And they never come to us and told us you have to do this for your Confucius Institute. Instead they say, we are giving you money and you are supposed to teach language and culture. And then it's up to us to sit with our Chinese university counterpart, which is really the professor who's the Chinese Director here representing that university and come up with plans. But we are not going to do Trinidadian things for the Confucius Institute, we're going to do Chinese things. And it's going to be perpetuated because every year you are getting a chunk of change [money] from Beijing that is allowing you to program and do things, and if you don't use the money, your budget goes down. So naturally there is an incentive to continue. So, they [China] are smart. They are very astute (T&TN19).

The use of Confucius Institutes as a soft-power foreign policy tool by the PRC to gain a stronger influence in a nation or region is not unheard of. Lanteigne (2015) for example maintains that the proliferation of these institutes that 'promotes Chinese language and culture via classes and institutional tools...' has led to concerns in these nations about 'their closeness to the Chinese

government'. This of course is being done to achieve what China calls a more 'harmonious world' and is a clear indication to 'reassure people that the drive to gain major-power status is based not simply on military and economic might but also on sound foundations of traditions and culture' Snyder (2011). For every promise made in the 2011 Forum, the elites of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have become more aware of China's broader foreign policy agenda behind each promise.

9.2 More of a strategic cooperation than a win-win situation

The awareness of China's foreign policy agenda does not stop these nations from appreciating various aspect of China's promises. The issue, however, for most of these elites is the negative impact that some of these promises have had on their country, and the feeling that China is leaning more towards particular promises while restricting its efforts in others:

I don't see China going and saying we can help you to fix your central bank. I do hear the Brits and the Americans saying we need to help you with counter terrorism. There are all kinds of other things about capacity building, and I don't get that sense from China. And I will say that lately, the Chinese Embassy is even more removed than they were in the past. They have fallen back in a massive way publicly and I am not confident that China's re-emergence, not rise, is going to lead to the overall development of the Global South. It will lead to the infrastructural development of the Global South. The stadiums and government offices will be built everywhere, but that's it (T&TN19).

One of the findings of my research is that when it comes to CARICOM nations, China is more committed to the promise of infrastructure development than any of its other Forum promises. This signals less of a 'win-win' situation. A win-win situation for these nations, would involve China delivering in all areas covered in its intended foreign policy for the region instead of mainly providing these nations with infrastructure development. According to Lixin and Wanling (2019) at the core of any 'win-win' situation is, mutual benefit. 'That means a country should consider not only its own economic interests and the healthy growth of its domestic economy and industry' but also 'consider the interest of its trading partners and promote mutual development and benefit on an equal footing' (Lixin and Wanling, 2019). A prime example of this is the partnership existing between Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and Small Island Developing States Docking Station (SIDS DOCK) (Hall and Chuck-A-Sang, 2012). Consequently, if a nation's trading partners is not of the notion that they too are benefiting on a mutual footing, then the partnership can no longer be considered that of a win-win. Based on findings, China's primary concern in these CARICOM islands is mostly centred on its

provision of infrastructure development instead on focusing on these nations' genuine need. For example, while China offered up a \$USD20 billion loan for infrastructure projects to these nations in 2015, it only offered \$USD50 million towards an agricultural fund for these islands (Amineh and Guang, 2017). According to (T&TG9) more than anything, Trinidad and Tobago in particular, is interested in Chinese service investments as opposed to building infrastructure:

The first wave of Chinese investment has been in infrastructure. And at first, of course, it [China] was out there vending or just selling goods. Then the second wave was in market seeking and manufacturing. This is where they [China] could get in a kind of large scale non-durable goods manufacturing in large markets. And in this second part, they were looking at where they could value-add from the basic primary level extraction. So, any secondary value-added to mining operations was part of that first wave of Chinese investment. So, you've got companies like Bosai in Guyana that bought all the bauxite mines and so on, and now the third wave of Chinese investment that is more important to us, is where they're looking at service level investment and looking more to strategic investment. So, China is actually utilising investment as a geopolitical tool. And the Chinese government is trying to 'seem' like it's helping Trinidad and Tobago to move forward in infrastructure and [Research and Development] R&D and [Information and Communications Technology] ICT and so on. So, when we [Trinidad and Tobago] are looking at Chinese investments, we are looking at high tech manufacturing. Things like solar panels, solar panel R&D and we are looking at utilising their manufacturing and engineering expertise to implement larger scale or mechanised manufacturing in Trinidad. We are also looking at them to serve as a sort of OEM [Original Equipment Manufacturer] or third-party manufacturers for Trinidadian design and services. So, there is a lot of areas where we want to partner with China, and especially as [Intellectual Property] IP begins to be more commercialised out of UTT [The University of Trinidad and Tobago] and UWI. Building another stadium is of no value to us (T&TG9).

Strategic cooperation on the other hand, rests on the premise of 'the more powerful state providing that there is a strategic interest for the powerful state to cooperate' (Slobodchikoff, 2013); which we have seen coming out in China's motives for aligning with these CARICOM nations. Additionally, 'the weaker state must also have a strategic interest in cooperating with the stronger state' (Slobodchikoff, 2013), which was highlighted to us in the foray of reasons given by elites in both country cases for their nations' alignment with China. In either case as points Slobodchikoff (2013) out 'there must be some kind of strategic interest to build a cooperative bilateral agreement'. Nevertheless, the issue of thinking that no real value is being added to their nations with there simply strategic cooperation existing between themselves and the PRC, which has translated mostly in them being recipients of infrastructural growth, is not the only issue for these nations' elites. China's possible use of infrastructure development as a platform for these nations to fall into debt traps is also for them, very concerning:

Jamaica's GDP to debt ratio is exceptionally high. I think it's 120% or something. Barbados is terrible, Trinidad is still alright, and it's only about 50 or 60%. It's well under 100 anyhow, but then Trinidad is unusual. So, what do we do when China comes calling? They will just take away whatever they have built that we can't pay for from us. Then what? (JG6).

Well, when it comes to China, we certainly maintain an increasing long-term debt, and that can lead to taking possession of certain economic assets (JG9).

According to Niambi (2018), China is using 'debt-book diplomacy' in such a way that is similar to imperialist Europe who used gun-boat diplomacy. He maintains that China is ensuring that these nations rack up enough debt to get them to do the PRC's bidding when the time comes (Niambi, 2018). Parker and Chefitz (2018) citing an example of this form of diplomacy, points to the \$USD361 million lent by the PRC to Sri Lanka to build Hambantota's Port, where the government, in an attempt to build an airport alongside it, borrowed another \$USD1.9 billion that it had defaulted on and ultimately had to relinquish its right to the port. Elites in CARICOM nations fear that this might befall them if they continue on the road of racking up debt with the East-Asian powerhouse. The issue, however, is not only the fear of a debt trap that these infrastructural developments might provide but concerns over their nations' trade deficits with China:

I don't think that it's going to be a win-win situation honestly because Trinidad has a very high trade deficit with China. I mean, when exactly are we going to pay that off? And we continue to borrow from China as the years go on. Is it a strategic cooperation with them? Perhaps yes. There are certain areas that China is willing to give money and funding and Trinidad and Tobago, and I assume Jamaica as well, is taking that opportunity. They [Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago] are not going to forego that opportunity (T&TG5).

We import massive amounts from China, and that's evident in the trade deficit that we have with them. China just produces what we produce but cheaper and faster (JG1).

We have such a significant trade deficit with China. Do you think it is one that we will ever be able to pay off? Or do you think that we will have to get debt forgiveness? I don't think so. We will owe for generations to come (JN19).

This growing trade deficit between these nations and China is another debt leverage by the PRC in a bid to secure its geostrategic position. (T&TG9) had previously established that China's investments occurs in three stages and Parker (2018) in agreement assert that China is pursuing a similar three stage 'debt-book diplomacy'. These are, 1) infrastructure investments which are normally offered through loans with longer grace periods from the China

Development Bank and Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of China (this, of course, seems like a sweet deal to emerging economies) 2) construction developments which is usually undertaken by Chinese workers and frequently exceeds budget and 3) debt collection involving an asset now owned by the PRC if the country defaults on its infrastructure payment (Parker and Chefitz, 2018). Shattuck (2018) affirms that in doing so, China is essentially changing the rules of the game by reshaping reality to its own liking. Since then, many researchers have referred to China's behaviour in this regard as predatory in nature. And if it is then, would it be safe to assume that elites in nations such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago would see China as an invited neo-colonial power?

9.3 Neo-colonialism by Invitation: Neo-colonial in tenets but not in Perception

9.3.1 *Neo-colonialism and its tenets*

First coined in 1965 by Kwame Nkrumah, the term refers to a false belief in the freedom of the colonised from the coloniser when in fact only a shift from an old ruler to a new, has taken place. Nkrumah (1967) maintains that this is to date, the most dangerous form of imperialism. Whereas in the past, old imperial powers had used military action to control another state, in neo-colonialism the weapon through which this is achieved is through financial or economic means, and more often than not, this is secured through investments into programmes and costs associated with running the country (Nkrumah, 1967). Gladwin and Saidin (1980) sharing a similar sentiment, noted that these economic and financial deals are most times arbitrary in nature and is often accompanied by foreign aid that has conditions applied to it. 'Some of the stipulations include making the country giving the financial aid the only one eligible for contracting deals or other bids within the country receiving the aid' (Parenti, 2011). Additionally, wherever profits are made, it is channelled back into the donor country as opposed to re-invested into the host country (Parenti, 2011). However (Qiao, 2018) maintains that in all of this, the neo-colonialist unlike a former colonialist is much more subtle in its approach for dominance and will pass itself off as a native who is equally concerned about the interest of the host country when its aim is to secure maximum benefits for itself often through the use of manipulation.

Up until this point, based on my arguments and data findings from previous chapters, we have seen where China has embodied all of the aforementioned elements. Indeed, China has as Nkrumah (1967) points out, seduced these small nations through its 'Charm Offensive' by

flexing its economic muscles. This is particularly evident through its massive investment in infrastructure projects. Likewise, as Gladwin and Saidin (1980) have pointed out, and as mentioned in the previous section, China's aid and investment are not without conditions. Although the terms of longer grace periods on loans may seem more desirable to developing nations, such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, as opposed to those attached to loans from Washington, we have noted that the appropriation of economic assets by China may indeed come to fruition if these nations default on their loans. Similarly, the issue of China out-crowding local construction industries in these countries, as my research findings have shown, also reinforces Parenti's argument that neo-colonial powers are typically those to whom construction deals fall.

Based on my research findings we have seen that the majority of major construction projects in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago appear to go to China, with only Trinidad and Tobago trying to minimise these outcomes. China is very subtle in carrying out these activities as it has convinced these nations that like them, it is also a developing nation which is seeking to aid in their development. This is done while simultaneously trying to convince the US that its rise in the region is a peaceful one. This also plays into the point Qiao (2018) had previously made when he affirms that the neo-colonialist unlike a former colonialist is much more subtle in its approach for dominance. The question then is, if China seems to possess the tenets of a neo-colonial power, would the elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago accept that they have effectively 'invited' a neo-colonial power to their nations?

9.4 FINDINGS: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's Elites on China being an invited neo-colonial power

For the elites of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, although there are a number of challenges emerging from China's presence and a clear case for a non-win situation coupled with the PRC standing on the foundation of neo-colonial principles, China is still not considered neo-colonial:

China has come here, and what have they done in the Caribbean? They have probably set up some Confucius Institutes and spent billions of dollars on building landmark buildings, schools and hospitals. So, lots of infrastructures. They have practised their dollar diplomacy, and they have sent workers. They have exported, and in some cases, they have imported. And at this point, it would be difficult for me to bracket what they have done as neo-colonialism because to me, neo-colonialism comes with a certain amount of power. And they have not been practising neo-colonialism, at least not the kind that we are accustomed to. We are

accustomed to large asymmetrical power relationships that tells us listen, we can no longer support you; you are on your own. Or that tells us, we are going to change the global playing field, and you just have to adopt it. We are not accustomed to those kinds of big power- small power relationships where they come and negotiate with us, and we can actually see tangible benefits that doesn't tax our populations and those kinds of things. Can it lead to neo-colonialism? It certainly can. It absolutely can. Is it there yet? It's not, and that's why I keep saying there's a responsibility on CARICOM countries to seriously consider how they are going to operate in this space between neo-colonialism, an asymmetrical parity, the equality of unequal because that's what it's like now (T&TG6).

It would not be good for them to treat even the smallest nation outside their territorial space in a neo-colonial way. Let's assume, for example, that they came to Trinidad and sent in troops, and they thought, you know what? Trinidad has not upheld its commitments, so we're going to use a small display of force. Not only does that draw the attention of the United States, but it also disproves 40 years of benevolent-looking overseas expansion. Is the current Chinese government or the Chinese Communist Party willing to sacrifice unfathomable investments in becoming the world's big brother and soft power for a small manoeuvre like that? It will haemorrhage and discredit everything they have done. So, I am not saying that they are benevolent and lovely or even that they are wonderful people. What I am saying is that they have placed too much investments in appearing that way as a counterweight to the US's power. So, they are committed to acting in a way that is, for want of a better word, more charitable in our part of the world and that's the opportunity that we have to take advantage of (T&TG11)

I don't think it's a new kind of colonialism. Even if you look at China's comments about the region in general, regarding the Caribbean and Latin America in the context of the China-CELAC Forum; you will find that they [China] are very careful when it comes to talking about cooperation and mutual development and these kinds of things. So, even they have been going out of their way to give assurances around that because it is also in their interests to distinguish what they are doing now from what the Americans and the Europeans did before. Remember they [China] are also looking for credibility. Credibility is very important to them. In terms of their [China's] own design for global influence they need that credibility, and so they have really gone out of their way to ensure that their statements are consistent with the notion of 'we are not trying to colonise Africa, the Caribbean or Latin America'. So, I don't think that neo-colonialism is the nature of our relationship with China. And I think with us being independent states now, the dynamic is definitely different. That's why we've got to manage the relationship so carefully to make sure that we reap the rewards too, and not just that it's a one-way street. Because if it's one way, then it's easy to see how people would think it's neo-colonialism. But if there's mutual benefit, then that claim wouldn't carry much weight. (JG2).

I don't think so. I don't think it's neo-colonialism just because, when you use the term colonialism, there is a different meaning to it. It could be argued that yes, China is seeking out new lands to gain and control, but the way they are doing it is more like passive colonialism because it's not very active. I mean Chinese people aren't running around with guns and taking your money. They are convincing you

to give it up to them, and they are convincing you to sell to them. A little bit of a mental thing yes, but they are not taking anything by force, and they are not going where they are not invited. The most important thing is are they going where they are being invited. So, they're not forcing their presence. However, when they do get inside your country their presence is superlatively established and that presence grows very slowly that it doesn't diminish. But they are going everywhere by invitation (T&TG3).

