

A call for a new Japanese foreign policy: the dilemmas of a stakeholder state

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The world was different in 2002 when Henry Kissinger published a book entitled *Does America need a foreign policy?*,¹ and *Le Monde* came out in support of the United States after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 by proclaiming: ‘We are all American.’² In many ways, this was the high point of the American global era—the era of unipolar American power. In 2014 the world has moved on. The United States is still the leading global power with unique capabilities and responsibilities for global leadership. But other states—particularly in Asia and the non-western developing world—are on the rise. The world is more fragmented and decentralized. States are rising and falling. The terms of global governance are more contested and uncertain. This article addresses the foreign policy of Japan and the choices that Japan faces in this shifting global context.

Is Japan disappearing from the world scene? Not quite. The article offers a portrait of Japanese foreign policy—its shape and direction—through the great traditions of international relations, depicting it as a combination of three forms of ‘ism’: classical realism, transformative pragmatism and liberal internationalism. Each of these traditions helps capture an aspect of Japanese foreign policy. In what follows, these three ‘isms’ are defined in relation particularly to US leadership, globalization, East Asian community formation, and the concept of an ‘arc of freedom and prosperity’. The article goes on to propose a new synthesis and direction for Japanese foreign policy that combines classical realism, transformative pragmatism and liberal internationalism in new ways.

Reflecting the great shifts under way in the global system, Japan has also exhibited various tendencies and policy directions. The foreign policy of the Shinzo Abe administration, inaugurated in January 2013, incorporates the three traditions of international relations mentioned above. Classical realism refers to an elite-focused statecraft of survival and striving to preserve the status quo. Transformative pragmatism refers to a revisionist line of self-rejuvenation and self-repositioning.

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¹ Henry Kissinger, *Does America need a foreign policy?* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002).

² Jean-Marie Colombani, ‘Nous sommes tous Américains’ [We are all American], *Le Monde*, 13 Sept. 2001, http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2007/05/23/nous-sommes-tous-americains_913706_3232.html, accessed 23 May 2014.

Liberal internationalism refers to working through and enhancing global norms and institutions, strengthening Japan's ability to advance itself and work with other states under conditions of deep globalization.³ The following sections first define these three concepts, and then clarify how these various foreign policy tendencies relate to the grand forces of globalization, a closer alliance with the United States, the East Asian community, and the so-called 'arc of freedom and prosperity'.

Classical realism

Several recent flashpoints in East Asian politics reveal the classical realist orientation of Japanese foreign policy, especially in terms of its counterbalancing and hedging diplomacy. Three events in 2013 are particularly salient. In the first, a Chinese fighter aircraft assumed an attack posture, locking its fire control radar on Japanese reconnaissance helicopters; then Chinese frigates took a similar attack posture towards Japanese frigates. These events took place on 15 and 30 January 2013, respectively.⁴ The Chinese action was one step short of initiating a battle. The Japanese Ministry of Defence investigated the Chinese actions, and made the events public on 5 February. Neither the Chinese nor the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been informed of these acts of aggressive posturing in advance. The Japanese government denounced the Chinese government for breaching the United Nations Charter, which prohibits the threat of force. The Chinese government denied that the events had occurred. Japanese leaders informed the US government, which in turn issued a strong statement condemning the Chinese for their provocative action. Using these events to explain classical realism and the nature of action and interaction, a number of observations can be made. (1) The length of time taken by Japan to investigate the events was excessive, unless it reflected a deliberate intention to hide Japan's capacity to act promptly. (2) Judging from the evidence,⁵ China was not deterred from taking a tough stance by the US condemnation and military preparations. These two points are negatives for Japan. (3) The Chinese denial of the actions should be taken as an indication that China does not want to be portrayed as an aggressor.⁶ This is perhaps a positive for Japan.

³ The principal authors and works of classical realism include Martin Wight, *Power politics* (London: Leicester University Press, 1978), and Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among nations* (New York: Knopf, 1948). The principal authors and works of transformative pragmatism include Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of international politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), and Dani Rodrik, *The globalization paradox: democracy and the future of the world economy* (New York: Norton, 2011). The principal authors and works of liberal internationalism include G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: the origins, crisis, and transformation of the American world order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), and Robert O. Keohane, Stephen Macedo and Andrew Moravcsik, 'Democracy-enhancing multilateralism', *International Organization* 63: 1, Winter 2009, pp. 1–31.

⁴ Takashi Inoguchi, 'The dynamic dynamite of Asia's leadership changes', *Global Asia* 8: 1, Spring 2013, pp. 14–17; idem, 'Seeking a new security framework for East Asia', Workshop on Managing International Conflicts on East Asia, Shinagawa Prince Hotel, Tokyo, 31 Jan.–1 Feb. 2014.

⁵ Linda Jacobson, 'Locked on: the dangerous dance around disputed islets is becoming ever more worrying', *The Economist*, 9 Feb. 2013, <http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21571466-dangerous-dance-around-disputed-islets-becoming-ever-more-worrying-locked>, accessed 25 May 2014.

⁶ Denny Roy, 'More security for rising China, less for others?', *Asia Pacific Issues*, no. 106, Jan. 2013, pp. 1–8.

Second, on 12 February 2013 North Korea carried out its third nuclear test. On this occasion it targeted the United States. Japan took action, denouncing North Korea for destabilizing East Asia and aggravating nuclear proliferation. Japan, South Korea and the United States took collective action at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), resolving to denounce North Korea and nudging China to support the UNSC resolution. Here too a number of observations may be made. (1) When North Korea carries out an act that violates international rules, stronger sanctions are implemented against it. This includes some element of Chinese participation, although Beijing tends to fall short of what the United States and others request. (2) What may be called 'coercive engagement' with North Korea is implemented.⁷ Other kinds of engagement, based on either political persuasion or economic inducement, are also used to make this coercion more effective.

