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### Japan as a Global Ordinary Power: Its Current Phase

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# Japan as a Global Ordinary Power: Its Current Phase

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*Japan's self-defining foreign policy role has been evolving on the basis of alliance with the United States since 1945. The author argues that depending on the changing terms of alliance with the United States, Japan has been adjusting its role roughly every 15 years: domestic contestation over alliance (1945–1960), free rider or Yoshida doctrine in practice (1960–1975), systemic supporter (1975–1990), global civilian power (1990–2005) and global ordinary power (2005–2020). In this article the author argues that the three key conditions for global hegemony, military, currency and demographic hegemony, will be met by the United States to varying degrees until the second quarter of this century. The author speculates that Japan's foreign policy role will evolve on the assumption of a continuing United States leadership role, albeit with far more dependence on market conditions and power calculations abroad.*

## Introduction

Shortly after the United States declared victory in the Iraq War in May 2003, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi paid a visit to Crawford, Texas to further consolidate the alliance with the United States.<sup>1</sup> Their encounter was symbolized by an exchange of very brief phrases and sentences. It is almost as if Koizumi came, saw and won the heart of George W. Bush. Koizumi said, 'High Noon'. Bush appeared baffled somewhat that Koizumi should say this without bothering to compose a sentence. Koizumi added, 'Gary Cooper', again without composing a sentence. Bush, who prides himself on his ability to judge the character of people, warmly hugged Koizumi.<sup>2</sup>

Both Koizumi and Bush are not known for making eloquent speeches, but they are known for being effective. When Arnold Schwarzenegger, Republican Governor of California, spoke in support of Bush at a 2004 Presidential election campaign rally, Bush introduced him and said they shared a lot in common: 'We both married above ourselves, we both have trouble with the English language, and we both have big biceps—well, two out of three aren't bad'.<sup>3</sup> Bush knows that he projects the image of an ordinary person. Koizumi's daily press conferences were very brief. He uttered perhaps a few sentences only and spoke with occasional pauses inserted, sometimes not between sentences but between words.

But what transpired between them with these brief phrases and sentences at Crawford? This leads to the subject of this article. How many phases has Japan gone

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<sup>1</sup>Inoguchi and Bacon, 'Japan's Emerging Role', 1–12.

<sup>2</sup>Renshon, *In His Father's Shadow*.

<sup>3</sup>'Remarks by the President', 2004.

through to send Self-Defense Force (hereafter SDF) troops to Samawa, Iraq in March 2004 even though Iraq itself was less than fully pacified? How have the two key themes of Japanese foreign policy since 1945, historical debt and war renunciation, come to the point of being redundant?

I tackle this task by examining the evolution of the self-defined foreign policy roles of Japan from 1945 to 2005. As Japan's postwar foreign policy has been embedded in an alliance with the United States, Japan's foreign policy roles have largely been shaped by the bilateral relationship. Japan's foreign policy roles are thus one of the major angles from which Japan looks at the United States and the Japan – United States relationship. In the rest of the article I trace the changing foreign policy roles Japan has assigned itself in five distinctive periods. Second, in order to be more precise on the nature of a global ordinary power in the current phase, I speculate on the durability of American hegemony by focusing on the three hegemonic sustainability conditions: military, currency and demographic factors. Finally, I examine efforts in Tokyo to moderate the powerful United States influences on Japan.

### Self-defined Foreign Policy Roles in Five Distinct Periods since 1945

Japan's foreign policy roles since 1945 have been heavily determined by its defeat in 1945 and the concomitant constraints of historical debt and war renunciation.<sup>4</sup> Notably Henry A. Kissinger has argued that the Japanese are slow to make a decision; he expounded a 15-year theory of Japanese decision making.<sup>5</sup> This can be illustrated with reference to three events: Commodore Matthew Perry's visit to Japan in 1853; the complete defeat of Japan by the Allied Powers in 1945; and the collapse of the huge bubble in 1991. It took 15 years for the Japanese to put an end to the seemingly endless debates and strife before they started *de novo* in 1868. It again took 15 years for the Japanese to make up their minds as to whether they would get along with the Americans or not before they announced the income-doubling plan in 1960, whereby they indicated that they would go with the United States' focus on wealth accumulation. It took another 15 years approximately after the collapse of the bubble before the Japanese worked out how to lay off employees and deal with bad loans.