Okay, that's too much. Can it turn into a new neo-colonial relation? It might be. The future is full of possibilities, but not too much to determine that today China is the new neo-colonial power in the Caribbean. Especially because colonialism is not only about the economy, it's about many other things. Part of this neo-colonialism has to do with the economy, but it also has a lot to do with the cultural pattern and it has to do with many different things. So, just because China has been advancing economically in the Caribbean doesn't mean that they are the new neo-colonial (JG1).

Of the 43 interviewees, 95% argued that China is not a neo-colonial power in the region, while citing that the dimension of violent subjugation, as a predominant characteristic of colonialism in the past, is not the case here. Several respondents cited China's unwillingness to export its culture to these nations as reasons for concluding that the absence of neo-colonialism and argued that any neo-colonial practices on the part of China would undermine and undo the benevolent image they have worked to create for centuries. Even in areas where respondents agree that the out-crowding of the construction industries of these nations can be seen as an indication of neo-colonial developments, they insist that they would still not label the PRC as neo-colonial. My research found that, because these nations have undergone such a repressive form of colonial rule, which is not the path taken by the PRC in its interaction with them, even though there is a clear indication that China possesses neo-colonial tendencies, elites refuse to look at it that way.

From what I am seeing China is building this sort of presence even in importing affordable labour, and it's a different kind of neo-colonialism to what the Caribbean is accustomed to. So, I am thinking about slavery and indentureship and these things but with China, this is a structurally different arrangement. However, the principle of extracting profits from the Caribbean to be used elsewhere remains. And the role of people as expendable workers whose labour has been sort of exploited in all of this, remains as well. So, certain principles of colonialism I think are very much there (T&TN20).

However, Nasser Hussain in (Benton, 2005) maintains that although slavery was not the order of the day in the nineteenth-century, there remained some level of autocratic rule. Hargreaves (1996) maintains that in the contemporary global system, international trade, investments and aid are the tools now used to create subordination. Junbo and Frasher (2014) confirms that

whereas in the past, colonial powers and their colonies was easily distinguishable, in the era of globalisation ‘the neo-colonisation over one country by a powerful state cannot be systematic since in reality any foreign country now cannot comprehensively and firmly control another country’s domestic economic and political systems’. Junbo and Frasheri (2014) maintain that instead, in this contemporary atmosphere ‘there isn’t colonial system but only colonial behaviour’. What this means is that the structures of colonialism such as slavery etc. that these CARICOM nations are used to will not be established in this contemporary world order under the PRC. That is not to suggest, though, that China’s actions do not make it neo-colonial. In other words, the absence of sameness does not equate to an absence of similarity:

I think your question has to do with more the sort of government and the aspects of colonialism, which I don’t think are that inseparable from the economic side of things, because it has a lot to do with money and business interests. So, when it comes to the economic side of colonialism yes, I am seeing these kinds of neo-colonial continuities, but in terms of subjectivity and things like race or otherness, it is different. It is changing things a bit because Trinidadians are now receiving and observing people whom they Trinidadians are othering. So, there is a new hierarchy being created and again, that’s a bit different from previous kinds of hierarchy like the plantations. So, I guess yes there are neo-colonial tenets here. It’s a very long way of saying yes because there are certain continuities (JN16).

9.5 Conclusion

The chapter finds that China is leaning more towards only some of the promises made and has minimal deliverance or utter disregard of the others made in the Forum. The chapter also argues that what China offers to these nations is, in some situations, not what these nations want. It also notes, however, that while data results have shown that the relationship is not completely win-win, in that, CARICOM nations are not of the notion that they too are benefiting on a mutual footing in their partnership China, the PRC is still not considered a neo-colonial power in the eyes of these elites. The reason for this was found to be steeped in the violent colonial past of these countries, where subjugation and the course of their nations’ affairs were directed by foreign imperial powers. This desire to subjugate and brutalise is instead replaced by China’s ‘*Charm Offensive*’, which it is now using as its foreign policy tools. As a result, elites in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago refuse to declare China as a neo-colonial power, despite the PRC’s possession of neo-colonial principles. However, my research argues that the absence of sameness as it was in the colonial period, does not equate to the lack of similarity in the period of decolonisation and globalisation.

Chapter Ten: The Geopolitics of CARICOM nations and the Game of Rational versus Irrational

The recent past produced various alternatives to the geopolitical construction of the Caribbean and by extent, the CARICOM region. These include a) the historic-additive strategy which is the inventory and grouping of isolated insular and regional histories b) scientific generalisation (comparative indexing of pan-Caribbean family patterns, inter-ethnic relations, agricultural strategies, forms of colonial rule etc.) c) schemes for Caribbean political and financial integration and d) the mystique of African origins (Morse, 1967). Nevertheless, the most compelling and dominant approaches of all those mentioned above have always been the force of location in both a strategic and economically demographic sense (Cohen, 2003). Braveboy-Wagner (2014) contends that when it comes to the topic of Caribbean geopolitics scholars find the topic to be one that denotes negative historical underpinnings and as a result, deems it an outdated topic to discuss especially since the majority of the IR discourse is concerned with normative approaches.¹²³ As a result, some of the most noteworthy researchers who stand in the tradition of Caribbean geopolitics continues to be David Barker, Adres Serbin, Bonham Richardson and Thomas Anderson. Regardless of the quality of their analyses the fact that there are only a few renowned scholars with neither of their work having to do with the geopolitics relating to CARICOM nations' perspective as it relates to China; not only indicates a gap in the application of the geopolitical theory as it relates to the topic; but also a never before attempt at the use of the holistic constructivist approach in this regard.

To fill this lacuna, my research address the following question in this chapter: How does the geopolitical factors—taken to mean the natural and human structures that exist in CARICOM's geographical space, influence the economic and political relations that leads to the emergence of China in the sub-region? And does the nature of such geographical, as well as human structures help us to identify the irrational and rational players in this equation? As Braveboy-Wagner (2014) points out, Caribbean scholars need to start to consider 'whether the constrained circumstances under which the old geopolitical relations were constructed have changed,

¹²³ Braveboy-Wagner.,2014. *Spaces and Places: The Impact of Geopolitics on Caribbean International Relations and Foreign Policy*. Unpublished paper presented at ISA Conference, 2014 Toronto, Canada.

[since] the notion of “space” has certainly expanded beyond physical and spatial characteristics’.¹²⁴

Given the absence of contemporary political geographers from this strand of research, answering the question has, first of all, an explorative purpose. As a result, the study extends itself in this section to build inroads into the holistic constructivist analysis wherein the objective is to provide a sound picture of the extent to which CARICOM’s geopolitical factors influence the economics and politics behind China’s rise in the sub-region and whether that makes China rational players and CARICOM nations irrational players. This section of the study considers the nature of the rational and irrational players through the analysis of the poker game literature, the study evaluates whether there is a poker-faced dimension to China’s foreign policy approach in fulfilling its broader agenda in the sub-region. The study does this through the use of Marco Javarone’s Evolutionary Game Theory. When applied to the China-CARICOM relations, the analysis found that there are indeed elements existing in the game of Poker that can also be found in China’s foreign policy approach specifically towards these nations. This dimension of the approach is termed here as the ‘poker-faced’ approach.

The study will also show not only that the geopolitics of the Caribbean Community matters, but also how it does. In order to provide a comprehensive analysis to the question, the first section will cover the geopolitics of CARICOM nations as it relates to China where the study will provide an overview of the geopolitical literature and the state of research on Caribbean geopolitics, in order to unearth the concepts that suit the research analytical needs. The chapter reinforces this argument by presenting empirical evidence from both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago’s elites most of whom assert that China does indeed cater to the vulnerable identity of these nations, to gain access to its geographical structures that are indicative of its strategic location.

¹²⁴ Braveboy-Wagner.,2014. *Spaces and Places: The Impact of Geopolitics on Caribbean International Relations and Foreign Policy*. Unpublished paper presented at ISA Conference, 2014 Toronto, Canada.

10.1 CARICOM's Geopolitics as it relates to China

10.1.1 *Grappling with 'geopolitics'*

In 1979, Henry Kissinger suggested that '*geopolitics*' was synonymous with global equilibrium and permanent national interests in the world balance of power. Though Kissinger is not wrong in his claim, the literature surrounding the term is rife with ambiguity as well as confusion. As Pami Aalto points out, 'the term geopolitics is still to an extent missing in mainstream international relations and when it is mentioned, it takes on multiple referents' (Aalto, 2001). Such ambiguity and malleability, however, should not render the concept meaningless or without practical political consequence. Therefore, in an attempt to define the basic nature of '*geopolitics*' and to explore how the term is made relevant in the political discourse; this section works towards understanding the concept by first dissecting and contending with its prefix and suffix, respectively. The prefix 'geo' which is, in fact, Greek for earth/land inextricably speaks to the physical attribute of the landmass on which we reside. The Greek suffix '*politics*', on the other hand, translates to 'affairs of the cities' and would, therefore, suggest that compounded, '*geopolitics*' would then mean, the land as it relates to the affairs of the cities. In a much narrower form, however, where 'politics' can be taken to mean the organised governance over a state, the concept of '*geopolitics*' would then come to mean, governance over a state in relation to its land. Geography, therefore, is never a natural and non-digressive wonder which is separate from philosophy and legislative issues. Rather, topography as discourse is a type of power/knowledge within itself (Hayes and Clarke, 2015).

Being able to trace the emergence of this concept dates back to 1840-1914 where the term was first coined by Swedish Political Scientist, Rudolf Kjellen who attributed the word to a state's geographical space that determines its political and strategic relevance in pursuit of global power (Owens, 1999). The term later emerged in the well-known work of Alfred Mahan who believed that the power of a nation could be closely linked to the area of the sea which it occupies (Mahan, 1905). Here, Mahan emphasised that a country's strategic location was conducive to its control over the sea. Listing six conditions needed for a nation to secure sea power, Mahan alludes to a state's geographical position as it relates to being advantageous or disadvantageous, favourable climatic conditions, accessible coastlines and abundant natural resources (Mahan, 1905). However, Mahan limited the scope of such geopolitics to the Eurasian context, mainly the Central zone of Asia lying between 30° and 40° north (Mahan,

1905). Consequently, it is difficult to accept this validity without an adequate view. Admittedly, the locational factor in the study of a state is of great importance as is its control over its seas. However, control solely over sea cannot be deemed the singular most important variable. It ought to be noted that the value of a state's position alters with changing conditions in many ways, depending on its interest at that given time.

My argument here is that the location of a state has other factors besides the sea that affects its political geography intimately. For example, the Caribbean Community, which comprises some of the smallest independent nations than any other region of comparable size on the basis of its strategic feature, has received a great deal of attention for decades. Scholars familiar with the Caribbean during the Cold War era cannot dispute the impact on the internal affairs of these nations, which were founded on concerns based on the dangers of the spread of communism in the region. The main concern here for these nations during this period was not only control over their sea channels but more so, over the implications of the infiltration of the communist ideology into a region so heavily policed at the time by the United States.

Carlton Snyder presents another approach to the concept. He argues that closely allied with the locational factor as a geographical element in the internal affairs of the state, are also the consideration of its size and shape (Snyder, 1962). This then means that, every state has grown to its present size from relatively small beginnings in the form of a nuclear area from which expansion has taken place, and which generally remains a dominant position in the internal organisation. Upon closer examination one would notice that the Caribbean Community grew out of the Caribbean, France grew out of L'Ile de France, U.S.A grew out of the original thirteen colonies on the Atlantic seaboard, the U.S.S.R out of Muscovy and to show that the workings of this principle are not confined to modern times; the Roman Empire grew out of a small nucleus in Latium. As a result, one could conclude that size or space inevitably plays a major role in the organisation of a state if for no other reason than its relations with the nuclear areas must be facilitated and organised, lest failure to tie together the outlying parts with the centre leaves the former open to the threat of acquisition by rival states.

In some areas, researchers like Colin Gray and Geoffrey Sloan agrees and tries to illuminate the relationship between geopolitics, geography and strategy through a continual exchange between history and theory (Gray and Sloan, 1999). Gary and Sloan (1999) stated that 'geopolitics is an attempt to draw attention to the importance of certain geographical patterns in political history'. Consequently, geopolitics becomes a theory of spatial relationship and

historical causation. Which means that one of the aims of geopolitics is to emphasise that political predominance is a question not just of having power in the sense of human or material resources, but also of the geographical context within which that power is exercised. As a result, political demands are projected through space from one location to another upon the earth's surface. This is not to say that the geographical environment determines the objectives or strategies of the foreign or internal policies of a particular state. After all, states are not constrained; rather, topography or geographical configurations open doors for policy analysts and lawmakers (Gray and Sloan, 1999).

The extent to which geographical opportunities will be exploited, depends on the strategy. Political objectives are a consequence of choices made by policymakers and as a result, stems from these choices that maintains that political and strategic importance are indeed attached to geographical configurations and locations. It also reflects the nature of politics in the decision-making process. In this process, the geographical factors which influence politics are a product of policymakers selecting particular objectives and attempting to realise them by the conscious formulation of strategies. Thus, since it is dependent upon changing levels of not only transport by way of the sea but also, social, economic and political tendencies, then this relationship between the geographical environment and the decision-making process creates an interesting dynamic.

10.2 CARICOM's Geopolitics and China

From the above findings, it becomes evident that the geopolitical literature is rife with ambiguity and sprawling ideas as to the underpinnings of the concept. However, it is important to note that some of the most important influences on a state's foreign policy behaviour stem from its location vis-à-vis other countries in the international system and the geostrategic advantages that this conveys. The presence of natural frontiers, for example, might guide policymakers' choices. That is to say, the foreign policy of a state is usually ruled by at least one part of its relations with different states (Macridis, 1979). As previously mentioned in chapter 3, the United States, for example, insist on retaining the Caribbean as its 'third border' within which it hopes to maintain political clout that affirms its capitalist agendas. Again, the foreign relations of CARICOM nations as well as their internal affairs, for decades have been largely dominated by fear of overstepping that political boundary.

Michi Ebata and Beverly Neufeld comes close to highlighting one of the shortcomings of the non-human environment of a state, by arguing that this environment can present permanently disabling obstacles for a state to successfully compete in the international arena (Ebata and Neufeld, 2000). Ebata and Neufeld contend that man can do much, yet the confinements of great distances, landscape, short growing seasons, deficient and variable precipitation will always remain (Ebata and Neufeld, 2000). As a result, the geographical possibilities are vast while the geological impediments are quite imposing. From this very line of argument, it is accurate as I had argued in chapter 3, that the very geographical potential of CARICOM nations not only perpetuate their ongoing dependency and the conditioning of a vulnerable identity but is also reflected in their foreign policy. Thus, limited renewable and non-renewable resources, small size of land area, island topography, fragile tropical ecosystems and scarce amounts of flat and arable land; coupled with restrictions to the land's carrying capacity are specific geographical factors that have constrained the process of economic development for these CARICOM nations. As a result, economic sensitivity, due to the limitations of size, a restricted resource base and relative isolation, are significant factors in small island development and the case of CARICOM nations are no different.