Third, in December 2013 the Chinese Defence Ministry announced that China had established an Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in East Asia, one day after the first, and successful, flight of the Chinese drone *Lijian* from Shanghai over the western Pacific. Also, the Chinese aircraft carrier *Liaoning* navigated from Qingdao down to the South China Sea, where its amphibious warship almost collided with the cruiser *USS Cowpens*, loaded with nuclear missiles.⁸ China announced that all aircraft flying within the ADIZ must report their flight schedules and identification numbers to the Chinese agencies. The US and Japanese governments' responses diverged. The United States took swift counter-action, ordering two B-52 bomber aircraft to fly over the ADIZ; these were soon followed by Japanese and South Korean military aircraft. The United States has shown strong commitment (a) to the freedom of flight, (b) to the security of the Senkaku Islands, and (c) to the defence of the Philippines. Nevertheless, US civilian aircraft comply with the Chinese government's stipulation, and submit each airline's flight schedules over the ADIZ. Japan, meanwhile, repudiated the ADIZ and intensified its defensive posture around the Senkaku Islands. Moreover, the Japanese government ordered civilian aircraft not to submit schedules and identification numbers to the Chinese agencies, which, according to the Japanese government, would be tantamount to admitting to the existence of territorial issues between the two countries. There are important conclusions to be drawn from this episode. (1) Neither the United States nor Japan acknowledges the ADIZ established by China. (2) The US action impressed allies and neighbouring countries as a demonstration of both overwhelming might and a capacity for agile and rapid response. (3) A divergence persists in respect of civilian aircraft. It is ironic that Japan refuses to comply with China's demand even in respect of civilian aircraft when the Japanese Self Defence Forces (SDF) are not yet generally considered to be capable of repulsing Chinese military action in cases where there is a risk of Japanese civilian aircraft being shot down. Japanese Self Defence Forces would then be compelled to counteract China's massive and persistent military actions. (4) China's reactions to the US and Japanese actions have been

⁷ 'The responsibility to protect in southeast Asia', *NTS Alert*, NTS-Asia Secretariat, Centre for NTS Studies, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Apr. 02/09.

⁸ Inoguchi, 'Seeking a new security framework for East Asia'.

interesting. China did not make any military response to the swift and convincing US B-52 bomber sortie: although after a short period the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced that China had taken steps to counteract the US bombers flight over the ADIZ, no Chinese response, or any to the corresponding action by Japan, was verified by either the United States or Japan. The lessons learned are that China is not ready to defend its claimed ADIZ by force, but will nevertheless take any available opportunity to threaten when the United States and Japan are neither ready nor prepared to act; and, most importantly, that the key tension is no longer just between Japan and China over the Senkaku /Diaoyu Islands but directly between the United States and China, focusing on the ADIZ.

Classical realists are familiar with these and other actions in a crisis situation where aggressive military and diplomatic moves need to be counterbalanced and hedged with astute judgement, deft articulation and agile action. There are two fundamental problems with the adoption by Japan of the assertive defence-oriented classical realist approach. First, the Japanese constitution focuses on the preservation of the status quo. Second, the constitution's design for the Japanese body politic, with the limited role it accords to the armed forces, creates problems relating to command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I). Japan's weaknesses in C3I, compounded by the fragmented institutional array of bureaucratic agencies, can hinder the country's capacity to play a role alongside its allies. In December 2013 the Japanese government established the National Security Council in order to improve Japanese interoperability with allies in respect of C3I.

Transformative pragmatism

Transformative pragmatism is different from assertive realism. Assertive realism is similar to defensive realism in its orientation towards the preservation of the status quo and the protection of sovereignty. Transformative pragmatism, by contrast, attempts to rejuvenate and reposition the economy and country, focusing on generating energy and vigour and thereby enabling Japan to act from a position of strength. Notwithstanding two decade-long recessions, transformative pragmatism attempts to increase national income by stimulating finance and industry through a set of monetary, fiscal and growth policies, known as 'Abenomics' after the incumbent Prime Minister.⁹ Mourning the loss of Japanese spirit and willingness to court the danger of losing sovereignty seen as characteristic of the post-1945 generation of Japanese, transformative pragmatism attempts to break away from the mentality of dependence on, and subservience to, the United States. Thus transformative pragmatism attempts to maintain some distance from both the United States and China. Recent Japanese public opinion polls on attitudes to the United States and China show fairly favourable views of the former and very unfavourable views of the latter.¹⁰ Ratings of the United States reached a peak recently when Ambassador

⁹ Takashi Inoguchi, 'Japan in 2013: Abenomics and Abegeopolitics', *Asian Survey* 54: 1, Jan.–Feb. 2014, pp. 101–12.

¹⁰ Takashi Inoguchi, 'Japan's foreign policy line after the Cold War', in Takashi Inoguchi and G. John Ikenberry, eds, *The troubled triangle* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 35–62.

