## Securing Japan: Tokyo's grand strategy and the future of East Asia

Richard J. Samuels
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Throughout the Cold War era, Japan maintained the national security formula crafted by Yoshida Shigeru. At the center of the so-called 'Yoshida Doctrine' was a dependence on the alliance with the United States, which allowed for a minimal military rearmament by Japan and a focus on economic recovery. Since the 1980s, however, the United States pressured Tokyo to take on more of the burden in the asymmetrical alliance. During the 1990 Gulf Crisis, Americans were very critical of Japan's checkbook diplomacy after Tokyo's financial contribution of US$13 billion in war support, but no contribution in terms of personnel.

Since then, new threats to Japan have emerged: the rise of China both militarily and economically, the unpredictability of North Korea, the possibility of the US abandoning its military role in Japan, and the relative decline of Japan's economic power. Does Tokyo have a new strategy to replace the old doctrine in order to deal with these new threats? According to Richard Samuels, the answer is YES.

Samuels argues that a debate over a grand strategy is underway in Japan. He classifies Japan's current strategic thinkers into four types sorted by two axes: 'Normal Nation-alists', 'Neoautonomists', 'Middle Power Internationalists', and 'Pacifists'. The first axis is a measure of how much value they put on the alliance with the United States. The second axis is whether they allow Japan to use force.

'Normal nation'-alists hope to expand the US-Japan alliance globally in order for Japan to increase its role to contribute to international peace and security by allowing Japan the use of force as other normal nations do. While allowing Tokyo the use of force, Neoautonomists want to have Japan's security policy independent of the United States. Middle Power Internationalists are against use of force: Instead, they seek to achieve prestige by increasing prosperity while limiting Japan's exposure to world politics. Pacifists rely fully on prosperity to achieve prestige and to establish autonomy while reducing any military posture.

Samuels' impressive analysis connects these contemporary arguments to the past political philosophers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He persuasively illustrates that all four types have their historical heritage. Normal nation-alists come from Big Japanists in the anti-mainstream who were opposed to the Yoshida Doctrine and sought more equal relationship with the

United States. Neoautonomists are derived from nativists who sought armed neutrality in the Cold War era, who adored Japan's imperial past, and who resented a military dependence on the United States. Middle-power internationalists are in line with Small Japanists who emphasized the importance of prosperity without seeking military strength. Pacifists used to be unarmed neutralists whose idealistic view sought autonomy with peace. This intellectual comparison was only possible because of Samuels' profound knowledge and insights into Japanese history, society, and politics.

Of the four schools of opinions, Neoautonomists never received a significant body of followers, and Pacifists are loosing their ground as the Socialists presence is declining in the Diet. The two main actors, then, are Normal Nation-alists and Middle Power Internationalists. They differ from each other on the balance between economic and military instruments, between hard and soft power, and between the alliance with the United States and the relationship with Asian neighbors, especially China. The debates between the two schools will eventually build up a new consensus to replace the Yoshida Doctrine.

Samuels' analytical framework is very useful to examine Japan's post-Cold War national policy. Beginning in 1991, Japan took a series of steps to increase its involvement in international affairs off Japanese soil in order to become more like a 'normal nation'. As the first step, the Toshiki Kaifu government sent SDF's minesweepers to the Persian Gulf after the First Gulf War concluded. Then in 1992, the Kiichi Miyazawa cabinet successfully enacted the legislation which would enable Tokyo to dispatch SDF troops for the UN peacekeeping operations. In 1999, the Keizo Obuchi cabinet took another forward step by enacting the US-Japan Defense Guidelines Legislation which authorizes the government to mobilize the SDF to provide rear echelon support to US forces in the event of a regional crisis.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who is portrayed as a Normal Nation-alist by Samuels, Japan's national security policy was much more active. In response to the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the Koizumi cabinet, within a two-month period, enacted a major piece of legislation to dispatch the SDF for the first time in the postwar history during active combat. Then in 2003, the Koizumi cabinet crafted and enacted two major pieces of legislation on national security: the emergency legislation which provided a legal framework for defending the nation against external attack and the Iraq legislation which allowed the SDF to offer humanitarian and reconstruction assistance on Iraqi soil.

Koizumi's successor, Shinzo Abe was also proved to be a Normal Nation-alist by successfully enacting three major pieces of national security legislation: the legislation to upgrade the Defense Agency to a Ministry; the legislation to establish procedures for a national referendum to amend the Constitution, the legislation to facilitate the transformation of US forces in Japan.

In contrast to Koizumi, Abe had to balance between his personal pro-American stance and the relationship with Japan's neighbors in Asia. As Koizumi's multiple visits to the Yasukuni Shrine had offended Chinese and South Korean political leaders, Abe quickly moved to improve the relations with China and South Korea by promising that he would not publicly visit the shrine like Koizumi did, while refusing to say whether he would in fact visit it or not.

The current prime minister Yasuo Fukuda is well-known for his pro-China stance, and can be ideologically classified as a Middle Power Internationalist. However, Fukuda, in order to maintain the strong alliance with the United States, took a political risk by forcefully enacting legislation with a two-third majority in the lower house to continue the Self-Defense Forces mission in the Indian Ocean for antiterrorism activities. It became a major political battle with another Normal Nation-alist, Democratic Party of Japan leader Ichiro Ozawa, who strongly believes that Japan's personnel contribution must be limited to the activities under the United Nations' flag, publicly announced his opposition to the legislation.

In this book, Samuels guides readers through philosophical arguments in the past, domestic politics in the Cold War era, and the new international environment and the developments in Japan's national security since the 1990s. This will long remain the best reference on Japan's security policy and thinking from both historic and contemporary views.

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