#### *The Battle between Pro-Alliance and Anti-Alliance: 1945 – 1960*

An examination of major works on Japanese foreign policy shows, to the great surprise of many observers of Japan who believe that Japan does not, will not and can not change, that Japan has been changing its policy line every 15 years since 1945.<sup>6</sup> The first period, 1945 – 1960, is characterized by debate about the nature of the postwar relationship with

<sup>4</sup>Pyle, *Japan Rising*. Samuels, *Securing Japan*. Suh et al., *Rethinking Security*.

<sup>5</sup>Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?*

<sup>6</sup>Tokibe, ed., *Sengo Nihon gaikoshi*. Tomoda, *Nyūmon Nihon gaikō*. Inoue, *Nihon gaikōshi*. Works in Japanese on Japanese foreign policy during the first period include Hosoya, *San Francisco kōwa eno michi*; Iokibe, *Nihon no bōei*, and *Semyoki*; Ōtake, *Saigunbi*; Lee, *Higashi Ajia reisen*; Oguma, 'Minshu' to 'aikoku'; Akaneya, *Nihon no Gatto*; Harada, *Nichibei kankei no keizaishi*; Miyagi, *Bandon kaigi*; Watanabe, *Sengo Nihon*; writings in English include Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism*; Cohen, *The Political Process*; Fukushima, *Japanese Foreign Policy*; Funabashi and Senta, *Japan's International Agenda*; Hara, *Japanese – Soviet Russian Relations*; Hasegawa, *Japanese Foreign Aid*; Hellmann, *Japanese Foreign Policy*; Katzenstein,

the US. Though vastly different from current debates post-2003 on the Iraq War, there was considerable discussion in Japan in the period 1945–1960 about the United States. The die was cast in 1960 when Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi passed the revision of the Japan – United States Security Treaty through the National Diet (despite vigorous resistance from opposition parties) and then submitted his resignation. The ‘Yoshida line’ commenced on the day of Kishi’s resignation. Prior to Kishi’s departure, the terms of the alliance had not been settled. Neither was the Yoshida line accepted at home. By the Yoshida line I mean the policy approach that relied on a security guarantee by the United States and enabled the Japanese to focus their energy on wealth accumulation. The Yoshida line was most vigorously contested during the first period of 1945–1960. Many Japanese were not able to come to terms with the humiliation of delegating national security to a foreign country and with the uneasiness associated with the security treaty and the Constitution. Only after 1960, with the income-doubling plan of 1960–1970 announced by Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda, was the Yoshida line enshrined.

In the first period historical debt and war renunciation were the key themes and most pressing issues affecting Japanese foreign policy. Japan was occupied by the United States until 1952: war tribunals were held; high ranking leaders were politically purged from office; and Okinawa remained occupied by the United States until 1972 (the northern half centering on Amami Oshima was returned to Japan in 1953). After the war, the remains of the war dead were buried at the Yasukuni shrine. War criminals, however, were not. Notably, the anti-alliance and anti-SDF movement was very strong in Japan throughout the period. In order to placate anti-SDF public opinion, the Japanese government kept the SDF busy with non-threatening and popular tasks such as disaster relief and economic reconstruction. Needless to say, the Japanese government has been keeping the SDF busy in recent years with the same set of tasks plus peace keeping abroad in Cambodia, East Timor, Iraq, and the Indian Ocean.

