

Evolution of Japan's Postwar Foreign Policy

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Abstract

This article traces the development of Japan's foreign policy since the end of World War II. It asks whether the concept of a reactive state is still valid as an explanation of Japan's foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. The article surveys the origins and key features of the Yoshida Doctrine, and discusses the limitations placed on Japan's Cold War foreign policy. The article introduces the institutions of foreign policy making and argues that the combination of a weak executive and strong bureaucracy reinforced the continuity of the Yoshida Doctrine by curtailing the ability of prime ministers to alter the basic course of foreign policy. The article then examines the continuities and changes in Japanese foreign policy since 1990, and provides an overview of new approaches that take issue with the reactive state argument. The article concludes that Japan's foreign policy behavior and capabilities are those of a middle power comparable to the major countries of Western Europe.

Keywords: Japan, foreign policy, Yoshida Doctrine, middle power, reactive state

Introduction

In 1988 Kent Calder wrote an influential essay of the nature of Japan's economic foreign policy. In that essay he described Japan as having a reactive state, one that made foreign economic policy largely in response to pressures from abroad with little evidence of policy making according to strategic calculations by domestic actors. Calder defined reactive foreign policy as one in which "the impetus to policy change is typically supplied by outside pressure, and reaction prevails over strategy in the relatively narrow range of cases where the two come into conflict" (Calder 1988, p. 519). A reactive state has two essential features. First, it fails to undertake independent foreign economic policy initiatives when it has the power and national incentives to do so. Second, it responds to outside pressure for policy change, but does so erratically, unsystematically, and often incompletely (1988, p. 519).

In particular, Calder argued that “(D)espite the importance of the international environment and considerations of state strategy, Japan’s reactive behavior in the international political economy of the late 1980s cannot be explained without reference to Japanese domestic social and political structure. Japanese domestic political structure discourages pro-active foreign policy behavior in several respects. Perhaps most importantly, the fragmented character of state authority in Japan makes decisive action more difficult than in countries with strong chief executives, such as the United States” (1988, p. 528).

Twenty years later Calder’s thesis remains an important analytical tool in the study of Japanese politics. The reactive state thesis originally was applied to economic foreign policy making but has been applied to foreign policy in general. Its appeal lies in three areas. First, it asks the key question of the relationship between policy capabilities and policy action: does a state necessarily act simply because it is in its interest to do so? This is a central conundrum of Japan’s postwar foreign policy. Many observers of Japanese foreign policy in the last twenty years have wondered why Japan has not cut a higher profile in international economic and political affairs. Calder’s essay was written at a time when it appeared that Japan was poised to surpass the United States in GNP and possibly take over leadership of the international economy. Yet, its performance since the 1980s has not fulfilled that expectation. The Japanese government was embarrassed by its inability to enact a law to provide materiel and manpower during the 1991 Gulf War, despite intense American pressure to do so and a definable national interest in maintaining stable access to Middle East oil supplies. Nor did it exercise decisive leadership in the early stages of the Asian foreign exchange crisis of 1997. Immobility internationally was mirrored by political and economic paralysis at home. Its efforts to reform the United Nations, and thereby to gain a permanent seat at the Security Council, have been stymied.

Second, the reactive state thesis implies a discussion about the nature of power in international relations. Calder’s essay appeared in the midst of a debate about the future role of the United States immediately following the end of the Cold War. Arguments about American unipolarity had not yet appeared, and Japan seemed to many policy makers and academics, Japanese and American, as the new economic superpower. The comparison was based largely on a tacit assumption that Japan would or should be exercising structural power, defined as the power to set and maintain the rules of the international political system. Typically, such power is

understood to be the preserve of hegemonies in international systems. In contrast, most states must content themselves with the exercise of relational power, the ability to influence specific actions or policies of other states. Implicitly, the reactive state thesis raises the question of whether Japan is a middle power, akin to the major states of Western Europe, or a potential hegemon.

Third, it sparked a debate that still continues about whether there has been any change at all in Japan's foreign policy since the end of the Cold War. Some scholars see very little. One textbook, edited by two scholars in Japan, characterizes that country's foreign policy style as *karaoke* diplomacy: Japan's foreign policy choices are circumscribed by a set menu of alternatives determined by the United States. As with *karaoke* the background music, the American policy line, is predetermined; the only scope for the singer is in the style of delivery, policy implementation (Inoguchi and Jain, 1996, xv.)