Mike Mansfield coined the phrase ‘most important bilateral relations bar none’ to characterize US–Japan relations;¹¹ they have fallen somewhat since, owing to the US insistence on certain issues that are unpopular with many, if not most, Japanese: for example, the military base at Futenma, the Osprey transport aircraft, nuclear power plants, Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, and dispatching Self Defence Forces abroad. Japanese views of China are currently at their lowest level since 1972, when the two countries normalized diplomatic relations, owing to factors such as rampant anti-Japanese unrest in China, assertive postures on their respective territories and aggressive actions in the East China Sea. In this context, the ‘self-rejuvenation’ of transformative pragmatism is pursued through constitutional revision to facilitate the possession and use of armed forces, the assumption of self-repositioning at a distance from both the United States and China, and increasing self-reliance in terms of military capacity, including building up both conventional and nuclear forces. It is highly significant, however, that so far Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has focused on the rejuvenation of the Japanese economy through Abenomics, and not on a dramatic increase in the defence budget, which remains at 1 per cent of GDP for fiscal year 2014 in the budget proposal presented to the ordinary session of the National Diet in January 2014.¹²

Transformative pragmatism does not mean a departure from Japan’s alliance with the United States. On the contrary, it attempts to retain the alliance but without focusing too strongly on US preferences on issues of importance. In other words, transformative pragmatism seeks a Japan that can generate Japanese energy to act in a determined fashion through Abenomics and still pursue a deeper engagement with the United States. This shift in Japanese strategy towards more independence may be welcome in Washington, provided that Japan does not overstep the red line drawn by the United States or override US power to set the limits of action.¹³

Liberal internationalism

Liberal internationalism is directed at strengthening global norms and institutions. An array of issues fall into this area: the economy and trade, human rights, peace, intellectual property rights, the environment and labour. In a study of 120 multilateral treaties dealing with such policy tasks, each country is given a hexagonal profile.¹⁴ Japan’s profile reflects strong support for those regimes that deal with the

¹¹ Testimony of Ambassador Designate to Japan John V. Roos before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 23 July 2009, [http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/Roos Testimony 090723a.pdf](http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/Roos%20Testimony%20090723a.pdf), accessed 24 May, 2014.

¹² *Boei hakusyo 2013* [Defence of Japan 2013], data no. 16, <http://www.mod.go.jp/j/publication/wp/wp2013/pc/2013/pdf/25shiryo2.pdf>, accessed 25 May 2014.

¹³ Jennifer Lind, ‘American eyes on Abe’s Yasukuni Shrine visit’, *Asia and Japan Watch*, Asahi Shimbun English website, 9 Feb. 2014, https://ajw.asahi.com/article/forum/politics_and_economy/east_asia/AJ201402090001, accessed 25 May 2014.

¹⁴ Le Thi Quynh Lien, Yokoshi Mikami and Takashi Inoguchi, ‘The might of stakeholders: how six international regimes comprising 120 multilateral treaties have been sustained in the 20th century and beyond by signatory countries’ (under review); Yoshiki Mikami, ‘Kagaku gijyutsu kanren jiyoyaku database no kochiku to katsuyou ni kansuru kenkyu: Kenkyu hokokusyo’ [Study on the construction and use of science and technology related conventions database: study report to the Ministry of Education Scientific Research Grant Scheme], Nagaoka University of Technology, Nagaoka, Japan, 5 May 2013.

economy and trade, the environment and intellectual property rights, and is very similar to those of the United States, the UK and Switzerland. These issues are manifested in various ongoing high-profile agendas, concerning first, trade liberalization, and second, contributions to international society through peacekeeping and overseas development assistance.

Trade liberalization

Free trade is one of the most critically important global norms and institutions, especially given that for some years the WTO has in effect ceased to function as a liberalizing and globalizing engine of the world economy. Regional norms and institutions are expected to play a growing role. Bilateral free trade agreements are one such vehicle. Japan has concluded such agreements, but only very few compared to other members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and other Asia–Pacific countries.¹⁵ Among those Japan is currently negotiating agreements with are the United States, the EU, and China and South Korea. Japan has a significant role to play in the enhancement of free trade across the globe, being committed to it both in principle and in practice, and itself representing a substantial volume of trade. In particular, it has a large part to play in invigorating free trade as a key actor shaping regional free trade norms and institutions. One of the schemes currently being promoted by Japan in the Asia–Pacific area is a regional comprehensive economic partnership (RCEP) agreement,¹⁶ which will encapsulate all the regional free trade agreements within one large framework. If it materializes, it will become a kind of regional WTO. However, there are hurdles in the way of its successful realization, among them China's refusal to allow Taiwanese participation. China normally treats Macao, Hong Kong and Taiwan as provinces or autonomous districts, for example when it gauges and reports their local pollution indices; and yet it allows Hong Kong, but not Taiwan, to participate in the RCEP negotiations. Taiwan is a very large economic presence in South-East Asia, ranking second after Indonesia in GNP and volume of trade. Its exclusion from this particular regional partnership agreement therefore constitutes a negative factor in the promotion of free trade in the Asia–Pacific region. We return to this point below.

International contributions (United Nations and TICAD)

The UN is an important institution for Japan. Its admission as a member in 1956 marked Japan's emergence from isolation and the shadow of the victors of the Second World War (both the Allied powers and newly independent former

¹⁵ Mireya Solis and Saori N. Katada, 'Unlikely pivotal states in competitive free trade agreement diffusion: the effect of Japan's Trans-Pacific Partnership participation on Asia–Pacific regional integration', *New Political Economy*, 31 Jan. 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2013.872612>, accessed 25 May 2014.