From Ebata's and Neufeld's standpoint of geography, these limitations of location, climate, scattered resources and 'islandness' would combine to create landscapes which no amount of economic or political planning these nations can fully surmount. In essence, whatever their governments, CARICOM nations would seem to lack the capacity to become truly great and competitive powers in the international sphere. The limited capacity of these islands to produce and expend restricts their exceptional capability to create an internal fund and capital markets, and to increase their exposure to more extensive financial vacillation (Barker and McGregor, 1995). As a result, dependence on external aid seems almost to be an inevitable fact of these CARICOM nations' existence. David Barker and Duncan McGregor concluded that economic dependency is rooted in small island size (Barker and McGregor, 1995) which goes back to Kenneth Waltz's theory that was mentioned in chapter 3 where it was argued that these small nations will align themselves with a superpower as a way of preserving their own state. We saw reasons for this later coming out in chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

However noteworthy here, is that the Caribbean Community itself is not a state. It is instead a collection of nation-states. This means that the Community is a sub-region within a broader region, which is the Caribbean, as was previously stated. While as rightly argued in chapter 3,

where it has been asserted that these nations have certain characteristics that may restrict them and, as Ebata and Neufeld have also argued, they may, in effect, be restricted by their own natural geographical location; as it relates to China, that is not the case. My argument here is that though these geographical variables may play a role in hindering these small nations' competition and development in the global arena, for China, the very location of these nations also plays into Beijing's favour. CARICOM countries naturally possess what can be referred to as a 'location of strategic importance' which plays into China's strategic and innovative new tools of foreign policy. According to David Jessop (2015) the newly 'enlarged Panama Canal, the rapid development of Caribbean ports and deep-water anchorages'¹²⁵ has piqued China's interest. Additionally, in naval terms, the Caribbean Community is permitted control over sea lanes and deep-water channels that provides access from the Pacific to the Atlantic, US ports in the gulf and on both of its coast. Also, the prospect of an improved US-Cuba economic relations; and the possibility that in time there will be significant finds of offshore gas and oil across the region, further adds fuel to the fire of China's interest. This comes as no surprise as the Belt and Road Initiative that was touched on in the previous chapter, grants China access to these sea lanes and water channels.

Consistent with the prescriptions of the holistic constructivist approach to geopolitics, this chapter provides an argument for the exploration of both the complex external and internal factors that have shaped the geopolitics of the Caribbean Community since its creation. In so doing, the chapter builds on the work of Adres Serbin who looked squarely at Caribbean geopolitics by exploring both the aforementioned factors that have shaped the geopolitical dynamism of the Caribbean region since the beginning of 1962 (Serbin, 1990). Though Serbin's concern has to do mainly with the cooperation and integration attempts in the region and the impact of arms escalation and militarisation; he also argues that the category of vulnerability raises a whole range of issues (Serbin, 1990). Among those are the geography of these islands and their fragile, dependent economies which militate against them being able to acquire what is needed to defend themselves. Certainly, it is that fragility which obtains the tendency of these nations to constantly feel under pressure for immediate cash to fulfil stated functions. As a result, and as I have previously stated in chapter 3, they will 'bandwagon' with

¹²⁵ See David Jessop's paper entitled '*A Location of Strategic Importance*' presented at the Caribbean Council. Published January 4, 2015. Accessed: June 13, 2017. URL: <https://www.caribbean-council.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Jan4-A-location-of-strategic-importance.pdf>

emerging superpowers like China at times without consulting their polities as we have seen to be the case of Jamaica in chapter 5. These nations are in a rush to develop, and instant development is always what Bert J. Thomas calls ‘the *raison d’être* for independence’ (Thomas, 1992). Thus, security is a priority which may mean the suppression of change of domestic and external variants to realise instant modernisation/advancement.

It is on this basis that the holistic constructivist theory lies in controversy with the classical geopolitical theory advanced by other researchers. The fault line between the two theories, I argue, is largely based on the fact that classical geopolitics is primarily about understanding politics based on considerations of location and physical geography and advising state actions accordingly. The holistic constructivist theory, on the other hand, challenges the dichotomy between both the systemic and domestic structures and tries to bridge the two approaches to accommodate the entire range of elements conditioning the identity and interest of the state. As a result, it no longer becomes solely about the physical identity of the state but instead also considers the corporate and social ways of life as a unified expository viewpoint that treats the domestic and international structures and process as two countenances of a solitary social and political order (Reus-Smit, 2013). This is not to say that geography, in terms of physical and spatial characteristics, does not influence the decisions of the state. As Halford Mackinder (1904) contends, ‘man and not nature initiates, but nature in large measure controls’ (Mackinder, 1904). Yet following Mackinder’s quote, I argue here that classical geopolitics is not a science of foreign policy, nor state behaviour. It only deals with geographically given obstacles to and opportunities for successful policies. The argument of this chapter is that human actors initiate policies and this behaviour cannot solely be analysed by classical geopolitics unless it is merged with a holistic constructivist approach.

This means that, whereas geographical conditions facilitate our understanding of why China has been engaging with CARICOM nations, they do not tell us how precisely the political aspects of these islands are playing in China’s favour. Richard Bernal attributes the Caribbean directly to China’s quest to secure resources (Bernal, 2016b) along with a slew of other researchers. However so far and based on the arguments in the chapters leading up to this, the geographical advantages that these CARICOM nations afford China does not necessarily mean that the geographical/natural structures of these countries are the only aspects that China is enjoying. Indeed, the ports that are being built and infrastructures that are rehabilitated by China in these CARICOM countries could serve as economic growth poles, with Chinese

companies investing in free-trade zones at these ports, cooperating with local companies and incorporating them into global commodity chains.

However, my argument is that the natural materials that these nations can offer are not the only security paradigm being developed by China. Instead, the very politics involving the vulnerable identity of these islands are playing into China's hands. Again, this does not mean that the geographical factors of these nations are irrelevant, or that they fall short as a description of China's strategy; but as Soren Scholvin states, 'we have to include non-geographical factors in order to gain a complete picture of what the Chinese are doing' (Scholvin, 2016) in the Caribbean Community. These non-geographical factors which include the 'vulnerable identity' that is the political nature of these islands are what China is using its soft power approach to deal with. While its ulterior motive is to secure and utilise these nations strategically placed location:

I think that they are seeking us out as a strategic vantage point, in ways that could impact the United States. And the way they do that is obviously through Chinese businesses on the ground and the provision of Chinese loans, grants and military assistance to most of us. This is something we all need to pay attention to (JG8).

The only thing we have as a region is strategic importance. It's not resources anymore except for maybe Venezuela, Trinidad and Guyana. So really, it's not so much that anymore. It has to do with transition through the Panama Canal and the building of super ports, possibly in Jamaica, in the Dominican Republic and in Cuba. The influence or the interest has to do mostly with shipping lanes, some natural resources and so on, but the major interest I would say, is geo-strategy (GRG1).

10.2.1 Catering to the Political to get to the Geographical (rational versus the irrational)

The relationship between China and the CARICOM nations has been relatively insignificant from a geostrategic point of view for decades. The dominant role of the Cold War as a dividing line between the communist East and the capitalist West led to a string of military governments that strongly favoured US's interests, while China was largely preoccupied with its own challenges at home and in its neighbourhood. Beyond its direct and indirect impact on the region's economic and governance trajectories, China's economic statecraft also contains its geopolitical ambitions. This should come as no surprise, as the fifteen (15) active nations of the Caribbean Community provide a number of opportunities to strengthen the general climate for China's 'harmonious rise' on the world stage (Bernal, 2010). The Chinese leadership's overt

engaging of 'leaders' in the sub-region over the last several years explicitly recognises the value Beijing puts on close ties of friendship and cooperation covering not just economic but cultural, political and security domains as well.

China's aim to reform the international order to reflect the growing economic and financial weight it and other rising powers carry in the world, needs like-minded allies from the Caribbean to succeed, and all the better, if joined up by countries that feel abandoned by the US's global leadership (Bernal, 2015a). In this regard, CARICOM nations have provided a conducive environment to advance this shared goal and have synergistically supported the long-standing aspiration of the sub-region's quest for greater strategic autonomy and unity on the world stage, separated from the United States. Since then, China has engaged these nations in a foray of promises and actions that covers politics, security, trade, investment, loans, finance, infrastructure, energy, industry, resources, agriculture, science and cultural exchanges. All of these things were offered in the 2011 Forum.

From a pragmatic CARICOM nations' perspective, all this sweet-sounding attention and resources from the world's fastest rising power became overwhelmingly enticing to these developing countries. These democratic governments were quick to restore their economies and reduce unemployment following a few years of difficult macroeconomic changes adopted after much pressure from Washington (Piccone, 2016a). For these small CARICOM nations, the development of ties with Beijing was an easy decision, given the decision between the cumbersome conditions of the neoliberal Washington agreements and what was presented to them as the non-binding conditions of the Chinese agreements. This soft power-based rising strategy in these nations is really Beijing's ability to balance national advancement against global duties, monetary advantages against political and security interests, relations with the world powers against those with different nations and change against the upkeep of world order (Ding, 1955).

So why? Unsurprisingly China has very little if anything to gain in trade and economic terms with its engagements in CARICOM and certainly arguments along the lines that China sees the islands as fellow developing countries and potential partners is not at all convincing to many researchers. This section of the chapter argues that outside all the motives outlined in chapter 4, the underlying reason has to do mainly with the Caribbean Community's geopolitics. Not just the geographical element but also the internal and external political nature of these nations which is cast in a vulnerable identity that continues to render them, aid-dependency agents. As

witnessed in chapter 3, CARICOM nations have for decades allowed the vulnerable identity surrounding their internal and external political nature to dictate who they align themselves with and their reasons for doing so. Advancing this point further, it is here that the argument rests on Robert Young's stance on the post-colonial theory, as was expressed in chapter 3. Let us remember that Young posits that 'post' in 'post-colonialism' did not signify a leaving behind of colonialism but rather emphasised the continued relevance of its impact on Caribbean nations' politics, economy and development after decolonisation (Young, 2016). The shift of these nations from colonial to postcolonial was as he puts it 'a minor move from direct to indirect rule, a shift from colonial rule and domination to a position not so much of independence but in-dependence' (Young, 2016). I argue that it is this position of aid-dependence that has formulated the vulnerable identity of these CARICOM nations, which continues to dictate their internal and external political nature, that China is taking advantage of. This identity, in essence, is a by-product of the variables that are inherent to small nations as was previously laid out in chapter 3.¹²⁶ This has created a severely lopsided relation of the rational agent versus the irrational ones.

10.2.2 The argument of the rational versus the irrational: Applying the Poker Model to the China-CARICOM partnership

The argument of who is a rational and irrational agent, finds its footing in the recent work of Marco Javarone which involves modelling Poker challenges by way of the Evolutionary Game Theory (EGT) (Javarone, 2016). Here Javarone (2016) proposes that based on the principles of Poker, players may follow two different strategies: rational and irrational. Judicious/rational operators are those that augment the likelihood to prevail by a principled procedure or 'discerning' mentality; while irrational operators, despite what might be expected, are those that engage in activities haphazardly without thinking about the estimation of their own benefits or different methodologies (Javarone, 2016, pp. 1-5). In this case the study will refer to the strategies taken by rational agents as (*technique x*), and those deployed by irrational agents as (*technique y*). The study proposes that the mathematical image would then be $W = s^x > s^y$, where W represents 'winning' and s^x and s^y demonstrate the 'technique' of the respective operators x and y . In making this system applicable to the China-CARICOM relations, the mathematical

¹²⁶ These characteristics are interrelated and offers an insight to the most critical elements that are attributed to small states. None of them independently are exclusive to small nation states, however on the whole they offer a wealth of knowledge into what components shape the very foundations of small states in various degree instead of in kind to bigger states.

model would then translate to: $W = S^{china} > S^{CARICOM}$; where a combination of China's soft and poker-faced power approach has led to its foreign policy strategy being unequivocally greater than those employed by CARICOM states.

However, Javarone further posits that for the situation where the irrational operators adjust their technique mirroring that of their triumphant rival, at that point a balance can be reached (Javarone, 2016). Nevertheless, this revision of methodology cannot be met unless the rational/winning opponent reveal their technique and until the irrational/losing operator decides to adopt the technique of the former. According to Javarone, in real situations, the technique of the victor is quite often never uncovered and subsequently the judicious/rational operator keeps emerging as the champion while the irrational one keeps on losing (Javarone, 2016). The study on the basis of this argument express the computation of a judicious/rational operator win over an irrational/losing operator by using the Fermi-like¹²⁷ equation (1) below:

$$s^x > s^y \left(\frac{\pi^x - \pi^y}{K} \right) = W \ 20 \quad (1)$$

In the above equation s^x and s^y indicates the '*technique*' of the operators x and y . Meanwhile π^x and π^y demonstrates their results (Javarone, 2016). In the equation $\pi^x = 50$ and $\pi^y = 10$ and by using $K=2$ a small amount of irrationality is thereby implemented in the technique revision phase. The win for the judicious/rational operator would therefore be $W=20$. On the other hand, the Fermi-like equation for the irrational operator using the same numerical values would be expressed as is in equation (2):

$$s^y < s^x \left(\frac{\pi^y - \pi^x}{K} \right) = W \ -20 \quad (2)$$

The Poker Model Defined

In looking at any situation in the discipline of IR, models have always contributed to a more clarified understanding of why a particular situation is playing out in the manner it is.

¹²⁷ Fermi-like methodology named after Enrico Fermi is done by using the back-of-the-envelope/rough estimations technique. This is typically combined with rough speculations to check values which would otherwise require extensive investigation or experimentation to decide their exact outcomes.

Considering that this section of the study focuses on the similarities existing in the game of Poker and the skills employed therein to China's foreign policy, the study employs the Poker Model as the basis of this section.

Since its emergence on gaming platforms, there has been rival debates as to whether Poker should be perceived as a skill as opposed to a game. Researchers such as Ole Bjerg and Andrew Leigh contends that Poker is indeed a game but one of pure skill (Bjerg, 2011, Leigh, 2015). Bjerg puts it best by stating, 'to ask whether poker is a game of chance or a game of skill is to assume that it is either-or. Yet the essential characteristic of Poker is precisely that it is both' (Bjerg, 2011). Therefore, if Poker is both a game and a skill then Schelling (1967) is correct in pointing out that the game theory which would apply to Poker, should then be seen as a 'formal study of the rational, consistent expectations that participants can have about each other's choices' (Schelling, 1967). Consequently, the game in and of itself represent guidelines towards a general plan consisting of strategic decisions, involving both rational and irrational agents that offer incentives for competition and cooperation among themselves (Kubáľková, 2016). Accordingly, with time, the discourse has witnessed many philosophers as well as politicians pointing to the similarities existing between poker and war (Stewart, 2007), while foreign policy has always instead, been likened unto chess (Walker et al., 2011). Nevertheless, the game provides a remarkable analogy for the global arena. Careful and detailed analysis of the game brings to the fore valuable insights of how states operate in an anarchic world.