Others see more evidence of active foreign policy, especially since the end of the Cold War. Some argue that Japan's acquiescence to American policy initiatives is a matter of choice rather than necessity (Miyashita and Sato, 2001, p. 156). Others argue that Japan's style of foreign policy making is less public, and thereby less confrontational, than that of the United States. Descriptions of Japanese foreign policy as leading from behind, quiet diplomacy, reluctant realism, or indirect leadership suggest that Japan is capable of defining its own national interest and acting on it. These approaches will be discussed later in the chapter.

Legacy of World War II, Legacy of the United States Occupation

Japan's foreign policy has not always been reactive in the sense meant by Calder. Japan reacted, of course, to opening of the country by the United States and the other western powers beginning in the 1850s and to the threat of imperialism presented by those countries. By 1900, however, Japan was itself playing the imperialist game in East Asia, progressively taking by military conquest territory in Taiwan, Korea, Manchuria, and China proper. In the midst of World War II practically all of East and Southeast Asia was under Japanese military and political control. The reactive foreign policy described by Calder is the result of defeat in war and occupation by the United States military from 1945 to 1952.

Defeat in war meant that Japan's borders were reduced more or less to those of the mid-nineteenth century. More important for the discussion here, Japanese

treatment of Asians before and during the war engendered deep animosities that still cause trouble between Japan and its near neighbors. Defeat also discredited the military and gave rise to revulsion among the public against militarism and a consequent widespread commitment to pacifism. The depth of that commitment to pacifism has varied over time (Miyashita, 2007), but public aversion to military adventures has been a long-standing block to attempts to recreate a military capable of the independent defense of the country.

The occupation of Japan by the United States military (1945-1952) seems an odd moment to discuss foreign policy. Strictly speaking, Japan had none during those years. Yet, decisions taken during those years provided the framework for Japan's foreign policy for the next half century. The basic aims of the Occupation authorities were to pacify and democratize Japan. To accomplish the first goal the United States authorities disarmed the country and abolished its military services. Moreover, while the Occupation was administered indirectly through the government of Japan (unlike Germany at war's end, the government never collapsed), directives were enforced by the physical presence of the American military encamped at former Imperial Army and Navy facilities across the country. Some of those forces remained even after the formal end of occupation.

The centerpiece of the second goal of democratization was the 1946 constitution, largely drafted by the political section of General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters. In general, the constitution achieved its purpose of providing a democratic framework for postwar politics: Japan is the longest-running and stablest democracy in Asia. But its famous Article 9, known as the peace clause, provided a severe restraint on all attempts to create an independent security policy after 1952. Article 9 has been so central to debates about Japan's postwar security and to its role in the international community that it is worth citing in full here:

“Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.”

This denial of war-making potential was at the center of Left-Right conflicts over the nature of Japanese democracy and foreign policy. Sharp conflicts over the ability

of the state to engage in collective security (a central aim of the United Nations), defend itself in case of attack, maintain a Self-Defense Force send peacekeeping forces under UN auspices, or even maintain the alliance with the United States all have Article 9 as their touchstone. Revision of the constitution, a project of conservatives since the reversion of sovereignty in 1952 but so far unsuccessful, begins and ends with these two paragraphs of the constitution.

Second, the Occupation placed Japan in the western camp of the Cold War. There were two reasons for this. On the one hand, the Occupation was started to finish an American operation. The Soviet Union demanded a role similar to what it had gained in Germany but was rebuffed. Unlike Germany, the core territory of Japan was never partitioned. As the Cold War deepened after 1947 the question of Japan's post-occupation sovereignty was inextricably linked to its relationship to the United States. That Japan signed a peace treaty with most of the Allied Powers on the same day it signed a bilateral security treaty with the United States (San Francisco, California, September 8, 1951) is not accidental: the latter was a condition of the former, and in fact paved the way for Japanese resumption of sovereignty the following April. That Japan was to be the junior partner in the alliance is made clear by the unequal nature of security obligations. While the United States is obliged under the provisions of the treaty to defend Japan in event of attack, Japan is under no such obligation in the event of an attack on the United States.