#### *Yoshida Line or Free Rider: 1960–1975*

Japan’s income level went up so steadily that Japan became the target of envy and then of enmity.<sup>7</sup> Internally as well, the rapid economic, social and demographic changes over years undermined the political basis of the governing Liberal Democratic Party. President Charles de Gaulle’s dismissal of Hayato Ikeda as ‘a transistor salesman’ caricatured a Japan in which the Yoshida line was stripped of that visionary politician’s valor and pride. President de Gaulle called Japan a ‘free rider’ who had no sense of responsibility about how to run the world even when it represented the second largest economy. The free rider line prevailed more or less throughout the period of 1960–1975. Again 15 years elapsed.

In the second period two Asian events, the Vietnam War (1965–1975) and the diplomatic normalization with Asian neighbors, most notably South Korea (1965) and China (1972), were significant factors. In terms of South Korea, diplomatic normalization negotiations were opposed bitterly in both countries. The historical debt was paid in the form of war reparations and, in part, in the form of loan packages to South

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*Cultural Norms and National Security*; Mendel, *The Japanese People and Foreign Policy*; Scalapino, *The Foreign Policy of Japan*; Welfield, *Empire in Eclipse*.

<sup>7</sup>Inoguchi, ‘Japan’s Images and Options’.

Korea from Japan. Diplomatic normalization with China took place in the wake of the diplomatic normalization between the United States and China in 1971. Significantly China did not demand war reparations. Instead China wanted Japan to extend official development assistance to help China modernize itself. One thing that complicated Japan's foreign relations thereafter was bilateral relations with China. Prime Minister Takeo Miki's (1974–1976) second visit to the Yasukuni shrine took place on 15 August 1976 with the focus on the Japanese war dead from the Second World War. All prime ministers since the Meiji Restoration (1868) had paid a visit to the Yasukuni shrine to honor the war dead without arousing criticism. Focusing on the Second World War and characterizing his own visit as a private one, Miki's second visit proved to be a watershed on this issue. As a result of the furor in bilateral relations with China, Prime Ministers Ohira (1978–1980), Suzuki (1980–1982) and Nakasone (1982–1987) did not pay a visit to the Yasukuni shrine until Nakasone did so on 15 August 1985. Nakasone argued that Japan's postwar period must be dealt with and deflected criticism about his visit. Chinese leaders, however, were outraged as high ranking war criminals such as Hideki Tojo were buried there in 1978. Due to intense pressure Nakasone stopped visiting Yasukuni the following year. No prime minister visited the Yasukuni shrine again until Koizumi pledged to pay a visit yearly when he stood for the presidency of the governing party.<sup>8</sup> He did so in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005, but not on 15 August. In spring 2001, he gave Chinese Ambassador Wu Dawei a pledge that he would not visit Yasukuni on 15 August.<sup>9</sup> Shortly before he resigned in September 2006, however, he did pay a visit to the shrine on that date.

#### *Systemic Supporter: 1975–1990*

Toward the end of the second period, the oil crisis erupted. The Middle East war between Israelis and Arabs was waged. Japan wavered between pro-American and pro-OPEC positions and was accused of being a free rider by both sides. This prompted Japan to shift its position slowly but steadily from free rider to a systemic supporter.<sup>10</sup> By a systemic supporter I mean an actor which gives a helping hand to the United States-led international system. It is important to note that Japan's support was mostly of an economic nature, as exemplified by Japan's positions on free trade and energy security, but that toward the end of the period Japan took on more political and military issues such as supporting a united Western position against the Soviet development of SS-20, an intermediate range ballistic missile whose accuracy surpassed its Western counterpart. 'Systematic supporter' is an apt description of its role during these years. Despite all the difficulties associated with the constitutional ban of use of force for the settlement of international disputes, there was no shortage of rhetorical freedom. Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone on his first visit to the United States in 1981 characterized Japan as 'an unsinkable aircraft carrier'.

In this third period the historical debt issue was somewhat subdued as South Korea was mostly under military rule and China was led by Deng Xiaoping, who ordered that territorial issues be frozen for the succeeding 50 years. Thus anti-Japan public opinion was effectively contained. Prime Minister Nakasone visited the Yasukuni shrine in 1985,

<sup>8</sup>Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism*.