There are fundamentally four principles of Poker, namely: the principle of strength, the principle of aggression, the principle of deception and the principle of betting (Harrington and Robertie, 2008). With regards to the principle of strength, a player in this regard spend its time building a bigger pot (chips) which has a significant bearing on that player's ability to ultimately win the game. The principle of aggression on the other hand usually involves the action of betting and raising through exploitation of the folding equity. However, what can be easily termed as the cornerstone of Poker, is the principle of deception. This involves expertise in keeping other players guessing about what the differing bets mean and what hands are being played. Coupled with the betting principle, which necessitates a player forcing a better hand to fold, forcing a weaker hand to call or causing a drawing hand to draw at unfavourable odds, means that the prime player has to ensure that their actions contain several interpretations. This means that if a player eliminates an equally strong or stronger player, then the prime player would have won from an otherwise losing hand. If however, a weaker hand is made to call,

then even more money is added to the pot which the prime player is set to win (Harrington and Robertie, 2008).

10.2.3 Linking Javorone's Poker Principles to the soft-power and poker-faced policy approach existing in the China-CARICOM relations

China's combination of a soft and poker-faced power approach is often easily mistaken solely as a 'soft power' approach by almost all researchers on the topic. This is stemming from the fact that the East-Asian power house's motives to bear fruition seemed to be firmly anchored on the quest for security, financial collaboration and an inexorably multilateral way to deal with foreign policy approaches. This section of the study argues that though these researchers are not wrong in citing China's soft power approach they fall short in advancing the argument that there is also a poker-faced dimension to this approach. The argument here is that China being the judicious/rational operator in its relations with CARICOM states, employs both approaches, neither of which can be fully grasped without proper analysis. So, what essentially is soft power? Soft power here is the capacity of one state to shape the preference of other states utilising the medium of both interest and fascination. According to Joseph Nye who coined the idea in the 1990's, soft power emerges out of engagement with a country's lifestyle, political measures and methodologies (Nye, 1990). In this way, when strategies are viewed as genuine according to different governments, at that point soft power is improved. General Wesley Clark in agreement, contended that, soft power is able to afford an impact past the hard edge of customary balance of power (Nye, 1990). As it relates to China, its developing economy is a noteworthy source of its expanding advance in the creation of appeal, particularly in the Caribbean Community. Wealth and the possibility to be well off are alluring and cash presents influence on regulations and gives way to disseminating culture and ideas (Zheng, 2009). Quoting Joseph Nye, Denise Zheng concludes that enticement is quite often superior to pressure (Zheng, 2009).

In the Caribbean Community it is then easy to see why this could be entirely the case as it relates to China. Here China's chant to these small states centres on development, cooperation and win for all. Based on data findings many researchers writing on Latin America and the Caribbean have singularly argued for this 'soft power' approach by China through linking this phase to a rise in China's monetary connections to the sub-region. This soft power approach is presented by the moving from almost frail levels of exchange and investment to more

noteworthy trades (Piccone, 2016b). It was Ted Piccone (2016) who further evidenced this approach in Latin America by citing that China's volume of trade with the Caribbean region in the year 2000 indicated a climb of \$12 billion, and at the end of 2013 it stood at a whopping \$260 billion (Piccone, 2016). Evidence of this soft power approach has been successfully extended into the Caribbean and was symbolised on August 2015 in Jamaica in the foundation of a 600,000 square foot, 'feng shui'- based Chinese garden in the Hope Botanical Gardens in Kingston (Bernal, 2016b). Obviously, in its purposeful effort to lure nations in the Community, China accentuates the positives under the expansive pennant of peaceful concurrence. This type of soft power shows an enormous change amid the past 50 years, moving from Mao Zedong's conflict and revision to a period of placidity and progress under a more current scheme (Zheng, 2009). Without a doubt, contrasted with the times of Mao, China seems more 'beguiling' as of late. This is a change that can at any rate, and to some degree, be attributed its developing soft power (Zheng, 2009).

So, what exactly is the poker-faced policy approach? The poker-faced policy approach has two sub-sections, namely: '*pokernomics*' and '*pokerpolitics*'. The former of which entails economic actions taken by a 'generous' state that masks that state's hidden intentions with regards to its own economic agenda. While '*pokerpolitics*' on the other hand, is the masking of a state's political agenda as it relates to other states. Rising states typically utilise financial tools as a way of seeking after vital destinations on the global stage and these as a result, are frequently covered under the appearance of business, and apolitical exercises (Wigell, 2016). China similarly takes this approach with countries in the Caribbean Community by pumping massive investments in these nations through foreign direct investments, loans, grants and credits. This *pokernomics* approach towards geopolitics derives from disposable income instead of weapon demonstration, exchange of citizens instead of military progression, and market invasion instead of armed forces and bases (Luttwak, 1990). Along these lines, in spite of utilised methods appearing soft/delicate, the point of origin may be a hard one in enhancing China's more extensive geostrategic position. Especially in relation to its rivalry with different nations. Mike Caro (2003) agrees by pointing out that money is nothing more than chips, just the devices of the trade, such as angling poles to a fisherman (Caro, 2003). Following this argument, China's generous giving to these CARICOM nations may seem like a game that is all about money but has nothing to do with that.

As it relates to *pokerpolitics*, according to Andrew Leigh, politics in and of itself is more like poker than chess (Curnow, 2016). He contends that politics has always been told as an account of skilful victors and foolish losers (Curnow, 2016). Though Leigh based his research on the ‘lucky’ aspect that the poker strategy adds to politics, this section of the study as it relates to *pokerpolitics* focuses strictly on the poker aspect as the creation of a smokescreen to mask true political intentions as it relates to politics. Therefore, understanding its role doesn’t just produce a more accurate perception of events, it also enlightens areas that lend to a state vis-à-vis state success or failure. For China, the ‘One China’ principle for many researchers appears to be the most important principle for China to develop its relations with these nations in the Caribbean Community. All things considered; the Caribbean remains the hub that possesses Taiwan’s surviving diplomatic connections. It is therefore important for China to maintain diplomatic ties with states in both the Caribbean and Latin America while figuring out how to restrain its ‘rouge’ state’s contribution in the area (Dreyer, 2005). However, this section of the study argues that as it was in the Cold War era where Taiwan was utilised as a satellite of the United States, thus conflicting with China’s security, that China in turn decades later is utilising these CARICOM nations as satellites, not in a military, but in an economic sense that seeks to threaten the United States’ security.

The argument here, is that both China’s *pokernomics* and *pokerpolitics* are interconnected and in turn both forms the poker-faced dimension of its policy approach. This in essence is what makes China quite rational and strategic in its approach towards the sub-region. Gambling lies at the heart of economic ideas, institutions and as this section of the study argues, by extension, states (Brown, 2011). Aaron Brown concludes that poker has important lessons for winning in the markets, and markets have similarly significant lessons for winning at poker (Brown, 2011). The poker-faced power approach of foreign policy advanced by this section of the study argues that states like China who are utilising this approach will always act contrary to how it really intends to. Much like people in a poker game, a state will never struggle against an opposing state and will instead play with all other states at the international table. In this manner, a state comprehends that it can never win by ruling rival states, however rather it can win by finding a productive vital specialty that would be in nobody’s interest to annihilate. To mask these strategies and intended motives then a state would conjure up a smokescreen. According to Judi James the intended behaviour of a poker player acts like ‘thought bubbles’ which can easily give away intentions and feelings (James, 2012). Therefore, to play and win would then mean that these ‘thought bubbles’ would have to be deleted. Consequently, this section of the

study concludes that the poker-faced strategy in foreign policy is essentially the practice of a state masking its own signal by bluffing and acting the opposite to how it really wants to. Linking back to Javarone's Poker game theory where it was argued that rational agents takes this stance depending on the level of payoff (Javarone, 2016). That is, if the hand is weak or the payoff is deemed to be low then a rational agent will fold.

As it relates to China and the Caribbean Community, the former's poker-faced dimension of its foreign policy approach stems from the hidden motives behind its economic and political rise in the region. Though clearly proponents like Richard Bernal attribute this rise in the Caribbean to economics and diplomacy this section of the study only agrees to a certain extent. Yes, China wishes to secure natural resources and also to diplomatically isolate Taiwan in the region, but the aggressive courting of these islands cannot simply be as a result of those two mentioned motives. China's increased effort to the sub-region is currently free of what Mander and Wigglesworth termed as the 'Taiwan factor' and is furthermore coordinated in a timely manner (Mander and Wigglesworth, 2013). A mix of economic withdrawals and appointive impulses have made provincial governments in these islands frantic for the monetary life savers that the Chinese loans and credits may give instead of making cuts in social designs that are wasteful and of questionable practicality (Mander and Wigglesworth, 2013). Furthermore, the region's role as a market opportunity for the gigantic volumes of merchandise at present being produced by China has pretty much been discounted. Contentions that support closer monetary ties with China will open up a stupendous opportunity for expanding domestic production which will secure a considerably larger share of the Chinese market; appears to be wishful thinking, especially given the inefficiencies that are inalienable to these small nations' production processes. The mere fact that researchers can agree that China has very little to gain in trade and economic with CARICOM states must mean then that China's motives are simply not as clear cut.

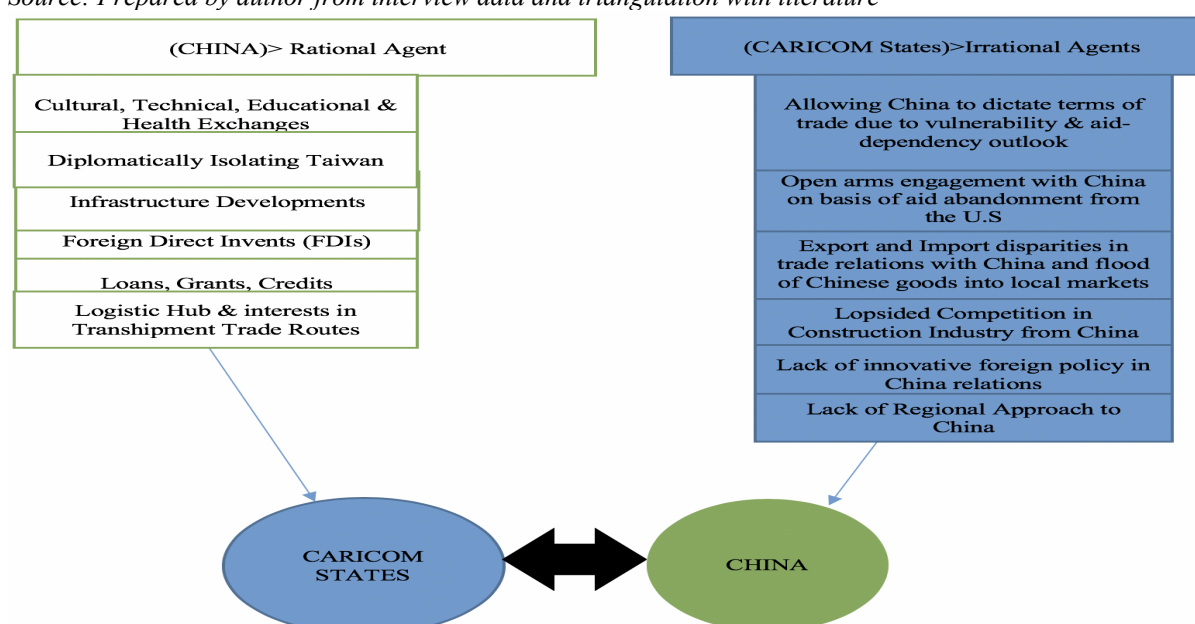
As in the case of Africa, governments should collectively pause to discover the shrouded intentions of various Chinese advancements toward our landmass (Insaidoo, 2016). However, Kwane Insaidoo's warning continues to fall on deaf ears as CARICOM states' officials and especially scholars who focuses solely on the opportunities that China's emergence has brought to the sub-region continues to throw caution to the wind without paying much attention to China's 'hidden agenda'. Effectively it is this 'hidden agenda' that makes up the poker-faced dimension of China's foreign policy and has rendered China the rational agent in its partnership

with CARICOM states. Although some researchers have unknowingly recognised that China's power approach might be more than just simply 'soft', almost all fail to attribute a name to it. For example, Richard Bernal admits that 'China has developed an increasingly sophisticated approach to the use of soft power in international relations since the mid-2000s' (Bernal, 2016). While Joshua Kurlantzick speaks of China mounting 'a systematic, coherent soft power strategy' which he describes as a 'charm offensive' (Bernal 2016). He Li, writing from the Chinese perspective contends that it has ended up being that Beijing has now taken a milder, coordinated, confident and more beneficial approach toward commonplace and overall endeavours (Li, 2005). The reason why the exact nature of China's approach continues to allude researchers is because as it is argued here, this 'soft power' approach has another dimension to it and that is the poker-faced dimension.

Evidently for China to first benefit from these small nations' strategically placed location, it had to first contend with the vulnerable identity, which is an underpinning of these nations' domestic and international political climate. We see this playing out in several areas wherein China is engaging with small nations. These are mostly in the areas of *Chinese Foreign Direct Investment, Major Infrastructure Projects, People to People Exchange and Diplomacy* as was outlined in chapter 4 and again in chapter 9. CARICOM nations on the other hand, are not as meticulous and strategic in their foreign policy as depicted in *Fig 13* below.

Figure 13: Depiction of how rational and strategic China's foreign policy towards CARICOM nations is and how irrational CARICOM nations' foreign policies towards China is.

Source: Prepared by author from interview data and triangulation with literature



The argument here is that in order for a state like China to work out what drives and motivates these CARICOM countries, the East-Asian powerhouse had to first spot the patterns existing in such an identity. This is what makes China a rational agent. In her study, Judi James formulate this spotting of patterns through the use of double doors leading into a department store (James, 2012). According to James, many people tend to almost always walk up to the one that they choose to push which is the one that often remains invariably locked (James, 2012). On different occasions, this will continue to happen to these same individuals with the same door. This, in turn, formulates a pattern in door choices. When applied to nations that have adopted a vulnerable identity, James conclude that not everyone would choose that particular door, but it is the one that often do and continues to, that will help strategic agents to win and win again (James, 2012). This is similarly the case with China and CARICOM nations. The former, having realised that through past events as previously evidenced, these nations have a tendency of adjusting their policies based on the state that could offer them the biggest aid.