On the other hand, disarmament and strict adherence to the letter of Article 9 meant that Japan would have to rely on some country to maintain its security. The United States security umbrella was imposed, but it also allowed Japan's postwar Left to argue for continuation of Article 9 unamended.

Alliance with the United States, of course, meant that foreign policy would also be a domestic problem. Progressive renegotiations of the bilateral security treaty eased the burden of the presence of the United States military, but that presence remains today. In fact, Okinawa did not return to Japanese sovereignty until 1972 and United States bases still take up a considerable portion of that prefecture. American bases in Japan served as rear support areas during the Korean and Vietnam wars, involving Japan in those conflicts indirectly. Left-Right conflicts over security and foreign policy were frequently carried out around the bases or in direct reference to them. Moreover, unlike traditional foreign policy, which is considered the province of the national government, issues involving the bases involve municipal and prefectural authorities

and local citizens. Disputes between local governments and the national government, especially the Japan Defense Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have complicated management of the alliance with the United States.

The Parameters of Postwar Foreign Policy

At the moment Japan regained its sovereignty in 1952 its place in the international system was anything but sure. It was considered a pariah state, its status as enemy state written into the United Nations Charter (fifty-five years later Germany and Japan still share that distinction, a constant irritant and one of the causes of recent Japanese efforts to reform the UN). Wartime policies and the onset of the Cold War isolated Japan from its East Asian neighbors, while the alliance with the United States turned its attentions across the Pacific and beyond. At home, the country was deeply divided over the shape of the emerging political system. The Left wanted a pacifistic, neutral Japan disentangled from the bilateral alliance and committed to social democratic ideals domestically. The Right, which combined in 1955 to form the Liberal Democratic Party that would go on to dominate politics for the next half century, was divided over whether to rearm and return to the prewar political system or continue the alliance and the basic framework of politics and society outlined by the 1946 constitution

The political compromise that was worked out, the Yoshida Doctrine, laid the foundations for Japan's foreign policy. Named for its architect, Yoshida Shigeru, a prewar diplomat and four-time postwar prime minister (1946-47, re-elected three times consecutively between 1948 and 1954), the policies adopted as political compromises proved remarkably durable. Some aspects lasted until the end of the Cold War, other still endure.

The Yoshida Doctrine contained three basic elements: continued reliance on the alliance with the United States to ensure Japan's security, emphasis on economic relations overseas to assist in the reconstruction of the domestic economy, and maintenance of a low profile in international politics. Externally, the doctrine was premised on the lack of military power. Over time Article 9 served both as liability and asset in the design of foreign policy. On one hand, the government was forced to accept the international environment as a given and hope the American security umbrella would hold up. On the other, Article 9 was used to present Japan as a country dedicated to world peace, a key element of its return to international respectability. It

was used repeatedly to resist pressures from the Eisenhower administration to rearm to take the dual burden off the United States of defending Japan while prosecuting the Korean War; to justify the limited and purely defensive mission of the Self Defense Forces created in 1954 as a result of that pressure; then to maintain low levels of military spending thereafter. Cabinet resolutions in the 1960s limiting defense spending to one percent of GNP and establishing the three non-nuclear principles (Japan will not produce, import, or sell nuclear weapons) were possible because of the convenient juncture of Article 9 and the American security guarantee.

The Yoshida Doctrine emphasized bilateral relations with the United States. Reliance on the United States was not only military in nature. During the entire Cold War period the United States was Japan's largest trading partner. Exports to the United States, tolerated by the latter for strategic reasons until the 1970s, were a major pillar of economic reconstruction and the development of significant export industries like consumer electronics, automobiles, semiconductors, and high-tech materials. Foreign policy therefore placed the relationship with the United States first and foremost. It was commonly said that when an international crisis occurred the Japanese foreign ministry looked first to Washington, next to the site of the crisis. Given the lack of military power, Japanese foreign policy naturally placed emphasis on economic policy instruments. Trade and foreign investment served economic interests, both public and private. As Japan's economy quintupled in size between 1955 and 1975 the quest for natural resources to supply industry was of paramount importance. Resource diplomacy favored developing nations like Indonesia or the Middle East countries that could supply petroleum, natural gas, and other critical industrial raw materials. But economic relationships also had a diplomatic dimension. War reparations to Southeast Asian nations and South Korea in the 1950s and 1960s paved the way for trade and investment, instruments that helped restore Japan's political relations with its neighbors.