¹⁶ The term RCEP here covers three types of broad bilateral free trade agreements: (1) bilateral free trade agreements, narrowly defined; (2) economic partnership agreements; (3) economic and trade agreements between mainland China and Taiwan.

colonies). The UN represents one of the great achievements of liberal international norms and institutions. Once a member's credentials are established and well regarded, that country's degree of freedom in action increases. Within this forum, Japan would do well to enhance its efforts in such domains as human dignity and human rights, nuclear non-proliferation, cultural diversity, poverty eradication, literacy improvement and intellectual property rights. The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) represents an important vehicle for advancing Japan's credentials in the UN.¹⁷ Japan has been working steadily for the past quarter-century to advance economic development in Africa. The key feature of Japan's developmental design is its comprehensive nature, with proper emphasis placed on health and education, on the one hand, and infrastructure, such as water and energy supply and communications and transport, on the other. Wholehearted support for Africa's own efforts to improve the quality of life of the continent's population and a commitment to extend a helping hand to Africans in these endeavours may well enhance Japanese credentials in respect of liberal international norms and institutions. Japan's contributions to Africa have been of immense value to this region of the world, not only directly but also indirectly through various UN organizations, especially the UN Development Programme and the World Food Programme, to which Japan contributes substantially. Progress towards the UNDP Millennium Development Goals has been largely satisfactory in respect of success in meeting the mid-term targets. For example, Africa has seen reduced infant mortality, increased literacy, improved supplies of safe drinking water, and higher school attendance by girls; these advances, more or less dramatic, are helping to usher in a new African century. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia in January 2014 has reinforced Japan's efforts in this respect.

The three 'isms' applied to four areas of study

A century of globalization?

Given the very limited achievements of the WTO Doha Round of trade liberalization over the past decade, and the fact that major economies including the United States, the European Union and Japan have barely emerged from a new kind of deep recession,¹⁸ it is arguably inappropriate to refer to this period as one of deep globalization. In view of the history of trade liberalization attempted by the WTO and its predecessor, GATT, from a longer-term perspective it is not hard to understand why argument so often surrounds the term 'globalization'. Many writers characterize the twentieth century as a 'century of globalization', with a focus on the G7 and OECD countries. In this article, by contrast, the 'century of globalization' denotes the globalization of emerging economies as well as OECD countries, a process originating in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

¹⁷ Katsumi Hirano, *Keizai tairiku Africa* [Economic continent Africa] (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Shinsya, 2013).

¹⁸ 'Why optimism may be bad news', *The Economist*, 23 Jan. 2014.

This new globalization is making demands both of OECD countries, especially in the agriculture, fishery, manufacturing and mining sectors, and of emerging economies, especially in high technology, services and intellectual property. The globalization discussed in this article further represents an appropriate level of globalization, not hyper-globalization, especially in respect of the 'excessively efficient global financial market'.¹⁹

Taking a forward-looking perspective, one can argue that efforts are required to liberalize trade and markets in those emerging and East Asian economies where national legislation to open up markets and remove barriers to trade have not been sufficiently implemented. In the case of Japan, forecasts at the turn of the millennium that the WTO might not work efficiently effectively led to the creation of the RCEP, discussed above—an idea that is akin to a bilateral free trade agreement under the WTO, but allows more flexibility and room for adjustment to suit local conditions and bilateral bargains. Whether the approach of accumulating RCEP-guided agreements works can be seen from a couple of recent events. First, not only Japan but also China has been included in the RCEP. As noted above, China has been reluctant to allow Taiwan to join negotiations on an RCEP agreement with any country except itself: Taiwan and China concluded a bilateral free trade agreement in June 2012 that saw Taiwan's vast number of manufacturing firms relocate to mainland China. Then, late in 2013, China allowed Taiwan to conclude RCEPs with New Zealand and with Singapore. The reasoning behind the policy change may be related to the political difficulties currently attending President Ma Yin-jeou, who concluded the free trade agreement with China against the opposition of the Democratic Progressive Party but has suffered a severe decline in popularity (by around 10–15 per cent) throughout 2013 and into 2014. Second, even South Korea has been included in the RCEP. Three East Asian countries, Japan, China and South Korea, have been negotiating a three-way bilateral free trade agreement, but deteriorating political relations have prevented the process from moving forward. The RCEP scheme has become more attractive to Japan, South Korea and China in that order.

Just as significant is Japan's initiation of negotiations to join the TPP, a scheme for trade liberalization in the Pacific. Of course, one can argue that this enthusiasm can be attributed to the China factor.²⁰ Joining the TPP enables Japan to forge a closer alliance with the United States and deepen globalization. South Korea, initially reluctant to enter TPP negotiations—President Lee Myung Bak boasted that although South Korea accounts for only a very small percentage of world physical territory, it has agreed to the principles of free trade with so many countries that the total sum of its economic presence is the largest based on this one criterion—was prompted by Japan's decision to join negotiations on the TPP

¹⁹ James Tobin, 'A proposal for monetary reform', *Eastern Economic Journal* 4: 34, July–Oct. 1978, pp. 153–9; Rodrik, *The globalization paradox*. See also Jeffrey A. Frieden, *Global capitalism: its fall and rise in the twentieth century* (New York: Norton, 2006).

²⁰ Ian Bremmer, NHK BS interview, http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/newsline/specialinterviews/index_20130122.html, accessed 24 May, 2014. See also Solis and Katada, 'Unlikely pivotal states in competitive free trade agreement diffusion'.

in 2013 to initiate negotiations itself. The negotiations between Japan and the US were carried on throughout spring 2014, with the aim of reaching an agreement during President Barack Obama's state visit to Japan on 23–25 April. Japan has not taken the critical step of opening its markets in rice, beef, poultry and pork. Entrenched domestic resistance was too strong to be overcome in time for the President's visit.²¹ Though the joint communiqué did not touch on the prospect of a TPP agreement, both bilateral negotiations after 25 April 2014 and multilateral TPP ministerial negotiations in Singapore (May 2014) were carried on with the goal of reaching an eventual agreement, perhaps after the US mid-term congressional elections in November 2014. China also appears to have an interest in the TPP.