CARICOM countries all through their independent history attempted a few procedures to attract financial aid and investment (Morris, 2008). Linking it back to the Cold War-era, preferential trade agreements and a push to keep the islands on the correct side of the iron curtain, became a battleground between the United States and the Soviet Union (Maingot and Lozano, 2005). What mattered to these nations, was not which of the superpower were fighting over their favour as it is the case today as (T&TG3) had pointed out in chapter 7 when he contends, ‘for us it is just an economic bargaining chip, at least from our perspective. We are not concerned about one or ‘two Chinas’ as most of us don’t speak Mandarin or Cantonese. All we care about is our own survival...’ (*See chapter 7 for rest of quote*), but instead a matter of alignment with which of the two could yield the most benefit. (T&TG6) surmised it well when he maintained ‘we in the Caribbean are funny people we will take your money, but that doesn’t mean we like you. And in all regard, we are no different from anybody else. Dominica and a couple of these Caribbean islands, they get grants and say okay we support ‘One China’ and then Taiwan ups the ante, and it’s okay we support the independence of Taiwan. We will dance to whatever tune, cause at the end of the day we are just trying to look out for our own interest’. In the end, coming off the Cold War, the United States dominated with bigger coffers, military intervention and trade preferences. This led to these nations ‘accepting US leadership and adopting Western alignment’ (Aviel et al., 2003).

Based on the data findings in the previous chapters, it is evident that nations in the Caribbean Community have since developed a pattern of aid-dependency stemming from a vulnerable identity that has followed suit in how they employ both their international and domestic policies. It is then, no surprise that China is using its soft-power foreign policy approach in various areas while promoting a case of win-for-all as it has done in the 2011 forum. This particular strategy will allow the PRC to engage these nations while strategically seeking to utilise what Fagon (1973) describes as the ‘plaza’ of the Americas. According to Donald Fagon, ‘the Caribbean was and still is the doorway to the riches of the Americas’ (Fagon, 1974). Essentially, this fact is not lost on China. David Jessop, Director of the Caribbean Council, some decades later contends, ‘there has been a little public discussion about the ways in which some nations beyond the region may be coming to view the strategic importance of the Caribbean’ (Caribbean Council, 2015). To fulfil its economic and political goals in the region it is no surprise that this is why China had to first diplomatically isolate Taiwan (an issue we discussed in chapter 4 and further touched on in chapter 7). It was in effect its first move to gain a strong foothold to benefit from the strategic importance that the region provides.

The vast majority of these CARICOM nations Taipei and Beijing are fighting over are poor, less developed and intensely in debt (Zhao and Liu, 2008). Quite frankly huge amounts of Taipei aid to some of these CARICOM nations have often prompted China to offer even greater aid to compete directly with Taiwan and to offset the Taiwanese influence. Thus, China’s first tactic in achieving its goals based on its knowledge of, and the vulnerable identity that these CARICOM nations continues to portray, has led it to first utilise its soft power approach to lure away these small islands from Taipei. Though Taiwan has a long history of providing development assistance to some of these CARICOM countries; when Taiwan cannot satisfy some countries’ needs, diplomatic relations are likely to be broken and the inevitable switch to China will begin.¹²⁸ This was quite evident in elites’ perspective on St. Lucia’s switch from Taiwan to China and back again.

¹²⁸ The investigation later witnessed this stated switch when the Dominican Republic sever its diplomatic ties with Taiwan to formulate an allegiance with China for a \$3.1 billion package in loans and investments. This was not the case during the course of this investigation but was expected based on the data collected base on the St. Lucia’s flip-flop move.

10.3 FINDINGS: The case of St. Lucia and what elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago and other CARICOM nations¹²⁹ regard as a ‘bad move’

St. Lucia has held relations with Taiwan from 1984 to 1997, then with China from 1997 to 2006 and again with Taiwan since 2006. This was a minor success that Taiwan scored by reversing the move the 1997 St. Lucian government made (Cooney and Sato, 2008). St. Lucia, on the other hand, have simply told Beijing on its switch back to Taiwan that it simply cannot cast aside its friend. It was unlikely that the People’s Republic of China would have stood for this and thus in 2007 China immediately and unilaterally suspended diplomatic relations with St. Lucia when it switched back to Taiwan. Many researchers have argued that while St. Lucia wants to have relations with ‘both Chinas’ simultaneously, each donor wants exclusive rights. This presents an all or nothing case, which could leave CARICOM nations in a ‘want all, lose all’ situation. However, can other CARICOM nations learn something from St. Lucia’s tactics?

As previously stated above in Judi James’s example of the revolving door, adopting an unpredictable behaviour like that of St. Lucia would allow CARICOM nations to deviate from patterns of alignment based only on the state represented as the highest bidder. St. Lucia’s flip-flop creates difficulty for China to pin down the small nation’s ‘pattern’ and to question whether it indeed does have a ‘vulnerable identity’ seeing that the small nation’s switch took both Beijing and the region by surprise. Sir. Ronald Sanders pointed out that, St. Lucia’s decision to switch devotions between China and Taiwan have all the earmarks of being taken in an entirely domestic political setting with CARICOM nations finding out in the media like everyone else.¹³⁰ The switching of St. Lucia back to Taiwan jolted China to the point where the East-Asian powerhouse was forced to rapidly and unobtrusively double its efforts to win Caribbean nations from Taiwan (Zhu, 2016). St. Lucia’s switch back to Taiwan angered China so much so that Chinese ambassador, Gu Huaming issued a statement outrightly rebuking the CARICOM nation and accused St. Lucia of meddling in the internal affairs of China (Joseph, 2011) he stated:

We are shocked by Saint Lucia Government’s decision to resume so-called ‘diplomatic relations’ with Taiwan and by the signing of relevant communique. It is known to all that there is but one China in the world, that the Government of the PRC is the sole legal government representing the whole of China and that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China’s territory. The Taiwanese issue is China’s internal

¹²⁹ The other CARICOM nations here are Barbados and Guyana wherein interviewees were taken from.

¹³⁰ See: *China and Taiwan-Diplomatic jousting in the Caribbean again*. URL: <http://www.sirronaldsanders.com/viewarticle.aspx?ID=382> (Accessed August 1, 2017).

affair. It concerns China's core interests, namely its sovereignty, territorial integrity and reunification. China strongly opposes the development of any official relations with Taiwan by a country that has diplomatic relations with China. This is a clear and firm position of the Chinese Government, which is recognised and supported by a vast majority of countries (The Voice, 3 May 2007)-(Joseph, 2011).

St. Lucia, however, obviously not fearing China's rebuke, set out seven years later to open an embassy in Taiwan. According to Joseph Yeh, this will make it 'the Caribbean nation's first embassy in Asia, which will help St. Lucia boost relations with Asian countries' (China Post, 2015).¹³¹ It could be argued that CARICOM nations ought to take a few pages from St. Lucia's playbook since this nation in dictating its alignment and allies on its own terms, have demonstrated that it views itself as a sovereign nation that will adjust its internal and external policies as it sees fit and will not be easily swayed into a 'follow the crowd' mentality. But does CARICOM nations' elites share this view?

What we shouldn't do is question 18 [what St. Lucia did], be changing. That really puts us in a very compromising position because for a small country one of the few advantages you can have in the world is to be an honest and morally trusted actor. However, if you start switching your alliances, then you become untrustworthy, and you have not that much to bargain with. So, I won't suggest that countries that have actual engagement with Taiwan switch to China or vice versa (T&TN17).

That whole move was a blunder. I remember I was very much in the whole situation. The fact about it is states pursue their own self-interest in the pursuit of their own partners. I think the move was taken under the concern of the foreign government at that time which was coming back into power. Their government consensus was that a deliberate decision would be taken to renew the Taiwan partnership. However, it was a bad move (JRG7).

Well like I said, it comes down to leadership and these switches would not have happened under the same administration. It could be a case of party *A* sticking it to party *B*, but then, that is playing with the country's development because again, in the real world you go to the market and you see a mango, and you pick it up, and you decide you don't want it and you put it back down but somebody else decides to buy it, so you go and grab it up, who looks foolish? (T&TG3).

Listen who cares about what they say? They're not abandoning their friends, what does that mean? Who are their friends? What did Lord Acton¹³² say? Permanent interest and not permanent friends. So, they switch, and they switch, and they will probably switch again. Why? Because like most of the small island developing nations, it is economically vulnerable. Monocrop and monoculture which means

¹³¹ See: The China Post, *St. Lucia planning to open embassy in Taiwan*. URL: <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/intl-community/2015/02/13/428878/st-lucia.htm> (Accessed August 1, 2017).

¹³² Referring to John Dalberg Acton who contended that there are no permanent enemies or friends only permanent interest and that nations should only look out for themselves.

there are very low areas for divestment, slow to change, established trade patterns and trade routes (T&TG6).

I know that in some of the countries like St. Lucia, there is competition between them, and the other China and I think they foolishly went the route of going with the other China—which is Taiwan and that was very foolish (JG4)

I can't speak for the government of St. Lucia or for my friends there or anything, I wouldn't dare do that. They know their circumstances, but I think it's a pretty dangerous game when you try to play it that way (GRG1).

In both country cases and across both sectors, the flip-flop of St. Lucia was deemed to be a very bad move even by elites from Barbados and Guyana. In Trinidad and Tobago, only 10% (2 of 21) thought it was a courageous move showing strength in sovereignty. In Jamaica, 21% held this perspective (4 of 19). In Trinidad and Tobago, 1 was from the governmental sector and 1 from the non-governmental sector while in Jamaica all 4 was from the non-governmental sector. If this flip-flop by St. Lucia is deemed a bad move, which of the nations are being irrational agents in dealing with China? Is it St. Lucia or the other CARICOM nations that ascribe to the 'One China' policy which chooses to still conduct their foreign policy through a vulnerable identity? In the China-CARICOM nations equation who are the rational or irrational players?

10.4 Conclusion

Advancing its need for geopolitical leverage, the initial rise of China in the Caribbean Community first witnessed the eventual turning of a diplomatic tide in Beijing's favour. In its bid to wrestle away diplomatic recognition from Taiwan, China began to engage CARICOM nations along economic avenues, not because of economic necessity, but because of its desire for geopolitical leverage. The study advances that China's reason for this is two-fold: 1) China is challenging the US by setting up in the superpower's backyard due to its constant rebuffing of China's claim that Taiwan is rightly a province of mainland China and must be reunited to it even if by force; 2) in order for China to fulfil its geopolitical goals in the Caribbean Community it cannot do so with a split in allegiance between the 'two Chinas'.

The former reason witnessed its beginnings in the Cold War period and has to do with the fact that Taiwan was viewed as a satellite of the United States and a key link that could fuel the Western strategy against the spread of communist influence in the Pacific. According to Peter Chow from that point forward, the United States have supported 'a democratic Taiwan as a

role model of global democracy' (Chow, 2008). This support has always run contrary to China's security interest. Decades later, China is giving the United States a taste of its own medicine by making its presence felt in the Caribbean Community which the United States considers its 'third-border'. US's support for Taiwan aligned with Mahan's core vision that the power over sea ensures military, commercial and political aspects to vital regions (Munoz, 2013). China is now playing that very role in the Caribbean Community. As Mark Munoz contends, 'the US pivot in Asia has resulted in the Chinese response to that pivot' (Munoz, 2013).

In the same breath, China has been undertaking this task all while simultaneously isolating Taiwan in the region. In so doing, the People's Republic of China (PRC) employed its dollar diplomacy in an attempt to induce these small nations to switch sides. The one-China policy is the political establishment for the foundation and improvement amongst China and Latin American and Caribbean nations as well as regional associations (Zhu, 2016). After all, of the 17 states that recognise Taiwan, 9 belongs to Central America and the Caribbean.¹³³ In the Caribbean Basin, recognition remains a mixed bag. St. Lucia and Haiti continue to have diplomatic relations with the government in Taipei while Cuba, Jamaica and Barbados have long recognised the Beijing government.

Since 9 of the 17 of Taiwan's surviving diplomatic connections can be found inside the Greater Caribbean, it is as Dreyer (2005) contends, of great significance for China to guarantee that it maintains strong ties with Latin American and Caribbean nations for political reasons, while figuring out how to constrain Taipei's contribution to the region. However, undoubtedly, the strategic location of these CARICOM nations is also of grave importance to China which motivates the PRC's clear preference that these islands recognise Beijing over Taipei. For example, Kingston Jamaica is the Caribbean's headquarters for the China Harbour Engineering Company, which has been contracted to conduct major infrastructural projects in the country. According to Economist, Fernando Mendez 'in Jamaica, for instance, China Harbour Engineering Company is scheduled to invest \$1.5 billion to build a transshipment port on Goat islands, and the port will serve as a logistic hub for China to take advantage of Panama Canal

¹³³ During the time of the investigation 21 states stood in recognition of Taiwan with 11 existing in the Caribbean and Central America. Since then from the Caribbean Dominican Republic (2018) and Panama (2017) has switched to recognising China.

expansion and modernisation'.¹³⁴ Nevertheless, moving from a strictly geographic motivation, it is also important to note that from a political perspective one will notice that for one thing, each of the mini-nations in the Caribbean Community has one vote in the United Nations. That is, the Caribbean Community represents potential votes for China in the United Nations (Wouters et al., 2015). In trying to secure these votes and having full knowledge of these nations' lacking in abundant natural resources, combined with their limited potential for economic growth, China is pushing the controversial nature of Taiwan's recognition by basing its support for CARICOM countries on their support for the 'One China' policy of the PRC.

So yes, though clearly, proponents like Richard Bernal attribute this rise in the Caribbean to economics and diplomacy this investigation can only agree to a certain extent. My argument is that, China wishes to secure natural resources and also to isolate Taiwan in the region diplomatically, but the aggressive courting of these islands cannot simply be as a result of those two mentioned motives. As Mander and Wigglesworth (2013) contend, China's intensified outreach to the region is no longer inclusive of solely raw material and the 'Taiwan factor', instead it is an advancement rife with a geo-strategic intention that elites in both country cases are well aware of.

¹³⁴ See: *China comes to the Caribbean*, URL: <http://www.chinausfocus.com/finance-economy/china-comes-to-the-caribbean> (Accessed August 1, 2017).

PART IV: CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Chapter Eleven: Closing Considerations

This investigation has sought to understand From Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites' perspectives, the implications of China's expanding presence on the sub-region's intra-regional political and economic relations, along with CARICOM countries' relation with traditional partners such as the US and Europe, from 2011 to 2016. My investigation took as its starting point, the 'opportunities' and 'challenges' debates that began entering into Latin America and later the Caribbean discourse at the start of the 21st century. However, the investigation's point of departure was not only to provide these debates and discussions with a more rigorous theoretical approach and additional empirical data but to also take the analysis from a macroscopic to a more microscopic level by focusing entirely on the Caribbean Community. Employing a holistic constructivist approach to foreign policy analysis (FPA) framed by an interpretivist epistemology, I argued that the key to the dominant enquires in these debates especially surrounding the CARICOM region in particular, could only be best understood by exploring the cognitive frameworks of those elites that are responsible, or are able to influence the decision-making process that impacts development. As is the circumstance with my case studies. The cases of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have been conscripted, as they are not only important actors in the sub-region but also sufficiently representative of the main patterns of post-colonial development in the Community that allow for a very tentative yet definite level of generalisation. This concluding chapter summarises the findings of the research before offering a brief discussion on the theoretical ramifications and then finally concluding with recommendations from the elites of each nation regarding a better way forward with the China partnership.