A good example of the diplomatic dimension of economic relations can be seen in Japan's foreign aid program. From the beginning the aid program was seen as a way to promote diplomatic and economic relations with Southeast Asia, then progressively other regions of the world. While all donors mix diplomatic and commercial motives in their aid programs, Japan is distinctive because aid was seen as an especially important foreign policy instrument given the lack of military power. Japan's drive in the 1980s to become the largest bilateral donor, a position it achieved in 1989 then from

1991 to 2001, should be seen as the attempt to develop an alternative to military instruments in its aspirations to great power status.

Diplomatic and economic goals do not always complement one another. In the early years the government articulated a policy of separating politics and economics (*seikei bunri*) as way to justify trading with nearby communist countries while adhering to the western camp in the Cold War. *Seikei bunri*, however, proved to be a limited policy when Japan was confronted with counterparts that insisted on linking political commitments with trade and investment. *Seikei bunri* did not convince the Chinese government when it insisted that Japan suspend diplomatic recognition of Taiwan in exchange for trade agreements with the mainland. Nor could Japan avoid taking sides in Middle Eastern politics. Access to oil after 1973 depended on Japan downgrading relations with Israel in favor of the OPEC states of the region.

Subsequent articulations of Japan's national security always contained an important economic element. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan electrified the western alliance and led to American demands that Japan provide more active support in maintaining that alliance system. Japan responded by increasing aid to countries bordering cold war conflicts (Yasutomo, 1986) and rethought its basic security strategy. In 1980 the government of Ohira Masayoshi articulated a doctrine of comprehensive national security that included not only adherence to the bilateral military alliance, but economic security including provision of aid and other forms of economic cooperation to maintain the stability of the international system.

The third pillar of the Yoshida Doctrine, keeping a low profile in international politics, can be rephrased as the search for a place in the international system. Japan's isolation in 1952 was near-absolute. Rebuilding a position of importance meant regaining international respectability. One avenue in which to pursue this goal was the United Nations, and the government worked hard to gain admittance to that body. Since its entry in 1956 Japan has been careful to pay its dues and carry out its obligations to that body. Most of the time its votes in the General Assembly have coincided with those of the United States, but for Japan the UN is important in its own right. Unlike the United States, for example, public support for the UN and its related institutions is widespread.

Japan has also participated in other multilateral fora. Such participation afforded diplomats an alternative to over-reliance on bilateral relations with the United States while safely keeping it clear of accusations of unilateralism. Multilateralism in

East Asia has provided Japan the opportunity to engage its neighbors on issues specific to the region without raising the specter of wartime relations. Beginning in 1978 it acknowledged the importance of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a multilateral institution. Since then, along with China and South Korea, it has participated in the ASEAN-plus-three meetings that follow the annual ASEAN ministers' meetings. Since the 1980s it has also participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) that discusses security issues common to East Asian countries. Japan was also active in helping establish the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), organizations that provide opportunities for political and business leaders from the Asia-Pacific to exchange views on economic concerns.

Foreign policy making institutions

A notable feature of Japan's foreign policy making apparatus is its fragmented nature. Calder's argument about reactive foreign policy recognizes this fact and he is hardly alone in noting the problem. Assuming that clear foreign policy goals arrived at in a rational manner and tied to specific policies are the hallmark of effective policy making (this is debatable), Japan falls well short of the mark.

A major problem for Japan's postwar policy making has been the lack of strong executive leadership. The 1946 constitution vests executive power in the prime minister and cabinet, but weak prime ministers and cabinets have been a signal feature of postwar Japanese policy making (Van Wolferern, 1990; Hayao, 1993). Three factors contributed to this phenomenon. First, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was divided into factions, meaning that any prime minister was beholden to faction leaders for support, in effect a coalition government within the governing party. Second, while the opposition parties of the Left could never muster enough parliamentary seats to take power they learned how to block legislation they were determined to oppose in ways that made the cost of policy success so high that cabinets were often forced to modify or drop especially sensitive legislation. While no one was completely satisfied with the limited aims of the Yoshida Doctrine, all parties recognized their stakes in specific aspects of it and were therefore unwilling to concede those aspects to their opponents.