Closer alliance with the United States?

The US 'pivot' strategy, involving a switch of focus to Asia and the Pacific, might enable Japan to avoid making a basic choice on either deepening its dependence on the United States or moving towards distinctive security independence. It is true that the US pivot strategy requires allies and friends to consolidate their strategic partnerships further, especially in terms of sharing intelligence and co-manufacturing weapons capable of a high order of destruction. After all, the United States has been most apprehensive about Japanese 'loose cannon' habits in matters concerning secret intelligence and diplomatic negotiations. Henry Kissinger is known for his frequent complaints on this point. Japanese legislation for secrecy protection was passed in December 2013, largely in response to this kind of criticism from the US government. To further secure international confidentiality, legislative efforts have been undertaken by allies to protect secret intelligence and other related matters from unauthorized disclosure, especially in light of the WikiLeaks, Anonymous and similar episodes.²² In the area of weaponry, the co-manufacturing of high-tech fighter aircraft has become a norm. The F-35 fighter is to be co-manufactured by Lockheed Martin and Japanese firms. When parts for fighter aircraft can be made only by co-designing and co-manufacturing with non-American manufacturers, the relationship may be viewed not as one or more countries having a one-sided dependence on the United States but rather as greater US dependence on non-American manufacturers. To add more complexities to strategic partnerships with allies, not only Japan but also South Korea has ordered F-35s in large numbers. South Korea voiced some concerns about selecting F-35s with Japan as a co-manufacturing source. But for South Korea not to have F-35s would reduce its fighting capabilities *vis-à-vis* Japan, North Korea, China and Russia, let alone *vis-à-vis* the United States. From the Japanese point of view, co-manufacturing may enhance not only Japan's fighting capabilities but also Japanese bargaining power *vis-à-vis* the United States and South Korea.

²¹ Mark Landlos and Jodi Rudoren, 'Obama suffers setbacks in Japan and the Middle East', *New York Times*, 24 April 2014.

²² Wendy H. Wong and Peter A. Brown, 'E-Bandits in global activism: WikiLeaks, Anonymous, and the politics of no one', *Perspectives on Politics* 11: 4, Dec. 2013, pp. 1015–1033.

An East Asian community?

Overall, Japanese foreign policy has been pro-alliance and pro-neighbours. But it wavers as the position and power of others change from pro-US to anti-US and vice versa, as well as from anti-China to pro-China and vice versa. The most pronounced example of this vacillation is Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama (in office 2006–2007). His grandfather Ichiro Hatoyama, who was also prime minister, followed the anti-US line in 1956–7 and decided to pursue *rapprochement* with the Soviet Union, which he did alongside an equally successful bid for entry into the United Nations.²³ In 2006, in a speech in Singapore, Yukio Hatoyama, called for the formation of an East Asian community. Hatoyama wanted to correct what he regarded as Japan's excessive affiliation with US policy during the Bush presidency. He was aided by Ichiro Ozawa, the secretary general of the Democratic Party of Japan, who took the DPJ's China policy to the extreme of allowing every visiting DPJ parliamentarian to shake hands with President Hu Jintao in Beijing and allowing Vice-President Xi Jinping to meet Emperor Akihito in Tokyo—actions that were not well received by public opinion. Yukio Hatoyama's fatal mistake was his choice of terms in referring to the controversial Okinawa US military base. When he met President Barack Obama, Hatoyama told Obama to 'trust me' to resolve the base issue—a choice of phrasing deemed too light for use in diplomatic conversation with the US President. The United States became very critical and suspicious of Hatoyama. Just as poor a decision was Hatoyama's pledge to Okinawans to find an alternative site for the US military base outside the island or even the country (possibly on Hawaii or Guam). These wishful ideas were doomed to fail. After all, the majority of Japanese pay lip service to Okinawans for having borne enormously heavy burdens on behalf of other Japanese before, during and after the Second World War. The national consensus is that it would be preferable if another site for the Okinawan military base could be found—but, as with similar issues such as the selection of sites for nuclear power plants, there is a great deal of 'nimbyism' in play.

As territorial issues with China and South Korea gained prominence in the mid- and late 2000s, the idea of forming an East Asian community fell into neglect in Japan. In the second decade of the new century economic, financial and technological issues have gained more salience, while political issues giving rise to tensions between Japan, China and South Korea have become extremely emotional and vitriolic. At the same time, voices urging that political and economic issues, or government and business issues, be separated have started to be heard in all three countries. In the basic framework of economic and technological relations governing the three East Asian economies, Japan takes the lead, while South Korea follows; though it has on occasion surpassed Japan in terms of manufacturing, it has not done much in research and development: since 1945 Japan has won 19 Nobel Prizes (16 of which were science prizes) whereas South Korea has received just one (peace