<sup>9</sup>'China issues warning'.

<sup>10</sup>Inoguchi, 'Japan's Images and Options'.

however, and both China and Korea expressed their anger. He undertook no repeats. Meanwhile the war renunciation issue also remained contained, with China indicating that Japan's alliance with the United States was preferable to an independent Japan with a much more powerful Self-Defense Force.

#### *Global Civilian Power: 1990–2005*

The steady decrease in the incidence of war among major powers and the end of the Cold War set the stage for 'global civilian powers' to play a more significant role.<sup>11</sup> Japan and Germany, as heavily militarist and expansionist powers before 1945, and exemplarily pacifist nations since 1945, were more than delighted to be given this role.<sup>12</sup> As global civilian powers both countries have global economies; project pacifist policies/activities associated with peace keeping, international rescue and relief, and economic reconstruction largely on the basis of human security; and are allies of the United States. The United Nations was most pro-active in these activities under the leadership of Boutros Boutros Ghali in the late 1990s. However, global market integration, which deepened the predicament of poverty-stricken and strife-riddled countries, and the end of the Cold War and subsequent reduced interest in the developing world, created failed states and bankrupt economies. That is far above what self-styled global civilian powers, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations were able to handle in a singular fashion. It was against this background that the events of September 11, 2001 took place. The subsequent response by the United States put an end to the fourth period of global civilian power, 1990–2005, and paved the way for the role of a unilateral global power.

In the fourth period the historical debt issue became more salient thanks to the disappearance of Cold-War-related issues and subsequent nationalistic uproars. The war renunciation issue also came up thanks in part to the need for Japanese police and self-defense forces to be sent abroad for peace keeping, international relief, and economic reconstruction. Most important in this regard were the 'Revolution of Military Affairs'<sup>13</sup> and the transformation of the United States Armed Forces, and their ramifications. The United States wants its military troops abroad to be kept to a minimal size and its minimum overseas troop level to be augmented by superior weapons and intelligence systems.

#### *Global Ordinary Power: 2005–2020*

Japan has chosen the emerging role of a global power with justice for the period 2005–2020.<sup>14</sup> The chosen role is revolutionary, on the surface at least, as Japan has been an actor supposedly beset with *Machtvergessenheit*. It symbolizes that Japan is becoming an ordinary power in a number of senses. First, the use of force is becoming more accepted in Japan. Without any public criticism or reproach, the Maritime Safety Agency has used force against an unidentified, presumably North Korean vessel which fiercely resisted

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<sup>11</sup>Maull, 'Germany and Japan'; Funabashi, *Samittokurashii*.

<sup>12</sup>Schwarz, *Die Gezähmten Deutschen*.

<sup>13</sup>Rumsfeld, 'Transforming the Military'.

<sup>14</sup>Inoguchi and Bacon, 'Japan's Emerging Role'.

the Japanese coast guard's attempt to investigate what it was carrying. This took place in 2002.<sup>15</sup> The Self-Defense Forces on UN-sponsored peace keeping operations have been allowed to use force, more specifically rifles, once they are attacked or once they detect that an enemy is about to attack. This was legislated in 1991. The Self-Defense Forces have been allowed to use force, more specifically person-to-tank weapons, in the context of their peace keeping operations in Iraq. This legislation was introduced in 2003.<sup>16</sup> Japan will not, however, accommodate the notion of 'assertive defense' pursued by the United States since the 9/11 events, which allows a preemptive war. Furthermore, it pursues efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and bring an end to discrimination in the world, as well as measures to enhance inclusive involvement of the wider population in running a society, as necessary concomitants of the reduction of terrorism.