Third, the bureaucracy was a formidable power in its own right. The tradition of an elite bureaucracy that administers the state with little political interference is an

inheritance from the prewar period that survived the Occupation largely intact. Especially on day-to-day issues of policy the Diet has been content to allow the ministries a great deal of leeway in formulating, proposing, and administering foreign policy. There is room for prime ministers to provide decisive leadership when the bureaucracy deadlocks on controversial. In 1972, for example, Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei broke such a deadlock over whether to open negotiations toward diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in the wake of President Richard Nixon's surprise visit to Beijing (Fukui, 1977). Tanaka's leadership broke twenty years of official non-communication and opened the way for Japan to engage its most important near neighbor. Such moments, however, have been relatively rare in the postwar era. Sectionalism, the tendency of the bureaucracy to consider the world from the parochial interests of each ministry and agency, is not specific to Japan nor to the postwar, but certain features of Japan's foreign making organization tend to make it especially difficult to decide on clear policy and act on it in a concerted fashion. The key foreign policy actors within the bureaucracy have been the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry since 2001). The latter two have been primarily concerned with economic issues such as exchange rate management and relations with multilateral development banks like the World Bank and IMF (MOF) or promoting the interests of Japanese business abroad (MITI) while MFA is given the task of managing the traditional functions of diplomacy. Given the centrality of economic instruments and considerations in Japan's foreign policy and the lack of executive leadership in day-to-day foreign policy administration, however, sectional rivalries between the three agencies are frequent and sometimes prevent a united front on policy proposals in international negotiations.

As Japan's economic presence in the world grew in the 1970s and 1980s other ministries became involved in specific aspects of foreign policy. For example, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (now the Ministry of Posts) successfully staked out a claim to manage Japan's participation in the rapidly expanding global telecommunications industry, at the expense of MITI.

A good example of the problem of sectionalism and failure to contain new entrants into the bureaucratic foreign policy game can be seen in Japan's participation in the GATT Uruguay Round and the transition to the World Trade Organization (WTO). All three main ministries had been involved in GATT negotiations in the 1960s that led to

gradual liberalization of Japan's domestic economy in the 1970s. The Uruguay Round (1986-1994) grasped the nettle of agricultural liberalization, a policy that directly threatened Japan's highly protected and subsidized farm sector. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries made common cause with Diet members from rural electoral districts to oppose attempts to liberalize domestic agriculture and to remove non-tariff barriers to imports, especially of rice. Despite the position of the main ministries, along with the big business federations, in favor of promoting liberalized trade as a key national interest, Japan joined the ranks of those countries that would commit only to the minimum provisions of the Uruguay Round on agriculture liberalization. MAFF stuck to strict policies on tariffication of rice imports and unilaterally imposed a time limit on tariffication policy.

Foreign Policy after the Cold War

The Yoshida Doctrine can be considered a successful foreign policy, at least during the Cold War. Japan guaranteed its national security through alignment with the leading superpower, carefully nurtured its economic fortunes to the point where it emerged by the 1970s as the second largest economy in the world, and by and large rehabilitated the reputation as a responsible country that it had lost through imperialistic war.

The end of the Cold War, however, led to a series of challenges about Japan's role in the international system and therefore whether the Yoshida Doctrine remained sufficient to ensure Japan's vital interests. The most obvious change in the international system, the collapse of the Soviet Union and corresponding eclipse of socialism as a global threat, had two major impacts on Japan and its foreign policy.

The first was a major realignment of domestic political parties. The LDP's dominance of Diet politics ended in 1993. Until 1995 it was out of power and until 2005 it was forced to govern through a series of coalition governments. More dramatic has been the eclipse of the left, in particular the near-extinction of both the Socialists and the Communists as parliamentary parties. Their place as opposition parties has been taken up by the Democratic Party, a party of the center. Diet debate on foreign policy has moved to the right, facilitated by changing public attitudes about revising the constitution, including Article 9.