²³ Donald C. Hellman, *Japanese domestic politics and foreign policy: peace agreement with the Soviet Union* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); Gilbert Rozman, *Japan and Russia: the tortuous path to normalization, 1949–1999* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

prize). China, too, surpasses Japan in manufacturing but not in infrastructure building or in civilian technological research and development (receiving just two Nobel Prizes, both of which were peace prizes). South Korea needs a more advanced technological edge, whereas Japan excels in this area with outstanding results. China needs more progress in infrastructure, and in this area too Japan excels. Furthermore, both China and South Korea need more market space in Japan, which is an important destination for Chinese and South Korean products, especially given the effects of recession in the United States and the EU, where consumption of products from East Asia has declined. Looking into the near future, *The Economist* notes: 'Countries have started to outsource public services to each other.'²⁴ China and South Korea, along with Japan, are facing the challenges of ageing societies in a region of the world known for longevity. In Japan, the added benefits of a universal medical insurance system contribute to seniors' well-being. These factors, combined with fairly dense interactions between cities in neighbouring nations, make the outsourcing of whole medical care systems between governments via cities a viable option for the indeterminate future. After all, 'unlike countries, cities are not hobbled by issues of sovereignty,' Benjamin Barber points out.²⁵

Arc of freedom and prosperity?

It is significant that the doctrine of an 'arc of freedom and prosperity' was announced when Shinzo Abe was prime minister (2006–2007) and Taro Aso foreign minister. No less important are the facts that at the time the US President was George W. Bush, Jr (2001–2007) and that the previous Japanese prime minister was Junichiro Koizumi (2001–2006). What happened during the Bush–Koizumi period? First, US unilateralism ruled the world. US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq took place. Second, Koizumi sent Self Defence Forces to Iraq after Bush declared victory. Koizumi achieved simultaneously what were regarded as the two essential elements of Japanese foreign policy: supporting the United States even under the constitutional constraint of not sending SDF to active combat regions and not succumbing to what Koizumi viewed as Chinese interference in Japan's internal affairs; that is, annual prime ministerial visits were made to the Yasukuni Shrine during his tenure. On succeeding Koizumi as prime minister, Abe's first action was to mend fences with China and to refrain from visiting the Yasukuni Shrine. Taro Aso proclaimed the doctrine of the 'arc of freedom and prosperity' to develop Japan's diplomatic offensive. This doctrine is intended to fulfil three purposes: (1) to make Japan's presence more widely felt, as China took centre stage with its announcements of double-digit annual economic growth in the 2000s; (2) to comply with the Bush 'Riga' Doctrine of participating in anti-terrorist activity against terrorism-nurturing autocracies, such as Iraq, Iran and North Korea;²⁶

²⁴ 'Unbundling the nation state', *The Economist*, 8 Feb. 2014, pp. 50–51.

²⁵ Benjamin Barber, *If mayors ruled the world: dysfunctional nations, rising cities* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2013).

²⁶ Takashi Inoguchi, 'How to assess World War II in world history: one Japanese perspective', in David Koh Wee Hock, ed., *Legacies of World War II in South and East Asia* (Singapore: Institute of South-East Asian Studies,

(3) to promote Japan's ODA and other contributions to international society such as peacekeeping operations and humanitarian assistance.

After Abe's resignation on health grounds, the new Prime Minister, Yasuo Fukuda, expressed his own concerns about Japanese foreign policy, which differed from those of his predecessors. In the first place, he was not receptive, as Koizumi had been, to the US suggestion that Japan take substantive part in anti-terrorist wars; second, he joined Hu Jintao of China in issuing a joint communiqué proclaiming a mutually beneficial strategic relationship between Japan and China. Fukuda did not visit the Yasukuni Shrine either. When he resigned for reasons that were not made sufficiently transparent,²⁷ he was succeeded by Taro Aso. Aso continued to pursue the 'arc of freedom and prosperity', but his tenure was fragile and dominated by criticisms of rotating power among Liberal Democrat Party (LDP) bosses untested by general elections. Pressure mounted and ultimately he resigned at the expiry of the House of Representatives' four-year term. In the ensuing general election of December 2009, the LDP suffered severe losses and the DPJ took office under Yukio Hatoyama. He developed a policy to correct what the DPJ regarded as the LDP's excessively pro-US stance and focused on what is called the *tohen sankakukei* (equilateral triangle) relationship among Japan, the United States and China to promote an East Asian community free from excessive western influence. However, revelations of tax evasion led to his abrupt resignation. His successor as prime minister, Naoto Kan, tried to re-establish a foreign policy consonant with the LDP approach during the Abe and Fukuda periods, focusing on the Japan-US alliance and a beneficial strategic relationship between Japan and China. However, after the Great East Japan Earthquake struck on 11 March 2011, Kan was plagued by problems arising from recovery from the disaster, including the crisis surrounding the safety of nuclear power plants, financial imbalances, and many others. He resigned when his popularity ratings dropped to between 10 and 15 per cent.

Yoshihiko Noda, who succeeded, tackled what he regarded as urgent policy issues meticulously and comprehensively. But he was haunted by the problem of gaining endorsement through a general election, which, when it was called, resulted in his party's resounding defeat by the LDP.²⁸ This meant that Shinzo Abe became Prime Minister for the second time, having surprisingly won the LDP presidential election earlier in the year. The key points of his foreign policy line are: alliance consolidation; patriotism through visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and revisions to textbook guidelines; territorial sovereignty on the Takeshima, Senkaku and Northern islands issues; and what he calls *chikyugi fukan gaiko* (global diplomacy). The last point was articulated through official visits to as many as 30 countries during his first 365 days in power. The global diplomacy initiative is partially prompted by a wish to counter China and South Korea, the only two countries in the world whose citizens view Japan in unfavourable terms.²⁹

2007), pp. 138–51.