11.1 Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's foreign policy and the rise of China: Of what we are now knowledgeable

One of the first findings of this research which was considered to be of utmost importance, both detracted from and bolstered affirmations that CARICOM nations are indeed vulnerable. Drawing on the literature and the categorical construct of vulnerability, I discovered that Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites regard their nation as categorically vulnerable. Nevertheless, it has also been revealed that a categorical vulnerability fostered by post-colonialism has given way to the conditioning that has driven these nations to embrace a 'vulnerable identity'. In Jamaica, a nation with a legacy of post-colonialism, pro-western

policies and a penchant for viewing the nation as having no choice but to be aid-reliant at all times, has produced elites now predisposed to a powerful and deeply anchored vulnerable identity. In the shadow of earlier modernisation attempts to bolster a stagnant economy and push for development in the face of globalisation, Jamaican elites have committed themselves to a certain level of development and see China as a way to rise from an undeveloped position.

In Trinidad and Tobago, elites also wish to ride the Chinese wave to development. However, a long-standing history of increased economic performance and a sector based on the demand of petroleum and gas, has placed it in a position where elites are more selective of what they want from China as opposed to settle for only what they can get. This has culminated in an incomparably weaker 'vulnerable identity'. Guiding Trinidad and Tobago's quest for development is a legacy handed down that witnessed the tremendous post-independence progress that their nation had made after being governed by 'one of their own' after the country gained its independence from Britain.

The emergence of China in the sub-region as perceived by elites in both countries has instances in which they converge or diverge. For example, for both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, China is seen as a better collaborative partner than the US:

I am talking about me as an institution [Confucius Institute] it has been very easy to work with Chinese organisations, for two reasons, they are practical, and they have money. So, as a university if I am talking to the government of the United States it's really the whole world that is talking to the United States. Trinidad is not really a priority for them [US], so we will take a couple Fulbright and leave. The Chinese on the other hand are actively looking for new opportunities, so they want our students to go and study in China, and they'll put the scholarship money behind them. They also want to establish joint programmes, and these are Chinese universities so they're going to get on a plane and come here over the others who are going to say, well, why can't you come here? And if we don't have any money, we're not going, and that's it. So, they are practical. The other thing I should say, and this was echoed by my father [former T&T Ambassador to China] is that the entire world is in Beijing. Everybody wants to collaborate with China (T&TN19).

They are way better and much more willing to engage with Jamaica and on an equal footing than the US. They treat us as equals and act like we are sovereign nations and not just talk to us as if we are small and just begging them for help (JG4).

Furthermore, although China is seen to be a better collaborative partner than the United States, both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago prefer the status quo of the US being the dominant hegemonic influencer in the region as opposed to China:

I don't believe that there is going to be a substitution of the US hegemony. It's going to be more sharing in terms of how hegemony is especially practised in the hemisphere. And even if China were to push out America, they [China] would not be accepted (JG8).

I don't think that some of the heads of states and leaders have the fortitude to outright embrace a communist nation, as a means of a power-play in the region, or as a statement to America, because there will be repercussions (T&TG3).

The countries diverge on what would appear for some readers to be a straightforward and more practical way of dealing with China in order to reap more benefits and improve their position in dealing with the PRC. The question of an integrated approach to dealing with the East-Asian powerhouse saw a sharp divide between the two cases. Jamaican elites were much more insistent on a non-integrated approach, while Trinidad and Tobago thought that an integrated approach would place all CARICOM nations (especially those that recognise the PRC) in a much stronger position in dealing with China. Although this may come as a surprise to some readers, the past integrated attempts in the Caribbean has shown that Jamaica, which opted for independence as opposed to Federation was the nation to undermine the region's first attempt at integration. In the case of China, the country again thinks that an integrated approach to dealing with the PRC would not be in its best interest.

11.2 Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's Elites: Unearthing the Implications Surrounding the rise of the PRC-What we now know

After uncovering the foreign policy system of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago and obtaining a more general perception of the elites of these nations about the emergence of China in the sub-region, the study sought to pursue its key objective, which was to garner from these nations' elites' the opportunities and challenges—if any—that China's rise in the sub-region presented for their nation and Community. Here again, the case studies have shown a significant amount of overlap, but also specific variations, with regard to the numerous issues arising from the emergence of China. These could be separated into grassroots concerns and foreign policy concerns. They were:

Concerns at the Grassroots Level

1. Impact on local businesses/construction industries.
2. Environmental impact due to the depletion of natural resources (ecocide, deforestation etc).

3. The outflow of capital made from Chinese businesses in these societies.
4. Government corruption in dealing with China (the state).
5. Government corruption in dealing with the new wave of Chinese migrants.

Concerns at the Foreign Policy Level

1. The backlash from the US if China seems threatening (blacklisting the Caribbean, withdrawal of loans and grants, trade wars and rising tension between the Caribbean and the US etc.).
2. Bilateral agreements that are more beneficial to China than CARICOM nations.
3. Debt trap resulting from infrastructure development.
4. The growing trade deficit with China.
5. Having to choose between the ‘two Chinas’.
6. Complete isolation of Taiwan leading to intense competition amongst each other for the PRC’s investments.
7. Permanent displacement of the US hegemon.
8. Quality of China’s infrastructure projects.

For both nations, the emergence of China in the Community has led to a pronounced bias and polarisation in their societies due to the influx of Chinese migrants. The inability of this ‘fourth wave’ of migrants to assimilate into society has led to an increase in anti-Chinese sentiments and violent attacks in Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, most of these migrants came as a result of Chinese investment projects in these islands. Usually, these investments are in the form of infrastructure development, which has also added to the Chinese anti-sentiment fire, with local construction industries feeling squeezed out of these large-scale projects. The concern surrounding this was more visible in Trinidad and Tobago than it was in Jamaica. Additionally, it was found in Trinidad and Tobago that this out-crowding was happening in other local industries like that of supermarkets, restaurants and even the nation’s craft industry. This also exacerbates the problem of locals left unemployed, as it has been found that China offers investment projects to its own workers and even small Chinese-run businesses appear to be less likely to hire locals. Since then, the unemployment rate of Trinidad and Tobago has been volatile, but further research needs to be done to determine whether this has been a contributing factor and, if so, the extent of its effect on these patterns.

Several of these concerns, in particular numbers 1 and 10, coincided with majority of the discourse on the emergence of China in Latin America and the Caribbean from the beginning of the 21st century. This establishes the importance of contextualising China's emergence within a more confined regional framework, so as to avoid any notion that these concerns predated China's engagement with the region since the early 2000s. My findings establish the need for the PRC's emergence to be located within a much narrower development model that have contributed to discussions around the modernisation practises of CARICOM nations. Just as governing elites' perceptions are often translated to foreign policy practices, models are often inevitably related to a certain time or region. As such, the concerns set out above are sufficiently rudimental in their capacity to alter the behaviours of the governing elites in their approach to the decision-making process. The impact on local industries for example, which has contributed to the implementation of certain checks and balances, as pointed out in my discussion with the respondents, supports this claim. Elites' admission that China proves to be a more equitable partner than the United States, but that it also presents a counterbalance to the hegemon, confirms that, despite their concerns the PRC plays a much larger purpose within the sub-region than just another donor partner.

The striking similarity with the Cold War era, which still dominates the developmental activities of these post-colonial CARICOM nations, remains a significant indication of this. Before they turned to strictly pro-American ideals, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago ruled by Michael Manley and Dr. Eric Williams respectively, adhered to a modernisation paradigm that was aimed at combatting the tide of imperialism. The principles of the Washington Consensus that underpin the development model of CARICOM nations today, which focuses on trade liberalisation and an open economy, are very different from the Beijing Consensus that these nations are moving towards, which focuses on 'institutional innovation, equitable and sustainable development and self-determination' (Yao, 2011). The Washington Consensus is concerned with the modernisation of the agricultural sector and rural development, while the Beijing Consensus is more committed to rapid industrialisation. For now, elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are more preoccupied with the latter, though the evidence also points to the fact that they do not wish to rid themselves of the former's influence.

Although the research has, for the most part, tried to determine the root causes of these perceptions, the dissertation cannot, to a large extent, lay claim to having fully comprehended the rationalisation behind these reasons. Predicated on the methods used here, the analysis was

able to reveal the perceptions and motives behind the choices and actions of the elites but was unable to ascertain the above. As previously stated in chapter 2, the ontological approaches sought to abstain from developing rules of cause and effect that can be deemed universal and leans towards multi causality on account of the seclusion of a couple key factors. However, it is pertinent to note that restrictive connections can be entrenched through narrative and attribution.

In the case of this investigation the evidence shows that the post-colonial history of these nations is an important driver of a vulnerable identity that is used to form decision-making practices around development in both country cases. It also shows that vulnerability as a category and as an identity is so closely intertwined in the frameworks of governing elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago that they are viewed as an inevitable outcome of each other. What is less evident is the exact point at which vulnerability as a category shaped the vulnerable identity in which these elites, in effect, embraced it, even to the point where those who adhere to it in the two different cases give similar reasons for doing so. Is it merely a coincidence, then, that governing elites in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, the latter albeit to a lesser extent, provide the geographical structure of being small as a benchmark for having no choice but to rely on external aid to direct their development?

In response to this question, I propose understanding how structural factors have become an important extension of the elite-centred approach taken by this investigation. The dissertation employed an interpretivist epistemology to comprehend elites' perceptions and the reasons behind their own decision-making process accordingly. It has shown that, in the case of Jamaica, elites are more likely to believe in powerlessness due to size and poor economic performance in dealing with powerful foreign nations than their counterparts in Trinidad and Tobago. However, constructivism allows for correlation between agency and structure. It would therefore be a good idea for future research to investigate whether the emergence of the Belt and Road Initiative (which Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago is now a part of), combined with Jamaica's vision of being a global logistics hub and Trinidad's vision of being the financial centre of the world, would partially weaken this vulnerable identity in the future. For now, however, I argue that elites in both country cases are primarily concerned with mitigating the negative impact of China's rise on their economies (direct and indirect) to maximise the benefits that will continue to drive them towards development. As a result, for now, that vulnerable identity will stand.

11.3 Theoretical Ramifications: The convergence and divergence between the LAC and CARICOM Case

The findings offered up in this investigation possesses ramifications for certain strands existing in the discourse. The funnel-down approach of examining the body of literature from a macroscopic point of view to a microscopic one indicates that my findings are accurate in showing that there is a certain dimension of China's rise in the region that is understood and that there are other aspects that bear misgivings. Those who pointed out the perpetuation of the dependency pattern by LAC nations deserve credit for doing so, as my findings suggest that the pattern is indeed being perpetuated in the CARICOM community as well. The difference here is that while LAC scholars believe that this pattern can be illustrated by trade data, my findings show that this pattern existed long before it began to play out in numbers for those leaders existing in CARICOM, as the very cognitive framework of governing elites is shaped by a vulnerable identity that shapes their decision-making process.

The matter of a centre-periphery relationship between China and LAC falls along similar lines, for while LAC scholars maintain that this is evidenced through the asymmetrical nature of bilateral trade agreements existing between the two, elites in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago does not take this view. Rather, in both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, elites claim that relations with China are more equal than they have been in the past, despite the fact that the partnership still cannot be considered a total win-win situation. Whereas LAC scholars are able to establish that dependence on China for Latin American countries is mostly linked to market dependency, the case of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago show that dependence on China, for these CARICOM nations is much more about aid than trade. So, while Santiso (2006) is able to refer to China as a 'trade angel' for Latin American countries, my findings have shown that it is more-so an 'aid angel' in the case of CARICOM nations. Nevertheless, in LAC's case wherein Ferchen (2011) who in offering an alternative to the dependency theory, maintained that LAC leaders have adopted a gold rush mentality with minimal consideration to their foreign policy, my research also found this to be the same issue in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

For those like Juan Tokatlian and Richard Bernal who argue that the main reason of China's involvement with these nations is to secure the political isolation of Taiwan, my own research has shown that this is no longer the case. My findings have shown that China's involvement with these nations has gone far beyond the 'Taiwan factor' and that the pivot is now more of a

‘geopolitical factor’ with the PRC trying to undermine the US in its own backyard. While Tokatlian in his analysis of the ‘trilateral security’ theory surrounding China-LAC and US, argued that the United States had no need to view China as a threat, the suspicions borne out of my own findings in analysing China-CARICOM and US relationship establishes that China is perceived as a threat to the US and that there are elites in both country cases who believe that the US is warranted in perceiving the PRC as such. As a result, the dissertation is in agreement with Ellis (2012) who argued that the triangle suggests that only decisions made by these two nations (the US and China) can predict the region’s outcomes—as the findings from my investigation establishes that the intention of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago to use China as a counterbalance to the US suggests that they, too, are players that will undoubtedly impact the outcome. In their study of the triangular relationship, Barbara Stallings and Tokatlian neglect of historical factors in their analysis contributed to the underestimation of how CARICOM nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago that often find themselves caught up in power struggles can still influence the super-powers.

As a collective, these strands of discourse on the divergence in the theoretical literature as it pertains to LAC and CARICOM nations, as a whole, have served as a reminder of the importance of separating the two regions. It has also highlighted the issues surrounding the importance of garnering elites’ perspective to add to developmental debates and also serves as an admonition of the impact of established perceptions on an actor and their role in the decision-making process. The main drawback of these strands is the failure to contextualise the debate in an elite studies framework as a part of their empirical basis. This has led to ignoring the crucial role that elites play in the foreign policy and development process which has led to a broader focus on solely systemic forces as opposed to focusing on both. My research has remedied this by taking a holistic constructivist approach towards the foreign policy analysis of two CARICOM nations. The dissertation has highlighted that the modernisation theory which has increasingly been discarded by academic discourse and replaced by either the Washington Consensus or dependency theory, still matters in that these frameworks have fostered the conditioning of a vulnerable identity. It has shown that it is important to attribute the drive to modernise to the development paradigm of both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

11.4 Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's Elites: Recommendations on dealing with China in the sub-region

Although both elite groups of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago perceive China as a means of development, they acknowledge that, given some of the domestic and regional flaws that exist in their nations and sub-region, the goal of development will remain afar off. According to the majority of the elites in both cases, the question of interaction with China so far as it is not a 'win-win' cannot be understood in its entirety unless policy reforms are pursued, and these specific policymakers are taken into account. It is important to remember that development is mostly seen as the domestic project of a nation, although external aid was always viewed as having the ability to accelerate the process. However, more often than not, even with external aid these nations seem always to be playing 'catch-up' in their advancement levels. For Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago's elites, the answer is the implementation of a more strategic foreign policy approach and in Trinidad and Tobago's case, the need for deeper and more effective integration in the sub-region:

- 1) The power imbalance is so vast that this [power imbalance between China and CARICOM nations] is almost inevitable. If CARICOM countries do not function as a coalition, or if they don't have any allies, they would be in a very difficult position to defend their terms or argue against China if they wanted to engage in any kind of discussion or partnership. So again, the type of insularity that exist in the region, I think it's a risk (T&TN20).
- 2) The answer cannot only be given from a national perspective, you also need to formulate some kind of proactive response, and of course, this is going to be difficult because there are nations in CARICOM that do not even recognise China. But at the same time the countries that don't recognise China, allow China's investment there. Therefore, even if this diplomatic obstacle is present, it does not mean that you cannot articulate some kind of bilateral dialogue, or some kind of regional bilateral commission. I assume that some of this already happens, but it is not just a matter of meeting from time to time, but of ensuring that these kinds of processes work better (T&TN15).
- 3) First of all, we need to have a serious discussion on the position of China in the region. And two, I think we've already had the experience of maybe the last decade

of how to interact with China. So, we're in a position to evaluate what this engagement has been to date. What are the positive impacts? And what has been the negative impacts? We can take analysis and an assessment of that and try to build policies or try to implement articulated and coherent responses to avoid the negative impacts so as not to have a repeat in the future. So, the first thing is to have a serious assessment of China in the region and from that, you can start doing different things, different policies, instrumenting different responses (GRG1).