The end of the Cold War also called into question the purpose of the bilateral security alliance with the United States. The demise of the Soviet Union eliminated the common proximate threat to Japan and the United States. Until the mid-1990s,

neither China nor North Korea looked like threats to regional stability.

Moreover, Japan's perceived failure to support the United States more actively during the Gulf War in 1990-1991 seriously challenged the rationale that the United States would protect Japan while the latter was incapable of decisive action in a region where common security interests should have overlapped. Cabinet proposals to dispatch Self Defense Force personnel to support the multinational force assembling in Saudi Arabia stalled in the face of opposition from the Socialists; at times the debate took on near-comic dimensions as the opposition parties forced the prime minister and cabinet to adopt ever-more convoluted interpretations of Article 9 that would allow dispatch of military personnel for war fighting. A significant financial contribution to the war effort and post-conflict dispatch of mine-sweeping ships to the Arabian Gulf did little to assuage the image in the American government that Japan was incapable of acting in a crisis in support of its only ally. By the mid-1990s bilateral relations were strained enough that one Japanese journalist famously dubbed the trans-Pacific relationship an alliance adrift (Funabashi, 1999).

To be sure, many Japanese had reasons for questioning the reactive nature of foreign policy making anyway. Citizens and political leaders could point with pride to the country's economic accomplishments and suggest that it was time for Japan to flex its diplomatic and economic muscle. What has resulted is a search for a more pro-active foreign policy in which Japanese leaders themselves determine the national interest and choose the instruments by which to pursue independent of foreign pressure. The terms of the debate are wide-ranging. While the public and many political leaders still favor retention of the essential message of Article 9 there is a clear trend toward acceptance of some revision to acknowledge the existence of the SDF. At the other end of the debate there are calls for Japan to become a "normal nation," meaning one that maintains a military capable of defending the country by itself (Ozawa, 1994).

A more pro-active foreign policy also entails gaining recognition for Japan's contributions to the international community. For example, it now provides about 20 percent of the UN General Assembly budget, second only to the United States. In the post Cold War era Japan has not been shy about claiming its right to a permanent seat at the Security Council. In recent years it has championed UN reform as a vehicle to that end, arguing for expansion of the Security Council's permanent membership to reflect current international realities. So far, this coalition-building approach has failed, not only because of vocal Chinese opposition to Japanese membership but

because of rivalries between potential permanent members and their neighbors.

Post-Gulf War security policy has followed two tracks. First, Japan has reaffirmed the importance of the bilateral security alliance since the mid-1990s. This policy recognizes the continued importance of the United States as guarantor of Japanese security absent substantial changes in the defensive profile of the SDF. Despite the end of the Cold War the basic security framework in East Asia, the United States acts as offshore balancer through a series of strictly bilateral alliances, remains intact. Chinese nuclear weapons tests and military exercises aimed at Taiwan in the mid-1990s, and North Korea's declared intention to acquire the ability to produce nuclear weapons coupled with provocative missile tests aimed toward Japan since that period, have convinced most Japanese officials of the continued importance of the United States security guarantee. Japan participates in security dialogues within the ARF and has working-level information and personnel exchanges with the military organizations of China and South Korea, but no broad regional security framework capable of replacing the role of the United States is likely to emerge in the near future. Since the perceived fiasco of the Gulf War Japan has also developed a limited role in United Nations peacekeeping operations. It supplied peacekeepers and election monitors for the first time in Cambodia in 1992-1993, and followed that mission by participating in PKOs in Mozambique and the Golan Heights. The difficulties of constitutional interpretation have forced the government to restrict SDF personnel to rear-echelon support and humanitarian assistance roles, and care has been taken to keep Japanese personnel out of combat zones. The UN has provided a venue in which Japan can demonstrate its commitment to international stability independent of the bilateral security treaty while reassuring Asian neighbors of its good conduct.