²⁷ Takashi Inoguchi, 'Japan's foreign policy line after the Cold War'.

²⁸ Takashi Inoguchi, 'Japan in 2012: voters swing, and they swing away soon', *Asian Survey* 53: 1, 2013, pp. 184–97.

²⁹ Shinzo Abe, 'Policy speech by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the 186th session of the diet', 24 Jan. 2014, http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/96_abe/actions/201401/24siseihousin_e.html, accessed 25 May 2014.

Infrastructure consolidation for a new foreign policy

Before weighing up the three foreign policy lines, it is necessary to review the infrastructure required to pursue each one. First, classical realist foreign policy at the dawn of the twenty-first century calls for the construction of command, control, communication and intelligence chains on a solid, scientific and professional basis. After all, making deterrence and diplomacy work depends basically on accurate comprehension, and on the correct assessment, sound judgement, and skilful use of words (and indeed of their absence). Storing and analysing statements and assessments systematically and scientifically requires a good system of information retrieval and reconstruction. Given the very small number of Japanese personnel working on security, defence and foreign affairs in government as compared to their counterparts in major OECD countries, and given the additional small size of the intelligence and analytical community, the importance of infrastructure building cannot be overstressed. In the United States, several high-level bodies including the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Intelligence Council and the National Security Agency are in charge of various aspects of intelligence analysis and manipulation. The State and Defense departments and the National Security Council are responsible for making assessments and decisions, presenting public statements and executing actions. Although it would be excessive to argue that an infrastructure resembling the US one needs to be built in Japan, at least an elementary counterpart needs to be built from scratch. Japan's existing infrastructure is marked by weak professionalism and organizational fragmentation.³⁰ To meet this need, legislation was passed in late 2013 and the new National Security Council started its work in January 2014.

Second, transformative pragmatism argues for a change in status: specifically, the elevation of Japan from a client state or a protectorate of the United States to a genuinely independent entity. To carry out transformative pragmatism is to enhance Japanese energy through Abenomics, using a growth strategy involving quantitative easing of money, fiscal austerity, and encouragement for research and development in science and technology as well as liberalization of regulatory laws and institutions.³¹ However, Prime Minister Abe thinks Abenomics is not sufficient for his transformative pragmatism. He believes there is a need to change Japanese mindsets. In referring to a change in status, Abe looks to the revision of the constitution, especially article 9, which prohibits Japan from possessing and using armed forces for resolution of conflicts among nations. Even when Japan's ally the United States is attacked, Japan is thought to have no constitutional right to join in its defence. A revision of the constitution requires two-thirds support in both houses of the Diet. Since 1946, when the new constitution was promulgated, no political party has held that many seats in both houses. Transformative pragmatists of impetuous bent argue that breaking the restraint of the 'no war' constitution is

³⁰ Takashi Inoguchi, 'Japanese ideas of Asian regionalism', *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 12: 2, Aug. 2011, pp. 233–49.

³¹ Inoguchi, 'Japan in 2013: Abenomics and Abegeopolitics', pp. 101–112.

the only means to make the alliance truly effective, which is increasingly recognized as one of the highest priorities Japan has to consider, particularly given the threat to the alliance posed by the advent of an assertive China.

Yet public opinion has been strongly against this kind of government move. Approximately 70 per cent of respondents are clearly opposed to the constitutional revision of article 9. No less importantly, the junior coalition partner, the New Komei Party, is against the revision of article 9. The Sokagakkai, the religious body of which the New Komei Party is the political branch, is also fundamentally against what is called the *kaishaku kaiken* (constitutional revision by interpretation) whereby the alliance with the US enlarges the scope of the Self Defence Forces' military engagement.

The predicament of Japan's transformative pragmatism is that one of the symbolic efforts to change the Japanese mindset of deepening dependence on the United States for its national security sometimes takes the form of paying a visit to the Yasukuni Shrine where the nation's Second World War dead are buried.³² The unfortunate course of Japan's postwar history is that the shrine was originally state-owned until 1945 when it was privatized, and furthermore, in 1978 those sentenced as class A war criminals were quietly added to the more than 2.5 million war dead already commemorated at the shrine. This action by the shrine's owners prompted Emperor Hirohito (1925–89) to halt his visits to the shrine permanently in 1978; his successor Emperor Akihito has never paid a visit there. Some prime ministers and cabinet ministers do, however, continue to make visits.

Most problematic, however, is the implication of the consistently revisionist tone of Japan's transformative pragmatism: the potential challenge to the world order set by the outcome of the Second World War. Japan's status in the world community is spelled out in the United Nations Charter as that of a former enemy, along with Germany, of the Allied powers that have led the United Nations since 1945. Japan's predicament is that the harder it tries to shrug off its status as a protectorate of the United States, the more its determination to change the mindset of Japanese citizens is taken as a challenge to the United States and the US-led world order.

The US answer to the rise of an assertive China is the Asia–Pacific pivot strategy whereby the United States and Japan mobilize naval, air and, in the case of Japan, also land forces in the western Pacific against various contingencies involving China.³³ The Abe version of transformative pragmatism aroused apprehension in the United States and also in many other quarters: at the extreme, it is misunderstood as implying that Japan may be planning another world war.

Third, liberal internationalism argues that the infrastructure underpinning liberal international norms and institutions—the rule of law, freedom of expression, free trade, democracy and international law—must all be promoted

³² Hugh White, 'Japan's strategic predicament behind the Yasukuni curtain', *East Asia Forum*, 6 Jan. 2014, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2014/01/06/japans-strategic-predicament-behind-the-yasukuni-curtain/>, accessed 25 May 2014.