- 4) One of the frustrations for me personally working in the regional set-up, is that too often our countries do not give themselves enough credit. We get into this sense of learned helplessness where we believe that we are too small, we are too vulnerable, and we are too poor to affect any major change in the international system and in any bilateral relationship. And if that's the mentality that we approach the Chinese relationship with, then there can only be one clear winner, and that would be China. So, it goes back again to my point about what we want to extract and how we manage the relationship. And if we do the same thing that we did with every other partner in the past, it means that China comes out on top, we're just going to be pretty much a pawn in someone else's overall game. That's how I see it (BRG2).
- 5) When you focus on retaining power, then you can't focus on regional integration and unity, because that means you would have to be selfless, honest, transparent and make sacrifices. Look at what happened to the CSME, look at what's happening with the Caribbean Court of Justice. Who wants to still bow to England and the Privy Council? Why? Because we don't trust our own constitution, our own representatives and our own judiciary. We just don't trust them. Instead, we want to go before a white man with a wig and call him Lord and go with his opinion. But we need to unite, we need to be strong, and we need to unite in a way that is meaningful to the region and that promotes development and growth (T&TG3).
- 6) I think they're [China] more strategic than Caribbean countries. I think they think ahead. So, while we may be thinking about 3 or 4 or a 5 years' plan, they may be thinking about a 10 to 20 or 30-year plan. And that is what needs to change. We need to focus in terms of where exactly it is, we want to go and what exactly we want to achieve from this relationship with China. If it is that we want infrastructural

development, then this is the route that we are going to take. If it is that we want better governance, then we are going to partner with China, this is the route that we are going. So, I think that needs to take place. However, in terms of the Caribbean, we don't have that stronghold we are not very much opinionated in what it is that is beneficial for us (JN11).

- 7) Well, the best they could do is try to get more multilateral so that business is more equal. For example, if they are going to build something at least use our own workers, they don't have to bring their own workers and that type of thing. And if they're going to bring their own power then it's clear that they don't want it to be a much more mutually beneficial arrangement than what it is right now, simply because it's the Chinese who profits. So, when you get that money you still owe them. We don't get any jobs, the job still goes to them, they bring their own workers and they work at sub-standard levels even below the most basic economic and social standards required for workers (JG5).
- 8) So instead of safeguarding in the sense of building walls around ourselves, I would encourage, or I would like to see a more audacious and more vocal intervention in conversation, regardless of our size. We need to be a bit braver and a bit more vocal when defending our views of what our takes are on countries like that [China]. And it also ties into the matter of insularity. The wider regional alliances and the shift in power relations that happens when everybody is saying the same thing as opposed to just little St. Lucia (T&TN18).
- 9) We need to diversify our sources of foreign direct investment and ensure national interests are protected by unofficial quotas, etc. (JG9).
- 10) I think the first thing is to develop a clear policy. A clear political and economic policy towards China that will provide the guiding principles for engagement and collaboration. The policy itself is not a win, it is the process of developing a policy that forces us to ask ourselves questions and define our expectations and would therefore have a basis for bilateral engagement versus unilateral imposition and reaction. That's exactly what we need to do. I think that's the biggest issue. We need

to decide what we want, and that requires data, the kind of stuff that you are gathering right now. It requires trend analysis, and it requires a consultation (T&TG6).

11) All the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the government of the Ministry of Planning has to do is assemble a room of 10 to 15 people and have a real honest discussion, behind closed-doors with no recording and figure this thing [China partnership] out and come up with a position paper. UWI should be playing an active role in this, and I think the Institute of International Relations, when Andy Knight was there, was trying to move in that direction, but Andy was doing it more on a personal level. I have told Jessica Byron that I really think that we should hire a sinologist and create a research cluster around the Caribbean and China, and not just Trinidad because the IR is regional, but I don't know if anything has happened (T&TN19).

12) To be quite frank, we really do not have a regional cooperative trade effort within the Caribbean right now. So, the Foreign Minister of Barbados will be in Beijing this week, and 2 months later the Trade Minister of Trinidad will be in Beijing and then a few months later the Minister of National Security from Jamaica will be in Beijing. It is very uncoordinated, and from a trade perspective, this is also the case. I think that for some reason this unwritten rivalry is taking place in the Caribbean, and even within UWI, I see it with the other campuses and us in relation to China. When the centre was establishing this institute [Institutional Advancement and Internalisation UWI], they were fully aware of what we have done in China, and it's a very substantial engagement but not a single question or comment was made to us, and that's a weakness in the Caribbean. However, the Chinese are the complete opposite of that, they will make sure they get everyone's opinion and make a decision, and everybody will fall in line. So, I don't think that we are starting from a position of regional cooperation which we should (T&TN19).

13) If the Caribbean, rather than getting small drops in different small buckets, gets major investments and I'm talking billions, 10, 15 or 20 billion for the Caribbean region in one or two target areas such as economic diversification, disaster resilience, even if it's in one of these areas—the relationship would be so much richer that it would be transformative rather than incremental. Because it's small incremental gains right now. Only building a new cricket stadium which really brings no value. So, I guess

the answer to your question, as phrased, is no. I should also say the reality is that in the current political and economic climate of the Caribbean, integration in dealing with China is not going to happen. Nobody's taking leadership (T&TG7).

- 14) From a sales point of view, there are enough markets right in our neighbourhood with less transport costs that could buy all of our goods. Just look at South America, we can actually sell all we make to one country in South America, let alone all of them. So, why am I going to put it on a barge or a plane and send it all the way to China? The effort and the time zone just don't make much sense. So, nothing is wrong with concentrating on bilateral trade relations with China, but we shouldn't automatically shy away from others. I think there are tremendous benefits to be gained from trading with Colombia, Chile, Ecuador and Panama. Plus, these countries are right around the hemisphere so how can I address that? Focus on the hemisphere as a priority-but still China for wherever there is a possibility (T&TG9).

Indications abound that there is a desperate need for domestic and regional policy reform to turn the CARICOM nation relationship with China into a win-win situation. Even those in favour of the benefits of China's wave have voiced concerns about the lack of policy in dealing not only with China, but with other powerful nations. While non-governmental elites are able to blame governing elites for their adoption of a vulnerable mindset, the data also shows that governmental actors are also aware of the lack of innovation in the way they employ their foreign policy but seem somehow stuck in perpetuating them. As a result, the findings of this research have implications that extend far beyond just Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago as individual CARICOM nations. The ideologies and practices that are playing out in these two country cases indicate the probability that these dynamics are also playing out in other settings in the Community. Nonetheless, although there is a widespread perception that the process of regional integration in general, and CARICOM in particular, is in a state of crisis, there is equally strong agreement that regional integration is vital to the development of the Caribbean and CARICOM. The challenge is to get the regional stakeholders committed to it almost without exception.

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Appendix C

*Official Interview Script*¹³⁵

❖ COLLECTION OF RESPONDENT'S PERSONAL INFORMATION:

1. •Name: _____
2. • Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
3. • What age range are you: 25 – 34 ☐ 35 – 44 ☐ 45 – 54 ☐ 55 – 64 ☐ 65-70 ☐
- Do you consider yourself to be ill ☐ Have extremely limited knowledge about the topic area covered ☐ Not able to consent to participation in this study ☐ None of the above ☐¹³⁶
4. What is your current/previous job title? _____
5. What department/area are you working in/previously worked in? _____
6. How long have you worked in your present/previous post? _____
7. Would you consider yourself knowledgeable of China's foreign policy in the Caribbean Community especially Jamaica or/and Trinidad and Tobago? _____

❖ QUESTIONS ON THE CHINA'S EMERGENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY:

8. Would you say that China's presence in the Caribbean Community is becoming a matter of increasing debate, if not concern? _____
- b) And how do you feel about it? _____
9. In your analysis, would you say that China really pose a threat to the US's 'doorstep' as is being implied? _____
 - b) What do you suppose this means for CARICOM nations such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago? _____
 - c) Could it provide serious backlash to the region? How? _____
10. In your opinion in the case that China were to be successful in eliminating US's hegemonic rule in the region, do you suppose CARICOM nations such as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago would be willing to accept China as the new hegemonic overlord? _____
11. Do you suppose CARICOM nations view China as a counterweight to United States "backyard" imperialism? _____

¹³⁵ In keeping with the style of a semi-structured interview, every respondent did not subscribe to the same question. Questions that were not pertinent to put to every individual is colour coded in blue. Often questions omitted were replaced by those that were specific to the respondent's position or organisation. The sequencing of the questions also varied in some instances though great care was always taken in posing the key question 'would you say that China's presence in the Caribbean Community is becoming a matter of increasing debate, if not concern?' before asking respondents about their opinion on it.

¹³⁶ This line of questioning was to determine the eligibility of participants to engage in the research. Those participants who answered any of these questions were promptly excluded from the investigation.

❖ **QUESTIONS ON CHINA AS A FORM OF NEO-COLONIAL POWER:**

12. There is talk that China's presence in the Caribbean Community is a form of 'neo-colonialism'. Do you agree with this statement? _____
- b) If yes/no. Why? _____
13. For Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago what would you say differentiates their interchanges with China from past unequal centre-periphery relationships? _____
14. It is said that developing nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, need China more than China needs them. Do you see this as the case? _____
- b) What does this power imbalance mean for these CARICOM countries? _____
15. Should CARICOM countries including Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago somehow seek to safeguard themselves from China? _____
- b) If the answer is yes to the above question, elaborate on how best you believe these nations can best safeguard themselves from China? _____
16. China has put forward two policy papers geared towards Latin America and the Caribbean all in the name of increase economic, political, cultural and social cooperation. Who do you think this will benefit more? _____
17. To knowledge no CARICOM nation has yet to release a policy paper towards China. Why do you suppose this is? _____
- b) Do you think CARICOM nations should consider this a necessary move? _____
18. In your analysis would you say that the Jamaica-China relationship/Trinidad-China relationship can be viewed as a win-win situation or strategic cooperation as was championed in the 2011 China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Forum? _____

❖ **QUESTIONS ON A LACK OF AN INTEGRATED APPROACH IN DEALING WITH CHINA:**

19. On the issue of regional integration, CARICOM as a bloc cannot trade with China due to some recognising China while others recognise Taiwan which means CARICOM nations have to trade individually as they always do. What do you suppose the implications are for CARICOM countries? _____

❖ **QUESTIONS ON CHINA'S MOTIVES FOR ENGAGING WITH CARICOM NATIONS:**

20. Is China's interest in the Caribbean Community as well as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago strictly economic? _____
- b) If yes/no why? _____
21. When it comes to infrastructure development by China in these nations, what do you suppose will be the cost for these nations regarding the building of these infrastructures? _____
22. Some researchers have argued that during the post-colonial period, the Caribbean was the 'plaza of the Americas' referring to the Caribbean's strategic geographical

location. Would you say it is nations in the Caribbean Community or is it China that is utilising this 'plaza' at the moment? _____

❖ **QUESTIONS ON CARICOM NATION'S INCLUDING JAMAICA AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S MOTIVES/REASONS FOR THEIR COUNTRY'S ALIGNMENT WITH CHINA**

23. Researchers argue that CARICOM nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are simply practicing self-preservation when it comes to China because they are vulnerable. Do you suppose CARICOM nations are indeed vulnerable and therefore see preservation as their best interest? Elaborate _____

24. Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have continued to argue for a solid co-operative relationship with China which they deem as extremely important for all CARICOM countries. Should the governments of these two CARICOM nations be more conscious of the arrangements made with China? _____

b) If yes/no elaborate as to why? _____

25. In your opinion what motives would you say are behind Jamaica and Trinidad aligning themselves so closely with China? _____

26. Do you think corruption plays a part in Jamaica's/Trinidad and Tobago's interaction with China? _____ if yes, how so? _____

❖ **QUESTIONS ON CHINA'S DRIVE TO DIPLOMATICALLY ISOLATE TAIWAN AND THE ST. LUCIAN MOVE:**

27. China is aggressively trying to diplomatically isolate Taiwan in the Caribbean Community what are some of the challenges and opportunities do you suppose this will present for CARICOM nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago? _____

28. St. Lucia has switched from Taiwan to China and then back again, under the banner that they will not 'abandon their friends' do you think this was a good move? _____

b) Would you say that other CARICOM nations like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago can learn lessons from this move by St. Lucia? _____

c) If yes? What lessons? _____

❖ **QUESTIONS ON CHINA'S EFFECT ON CARICOM'S INTRA AND INTER REGIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:**

29. What would you say are the implications that China's emergence poses for the region's intra-regional political and economic relations? _____

30. How do you suppose this relationship with China will affect the Community's relation with traditional partners like the United States and Europe? _____

b) What are the reasons for your answer? _____

Thank you for your participation - the interview has now come to the end.

Q. Is there anything you would want to have chance to say? _____

Q. Are there any other issues you would like to raise with regard to the focus of this research?_____

Appendix D

List of Respondents

In order to facilitate referencing, respondents are referred to in the investigation as per the accompanying code: ‘J’ should be taken to mean an interview undertaken in Jamaica while ‘T&T’ signifies that which is undertaken in Trinidad and Tobago. ‘G’ is in reference to any respondent found in a governmental organisation. ‘N’ points to those respondents otherwise referred to as non-governing elites and often falls formally outside the governmental sector. While ‘RG’ references those respondents, who are from the regional organisation (Secretariat). The interviews undertaken in Barbados and Guyana are represented by ‘B’ and ‘G’ respectively. It should be noted also, that the sequencing of respondents is further haphazardly done in each sector. For example, JG1 to JG6 are all respondents belonging to the different ministerial branches in Jamaica but are placed in no specific order. In cases where an interviewee’s position has changed since the interview was undertaken, the position that was occupied during the interview was maintained. The exact name of most respondents and their title were concealed in the investigation. However, where permission was granted for citation then those names and titles were not especially shrouded.