This peacekeeping role since 2001 has expanded to support American military operations. In the wake of 9-11 Japan provided naval and air support for military operations in Afghanistan following the adoption of an anti-terrorism special measures law. For the first time since World War II Japanese destroyers operated in the Indian Ocean. In 2003 the Koizumi cabinet succeeded in passing a law allowing SDF dispatch to the Iraq War. Participation in both of these conflicts represents innovations in dispatch of SDF personnel because they were operations undertaken by so-called coalitions of the willing led by the United States and without UN PKO resolutions. SDF participation in PKOs is not a given, however, and prime ministers must propose a legislative bill for each new dispatch.

New Institutions of Foreign Policy Making

Whether Japan has succeeded in creating the administrative machinery for a pro-active foreign policy remains a key question. Administrative reforms undertaken by the Diet in the 1990s aimed to limit the independent power of the bureaucracy and increase parliamentary control over policy making. In early 2001 the number of cabinet ministries and agencies was reduced from 18 to 13 and a number of special administrative functions transferred to a reorganized Cabinet Office. Koizumi Junichiro, prime minister from 2001 to 2006, tried to create a more “presidential” style of policy decision making firmly located in the cabinet based on these reforms (Shinoda 2004). The Cabinet Office now has special offices for humanitarian assistance (peacekeeping operations dispatch) and, since 2007, a National Security Council based on an American model. The latter was made possible by the upgrade of the Japan Defense Agency, historically a weak policy actor dominated by civilian personnel dispatched from MFA, MOF, and METI, in December 2006 to the Ministry of Defense. The new National Security Council is made up the prime minister, the chief cabinet secretary, and the ministers of defense and foreign affairs.

Foreign aid policy has also undergone reconsideration in the post Cold War era. Japan’s ascension to the number one bilateral aid donor position after 1991 raised the question of what its aid, \$15 billion per year provided to some 110 countries on average, was for. This question became even more important in the 1990s because of the increasingly parlous state of public finances. The result of reconsidering foreign aid was the first-ever adoption of an ODA Charter, proposed by the foreign ministry, in 1992 (Japan still has no aid basic law). The Charter not only spelled out four basic objectives of foreign aid, it also gave the Ministry of Foreign Affairs leverage over rival agencies (MOF and MITI) in formulating aid policy. The result was the consolidation of aid policy actors into a version of the dual arrangement found in many other donor countries: the division of labor between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance in setting policy and establishing budgets, with other potential rivals relegated to implementation roles. The Charter was revised in 2003 to reflect changes in development approaches and to better respond to international events. The 2003 Charter explicitly acknowledges aid as a diplomatic tool. In fact, reconstruction aid for Iraq after 2003 was allocated especially to the region where the SDF peacekeeping force had been dispatched.

Japan has also announced that it will eliminate yen loan aid to China, the bulk of its program there, in 2008. Japan's rationale for this decision has two elements. First, the Japanese government considers that China has the economic resources to carry out the kind of large-scale economic infrastructure projects funded by yen loans with its own resources. Second, Diet members in particular have been angered by what they see as Chinese ingratitude for substantial aid. The Chinese government officially argues that Japanese aid is compensation for damage inflicted during World War II. Third, China's economy over the past fifteen years has boomed while Japan's has stagnated. At the same time, China's military spending, especially the off-budget portions invisible to outside scrutiny, have increased dramatically. There is an increasingly widespread concern in official circles in Tokyo that China is now an economic and political rival in East Asia.

What Kind of Foreign Policy?

If the reactive foreign policy of the Yoshida Doctrine no longer appears relevant, what, if anything, has replaced it? Recent scholarship on this topic portrays a foreign policy that attempts to assert a more pro-active posture while still constrained by domestic and external limitations. Post Cold War foreign policy has developed a set of policy tools that rely on consensus-building with other countries and continues a low politics economic approach. A number of scholars argue that Japan's foreign policy is more effective than is sometimes understood if one assumes the hegemonic model of international leadership. Japan's foreign policy tends not to directly challenge existing international arrangements but rather seeks to pursue Japan's national interests.

One approach to understanding Japan's foreign policy presents a model of quiet diplomacy. Japan continues to focus on low-risk and low-profile initiatives premised on a long-term view of Japan's national interest and the goals that will achieve it. This approach argues quiet diplomacy has been especially prevalent in Japan's relations with Asia. Japan has emphasized economic relations with the region and has worked to support a network of region-wide security, economic, and political relations that stabilize the region (Hook et al, 2005).