³³ Yoshiaki Hidaka, *America no shin chugoku senryaku o shiranai nihonjin* [The Japanese who don't know America's new strategy against China] (Tokyo: PHP Research Institute, 2013).

and improved at home and abroad. One of the steps that must be taken at the regional level is to express accord on such norms in speeches, statements and joint communiqués issued in national, bilateral and multilateral settings. For example, in his speech on Asia on 18 January 2013 in Jakarta, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's key message was that Japan and its fellow Asian countries should abide by, and promote, the rule of law, peaceful resolution of conflicts of interest, free trade, freedom of expression and democracy.³⁴ Though Japan has a strong record of supporting the international regime by promoting multilateral treaties in certain areas, in other areas its record is somewhat thinner, and its contributions in these policy areas should be encouraged.³⁵ Japan has distinguished itself in its contributions to international policy regimes, in terms of its adherence to multilateral treaties, in areas such as peace, trade, the environment, intellectual property rights, labour and human rights; in these areas, Japan is well up the rankings even among OECD countries. The hexagonal profile of Japan's contributions is very similar to those of the United States, the UK and Switzerland. In particular, contributions to the economy, trade, environment and intellectual property rights stand out, while those in policy areas such as human rights, labour and peace are somewhat less substantial. By way of comparison, France, Germany and Denmark show a fairly even hexagonal shape; Norway, Sweden and the UK show a pronounced emphasis on labour and peace; and South Korea, China, India, Vietnam, Afghanistan and North Korea have very small hexagonal shapes. Liberal internationalism argues that Japan should further enhance its contributions to the construction of global policy regimes. Activity in this field should be one of Japan's foremost strengths, for two reasons: first, Japan has achieved stable peace and prosperity at home, as evidenced by its having the highest longevity among all nations and zero war-related deaths since 1945; and second, Japan has been assiduous in scientific discovery and technological innovations, as evidenced by its total of 19 Nobel Prizes, all contributing to humankind universally.

Conclusion: finding the best mix of three foreign policy lines

In concluding, the article now presents what the author regards as the best mix of the three foreign policy lines examined above. Classical realism focuses on defence buildup and alliance consolidation. With China actively pursuing a 'restoration' that reflects the power dynamics of 200–400 years ago, a period during which the Manchus subjugated the Han Chinese, its immediate neighbours must enhance their defences and their alliances. Although the Shinzo Abe administration's emphasis on patriotism, the national anthem and allegiance to the flag falls

³⁴ 'The bounty of the open seas: five new principles for Japanese diplomacy', speech scheduled for delivery by Shinzo Abe, Jakarta, 18 Jan. 2013. Abe's policy speech was in the event not delivered during his stay in Jakarta owing to some unavoidable changes in his itinerary. For the original text, see http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/pm/abe/abe_0118e.html, accessed 25 May 2014.

³⁵ Le Thi Quynh Lien, Mikami and Inoguchi, 'The might of stakeholders'; Mikami, 'Kagaku gijyutsu kanren jyojyaku database no kochiku to katsuyou ni kansuru kenkyu: Kenkyu hokokusyo' [Study on the construction and use of science and technology related conventions database: study report to the Ministry of Education Scientific Research Grant Scheme].

within the realm of domestic politics, it is somewhat out of line with classical realism, which regards the preservation of the status quo as the highest priority. This article argues that this element of classical realism is best seen within the context of domestic political competition rather than as an externally directed expression of intent by government and civil society.

Transformative pragmatism focuses on Abenomics, in which sound economic growth is activated through quantitative easing of the money supply, fiscal austerity, a consumption tax hike, and a two-pronged pro-growth policy of accelerating research and development and liberalizing often stifling government regulations. Transformative pragmatism also concentrates on helping global neighbourhoods; this is based on the assumption that in an era of deep globalization, global citizens are all neighbours working together to build good infrastructure in transport and communications, as well as mining and manufacturing where appropriate, to raise levels of hygiene and nutrition, to improve education and training, and to provide ample opportunities to women and the young, in order to raise the national income of the countries Japan is helping by expanding free markets and trade in terms of technical/expert advice and financial investment.

With free markets spreading to encompass emerging economies as well as OECD member states, Japan's economic growth is bound to increase. Whether this happens through the universalism of the WTO or through the fairly ad hoc, somewhat regionalized, indeed pragmatic, incremental processes of RCEP, TPP and APEC (Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation) matters little, as long as it propels further economic growth.

Liberal internationalism focuses on international ideas and institutions that foster freedom, peace and prosperity in Japan's global neighbourhoods. Having achieved the highest level of longevity and the lowest possible rate of war-related deaths for its own citizens, Japan naturally wishes to help other countries to achieve similar prosperity and peace through international organizations and transnational groups, as well as through Japanese government and non-governmental organizations. Japan's commitment to various transnational policy regimes through international treaties and agreements registered at the United Nations is arguably the greatest of any nation, as noted above. The argument of this article is that the maturity of Japan's liberal internationalism in helping to sustain transnational policy regimes befits a world in which US leadership is less dominant and in which functionally multipolar regimes could survive and at times govern in order to prevent destruction and destitution.

In sum, Japanese foreign policy should combine the three foreign policy lines: classical realism for hedging and counterbalancing; transformative pragmatism for increasing internal vigour, efficiency and democracy; and liberal internationalism for contributing to the enhanced capability of multilateral institutions. This combination should be put into practice with keen observation, sound judgement and flexible action.