JAMAICA

- JG1: Parliamentarian (JLP): Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries. Kingston, 08/10/2017.
- JG2: Senior Civil Servant: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. Kingston, 05/11/2017.
- JG3: Special Advisor: Office of the Prime Minister. Kingston, 12/10/2017.
- JG4: Tax Compliance Officer: Tax Administration Jamaica. Kingston, 04/12/2017.
- JG5: Senior Official and Advisor: Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Office of the Prime Minister. Kingston, 25/10/2017.
- JG6: Former Parliamentarian (PNP): Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Kingston, 26/11/2017.
- JRG7: Senior Coordinator: CARICOM Secretariat Jamaica. Kingston, 15/11/2017.
- JG8: Senior Researcher and Advisor: Caribbean Policy Research Institute Kingston, 15/10/2017.
- JG9: President: Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO). Kingston, (LinkedIn, 05/02/2018).

- JG10: Statistical Officer: Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN). Kingston, 07/12/2017.
- JN11: Senior Coordinator: Build Jamaica Foundation. Kingston, 13/10/2017.
- JN12: Board Member: Incorporated Master Builders Association of Jamaica. Kingston, 25/11/2017.
- JN13: Senior Editor: The Gleaner Company Limited. Kingston (Phone), 15/01/2018.
- JN14: Senior Reporter: The Jamaica Observer. Kingston (Skype), 01/02/2018.
- JN15: Senior Lecturer: Caribbean Institute of Technology. Montego Bay (Skype), 25/01/2018.
- JN16: Adjunct Lecturer: Department of Government, University of the West Indies. Kingston, 10/11/2017.
- JN17: Professor: Department of Government University of the West Indies. Kingston, 17/10/2017.
- JN18: Executive Assistant: Environmental Foundation of Jamaica. Kingston (Skype), 18/01/2018.
- JN19: Marketing Director: Digicel Foundation. Kingston (Phone), 23/02/2018.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

- T&TG1: Sustainable Energy Analyst: Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries. Port of Spain, 31/08/2017.
- T&TG2: International Relations Officer: Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Port of Spain, 02/09/2017.
- T&TG3: Media Officer and Advisor: The Environmental Management Authority, Ministry of Planning and Development. Port of Spain, 13/09/2017.
- T&TG4: Senior Planning Officer and Advisor: Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development. Port of Spain, 4/09/2017.
- T&TG5: Co-operative Officer: Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development. Port of Spain, 17/09/2017.
- T&TG6: Marshal: Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. Port of Spain, 15/09/2017.
- T&TG7: Trade and Research Economist: Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce. Port of Spain, 11/09/2017.
- T&TG8: International Relations Officer: Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Port of Spain, 20/09/2017

- T&TG9: Vice President: Invest TT. Port of Spain (Phone), 27/02/2018.
- T&TG10: Tariff Analyst: Regulated Industries Commission. Port of Spain (Skype), 11/03/2018.
- T&TG11: Business Development Officer and Advisor: Caribbean Industrial Research Institute (CARIRI). UWI, St. Augustine Campus, 18/09/2017.
- T&TN12: Team Leader and Manager: Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association. San Juan (Phone), 05/03/2018.
- T&TN13: Project Officer: Caribbean Employers Confederation. North Aranguez (Skype), 16/03/2018.
- T&TN14: Project Director: The National Infrastructure Development Company Limited. Port of Spain (Skype), 07/04/2018.
- T&TN15: Journalist: Trinidad Express Newspapers. Port of Spain (Skype), 21/03/2018.
- T&TN16: Director: The Confucius Institute, UWI St. Augustine. St. Augustine Campus, 18/09/2017.
- T&TN17: Senior Lecturer: The Institute of International Relations. UWI St. Augustine (Skype), 17/09/2017.
- T&TN18: Director: Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies. UWI St. Augustine (Skype), 26/01/2018.
- T&TN19: Director: Institutional Advancement and Internalisation. UWI St. Augustine (Skype), 18/04/2018.
- T&TN20: Head of Department: Literary, Cultural and Communication Studies, UWI St. Augustine (Skype), 13/02/2018.
- T&TN21: Senior Professional: iGovTT. Port of Spain (Skype), 18/03/2018.

BARBADOS

- BRG1: Senior Coordinator: CARICOM Office of Trade and Negotiations. Bridgetown, 27/09/2017.
- BRG2: Technical Advisor: The Investment and Private Sector Department, CARICOM Office of Trade and Negotiations. Bridgetown, 27/09/2017.

GUYANA

- GRG1: Senior Project: Directorate of Foreign Policy and Community Relations, CARICOM Secretariat. Georgetown (Skype), 15/02/2018.

Appendix E

List Of Legislative and Government Materials

Secondary data stemmed from various documents including legislative documents which were employed for the purpose of triangulation. These fell into four classes and a full list and an overview of what most of them covered is laid out below:

1. Documents on different policy agreements issued by or on behalf of the Jamaican and Trinidad and Tobagonian governments as well as the CARICOM Secretariat.

□ **From the Jamaican case:**

The Jamaica-China Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement¹³⁷

The Jamaica-China Encouragement and Reciprocal of Investment Agreement¹³⁸

The US Presidential Initiatives in Jamaica (Fact Sheet)¹³⁹

The European Partnership Agreement¹⁴⁰

□ **From the Trinidad and Tobagonian case:**

The Trinidad and Tobago-China Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income¹⁴¹

General Agreement on Trade in Services¹⁴²

The Caribbean Community (Removal of Restrictions) Bill¹⁴³

Trinidad and Tobago-China Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments¹⁴⁴

¹³⁷ See full Jamaica-China Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement at https://www.jamaicatax.gov.jm/documents/10181/2600881/dta+jamaica_china.pdf/3344725c-f09c-4775-9d8f-c3142305c64d. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹³⁸ See full Jamaica-China Encouragement and Reciprocal of Investment Agreement at <http://tfs.mofcom.gov.cn/aarticle/h/bk/201002/20100206785113.html> Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹³⁹ See full US Presidential Initiatives in Jamaica (Fact Sheet) at <https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1862/jamaica-us-presidential-initiatives>. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁴⁰ See The European Partnership Agreement at https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2017/february/tradoc_155300.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁴¹ See The Trinidad and Tobago-China Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income at <http://www.ird.gov.tt/Media/Default/IRD/Treaties/DTT-China--2004.pdf>. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁴² See The General Agreement on Trade in Services at <https://www.tcsi.org/the-general-agreement-on-trade-in-services-an-introduction/>. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁴³ See The Caribbean Community (Removal of Restrictions) Bill at <http://www.ttparliament.org/legislations/b2004h39p.pdf>. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁴⁴ See Trinidad and Tobago-China Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments at http://www.sice.oas.org/Investment/BITSbyCountry/BITS/TRI_China.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

□ **From the CARICOM Secretariat:**

CARICOM-Regional Aid for Trade Strategy 2013-2015¹⁴⁵

Revised Common External Tariff of The Caribbean Community¹⁴⁶

The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas¹⁴⁷

□ **Regional documents¹⁴⁸ from other organisations:**

CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement¹⁴⁹

The Cotonou Agreement¹⁵⁰

The Caribbean Basin Initiative¹⁵¹

The Caribbean Trade Partnership Act¹⁵²

The Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act¹⁵³

2. Ruling parties' speeches and reports to parliament in each country cases whose examples include:

For Jamaica

□ Prime Minister Andrew Holness' Inaugural Address: *Partnership for Prosperity*. Published March 4, 2016.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁵ See CARICOM-Regional Aid for Trade Strategy 2013-2015 at https://caricom.org/documents/5269-caribbean_community_aft_strategy_final.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁴⁶ See Revised Common External Tariff of The Caribbean Community at [https://caricom.org/documents/16273-revised_cet_of_caricom_hs_2017_revised_11_april_2018_\(for_link\).pdf](https://caricom.org/documents/16273-revised_cet_of_caricom_hs_2017_revised_11_april_2018_(for_link).pdf). Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁴⁷ See The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas at https://caricom.org/documents/4906-revised_treaty-text.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁴⁸ Most of these documents cover both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago as well as other Caribbean nations. The focus for this investigation, however, was the provisions under these agreements that were made for these two case studies.

¹⁴⁹ See The CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement at https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/implementing_epa_april_12.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁵⁰ See The Cotonou Agreement at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/03_01/pdf/mn3012634_en.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁵¹ See The Caribbean Basin Initiative at http://www.sice.oas.org/TPD/USA_CBI/Studies/USITCcbi2000_e.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁵² See The Caribbean Trade Partnership Act at https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2016-Apr/us_carib_trade_3.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁵³ See The Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act at http://www.sice.oas.org/TPD/USA_CBI/CBERA83_e.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁵⁴ See Prime Minister Andrew Holness' Inaugural Address: *Partnership for Prosperity*. Published March 4, 2016 at <https://jis.gov.jm/media/PM-Inaugural-Address-002.pdf>. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

For Trinidad and Tobago

- Speech by Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar on *Realising the Chinese dream, China could become a world model*. Published Jun 2, 2016.¹⁵⁵

3. National Policies, Legislation and Acts existing in each country cases. Some of these examples include:

For Jamaica

- The Jamaican Corruption Prevention Act¹⁵⁶
- The National Industrial Policy¹⁵⁷
- Jamaica's New Trade Policy 2001¹⁵⁸
- National Development Plan-Vision 2030 Jamaica¹⁵⁹
- The Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) 2015-2018¹⁶⁰
- The National Export Strategy 2015-2019¹⁶¹
- The Credit Reporting Act¹⁶²

For Trinidad and Tobago

- Vision 2020 Planning Exercise¹⁶³

¹⁵⁵ See Speech by Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar on *Realising the Chinese dream, China could become a world model*. Published Jun 2, 2016 at <http://en.people.cn/90883/8267363.html>. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁵⁶ See The Jamaican Corruption Prevention Act at <https://moj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/laws/The%20Corruption%20Prevention%20Act.pdf>. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁵⁷ See Jamaica's National Industrial Policy at <http://web.stanford.edu/~dharris/papers/National%20Industrial%20Policy,%20A%20Strategic%20Plan%20for%20Growth%20and%20Development.pdf>. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁵⁸ See Jamaica's New Trade Policy 2001 at https://mfaft.gov.jm/jm/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/New_Trade_policy-2001Min-Paper-69.pdf. (Viewed February 6, 2017).

¹⁵⁹ See National Development Plan-Vision 2030 Jamaica at https://jis.gov.jm/media/vision2030_popular_versionsmallpdf.com.pdf. (Viewed February 6, 2017).

¹⁶⁰ See Jamaica's Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) 2015-2018 at http://www.nationalplanningcycles.org/sites/default/files/planning_cycle_repository/jamaica/mtf_2015_-_2018_-_final_draft_-_december_31_2015_-_rev_2.pdf. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁶¹ See Jamaica's The National Export Strategy 2015-2019 at http://www.jamaicatradeandinvest.org/nes/specific_goals.php. Accessed (August 10, 2018).

¹⁶² See Jamaica's The Credit Reporting Act at <https://moj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/laws/Credit%20Reporting%20Act.pdf>. (Viewed February 6, 2017).

¹⁶³ See Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2020 Operational Plan 2007-2010. Available at: https://www.cepal.org/iyd/noticias/pais/9/31469/Trinidad_y_Tobago_Doc_1.pdf (Viewed January 16, 2019).

- The National Information and Communication Technologies Strategic Plan (ICT Plan)¹⁶⁴
- The Foreign Investment Policy¹⁶⁵
- Value Added Tax Act 75:06¹⁶⁶
- Trinidad and Tobago Companies Act Chapter 81:01¹⁶⁷

4. Opinion pieces, official speeches and other documents emanating from media outlets in each country. Examples of these include:

For Jamaica

- The China Exim Bank Preferential Loan for Major Infrastructure Development Project, Letters of Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation, Letters of Exchange on the Construction of Infant Schools by the Government of China for Jamaica, Letters of Exchange on the Feasibility of Study ‘Teaching Building of the Confucius Institute’ by the Government of China for Jamaica.¹⁶⁸ Memorandum of Understanding on the Belt and Road Initiative. Speech given in the EU ACP Parliamentary Assembly by European Commissioner for Trade, Karel De Gucht, ‘EU-ACP: Completing a Partnership’ published on May 29, 2012, Speech of United States Ambassador to Jamaica. Pamela E. Bridgewater ‘Supporting Economic Empowerment and development in the Caribbean and the Pacific’ published July 10, 2013. Address by the Most Hon. Andrew Holness at the *Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for the construction of New Parliament and Government Offices* published March 13, 2017.

¹⁶⁴ See Trinidad and Tobago’s National ICT Plan ICT Blueprint 2018-2022. Available at: http://mpac.gov.tt/sites/default/files/file_upload/publications/NICT%20Plan%202018-2022%20-%20August%202018.pdf (Viewed April 10, 2019).

¹⁶⁵ See Trinidad and Tobago’s Foreign Investment Policy. Available at: https://www.monroecollege.edu/uploadedFiles/_Site_Assets/PDF/38-Draft-White-Paper-Investment-Policy-of-TT-2009-2013.pdf (Viewed February 15, 2019).

¹⁶⁶ See Trinidad and Tobago’s Value Added Tax Act. Available at: <https://tradeind.gov.tt/documents-resources/legislation/> (Viewed July 08, 2019).

¹⁶⁷ See Trinidad and Tobago’s Company Act Chapter 81:01. Available at: <https://www.finance.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Companies-Act-Chapter-81.01.pdf> (Viewed July 08, 2019).

¹⁶⁸ See Jamaica and China Sign Four Agreements: Published August 21, 2013 URL: <https://jis.gov.jm/jamaica-and-china-sign-four-agreements/>. (Viewed February 6, 2017).

For Trinidad and Tobago

□ Agreement on China's donation of container-detecting equipment, Memorandum of Understanding (Moustafa) on the Belt and Road Initiative, Memorandum of Understanding between the National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on Strengthening Cooperation in the Field of Medicine and Health (particular emphasis on neurology), Memorandum of Understanding on Human Resource Development Cooperation between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Public Administration and Communication of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.¹⁶⁹ Speech given by H.E. Song Yumin at the Chinese Embassy in Trinidad: '*Seize Belt and Road Opportunity for Closer China-Trinidad and Tobago Cooperation*' publish June 5, 2017.

¹⁶⁹ See Prime Minister Dr the Honourable Keith Rowley, M.P.'s Official Visit to China and Working Visit to Australia in May 2018: Published May 29, 2018 URL: <https://www.opm.gov.tt/prime-minister-dr-the-honourable-keith-rowley-m-p-s-official-visit-to-china-and-working-visit-to-australia-in-may-2018/> (Accessed July 7, 2018).