A second approach sees Japan exercising indirect leadership in international affairs, especially in East Asia. Japanese leaders do not publicly set agendas or push for goals set by Japan. Rather, Japanese diplomats lead from behind, preferring to

engage in behind-the-scenes consensus building and mediation between antagonistic parties (Blechinger and Legewie 2000). Japan has also taken on a role as spokesman for Asia in the intergovernmental institutions like the World Bank, the IMF, and the UN where its financial power give it political clout.

Michael Green has argued that recent changes in Japan's foreign policy represent a change in strategy toward reluctant realism. The country found its regional security environment changed but not necessarily safer after the Cold War. Chinese economic and military power now threatens Japan in ways it did not previously. North Korea is now less constrained by China and Russia. At home, Japan has undergone a major political shift that has nearly destroyed the old let but has not yet led to a consensus on a new foreign policy vision. Green argues that Japan now uses a principle that it "take more proactive steps to defend its position in international society and that these steps can no longer be defined by the US-Japan alliance or by facile assumptions about economic interdependence alone, even as alliance and economics remain at the core of Japan's world role" (Green 2001, pp. 31-32).

Conclusion

Each of the approaches above highlights a different aspect of recent Japanese foreign policy. Clearly, the assumptions of the Yoshida Doctrine no longer apply to Japan's situation in the world. It is no longer an economically vulnerable pariah state. Neither, however, is it the successor superpower to the United States as was imagined by many observers in the late 1980s. I would suggest that the best way to view Japanese foreign policy is to see Japan as a middle power in the international system. An appropriate frame of reference is the foreign policies of the leading European countries – Britain, France, and Germany – but without the framework of the European Union. Each of these countries confronts problems internationally the outcomes of which it cannot unilaterally control. All face domestic political and institutional constraints to clarity of vision and operation in international affairs. Here, Germany's postwar foreign policy is instructive. Largely overlooked in the discussions of Japan's struggle to define an appropriate UN peacekeeping role for the SDF is the fact that Germany experienced the same difficulties, first during the Gulf War and later during European debates on whether and how to intervene in the civil wars of the territories of former Yugoslavia. Like Japan, Britain's security strategy in the post Cold War world has been to adhere more closely than ever to the lone superpower and promote their

common security interests when domestic considerations do not clearly dictate otherwise.

That middle powers react to rather than directly shape the international environment is not surprising but worth keeping in mind nevertheless. The distinctions between the Yoshida Doctrine and more proactive foreign policy of the post Cold War era are those of degree rather than of kind. Japan lacks the political will and the constitutional provisions for a substantially more robust security policy, so economic policy tools still predominate by necessity. Economic power does not automatically translate into political power, nor does it guarantee national security by itself. What has changed is the willingness to think about policy instruments beyond economic measures and to state publicly what leaders think is in Japan's national interest.

Notes

* An earlier version of this article was published in Spanish as "Política Exterior de Japón en la Posguerra," in Laura Rubio Diaz Leal, ed. *China y Japón: Modernización Económica, Cambios Políticos y Posicionamiento Mundial*. Mexico City: Editorial Castillo, 2008.

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戦後日本外交政策の進化

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要旨

過去 60 年間、日本の対外政策がどのように変動してきたかについての議論がまだ続いている。本稿では、その戦後日本の外交政策の進化を考察する。冷戦期及び冷戦後における日本の外交政策の継続点そして変動を考えながら、K. Calder 氏による reactive state 理論は冷戦後日本の外交活動に説明力があるかを検討する。本稿では、いわゆる吉田ドクトリンの原因および特徴を指摘し、同ドクトリンは冷戦期の日本外交政策に与えた制限を分析する。特に、官僚主導体制に対する官邸によるリーダーシップ問題を取り上げる。そして、1990 年代以降に、reactive state 理論の変わりにどの理論とアプローチが現れたかを指摘する。最後に、1990 年以降の日本外交と欧州主要国との共通点を指摘し、日本外交の実績と行動は同国の中級国の地位を指すと結論する。

【キーワード】 日本、 外交、 吉田ドクトリン、 中級国、 反応的国家