In the fifth period both the historical debt issue and the war renunciation issue are revived as part of increasingly visible Japanese self-assertive nationalism. They are revived, however, against the background of the good record of pacifism and anti-militarism that have remained solid over the preceding 60 years. Japan's bid for permanent membership in the Security Council of the United Nations is one of the manifestations, justified along the lines of self-assertive nationalism and time-tested pacifism. Two of the major platforms in Japan's move on the United Nations are the slogan 'no taxation without representation' and the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. Another is the constitutional revision envisaged by the main governing party, the Liberal Democratic Party. The draft of a revised constitution was announced late in 2005, proposing such major themes as solid defenses, patriotism, and small government, excellence in science and technology and competitiveness. In May 2007, a law concerning the procedures for constitutional revision passed in the National Diet. Shortly thereafter the Liberal Democratic Party lost its majority in the House of Councillors election, which made the prospects for constitutional revision unlikely, as revision requires a two-thirds majority in both Houses.

### **American Hegemonic Conditions**

It is of critical importance for Japan's foreign policy line to correctly identify the waning and waxing of United States hegemony. In my view, predominance in military, currency and demographic hegemony are critical in maintaining hegemonic positions.<sup>17</sup> Military hegemony is most apparent in defense expenditure. More directly it is symbolized by weapons in Research and Development (R&D) expenditure. The United States dominates here most overwhelmingly. Of all the world's R&D expenditure on weapons the United States is responsible for 85%. All other major military powers—China, Russia, Britain, France, Germany, India, Pakistan, Japan, Israel, and South Korea—are far behind in terms of weapons innovations that would bring superiority in combat and deterrence situations. After the Cold War, technological progress made on weapons has been spearheaded almost solely by the United States. This constitutes one of the foundations of United States unilateralism. Since investment in weapons innovations bears fruit only 15–30 years down the track, America's military dominance seems assured at least until 2020–2035. Needless to say, the United States may continue

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<sup>15</sup>Coast guard action'.

<sup>16</sup>Cabinet approves plan'.

<sup>17</sup>Inoguchi, 'Twentieth-Century World Order Debates'.

R&D spending on weapons at the current high level for some years to come; it is not far-fetched to speculate that its military dominance may be stretched beyond 2020–2035. More intuitively, the size of the United States Navy, a major instrument for projecting power, is huge. After the United States Air Force, the United States Navy has the second largest air force capability in the world. Furthermore, the United States Navy has been responding to China's growing military buildup in ways that would enable it to acquire twice as many aircraft carrier groups as it possesses at present by 2015. The scope and speed of the military buildup by the United States are so breath-taking that China might be forced to back down from this incipient arms race, just as the Soviet Union backed down from an arms race with the United States when it brandished the torch of the Space Defense Initiative in the 1980s. Needless to say, the United States may not be able to use its overwhelming military superiority precisely because its use of force may not be prudent and effective. This caveat is one important characteristic of what Michael Mann calls Incoherent Empire.<sup>18</sup>

The second condition is currency hegemony. The ability to have its own national currency or equivalents used with trust on a global scale is essential. When the United States dollar was instituted as a world currency in 1945, dollar–gold convertibility was an important element to ensure such trust. In 1971 convertibility was abandoned. Yet United States dollars have remained a world currency. How long will this last? In order to answer the question, I might well use the Mongolian analogy, as I have done elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> The Mongol empire was the first truly global empire in human history, covering most of the Eurasian continent in the thirteenth century. It enjoyed a superior military force and deployed an effective military doctrine of awing the entire population by swift and thorough genocide of troublesome or rebellious communities. Its currency was military draft. It was used for about 85 of the years of that century.<sup>20</sup> The Mongols were able to get their military draft used with 'trust' on a global scale in conjunction with their military might and strategy. How might this affect the way we see United States dollars in conjunction with the non-convertibility of United States dollars, which could be taken as somewhat analogous to military draft? It would be circa 2055 when the United States dollar might lose its aura if such an analogy were to be of some use. Since historical conditions are vastly different, the historical analogy between the Mongolian empire and the American empire may not be appropriate, especially because the United States has been able to attract uninterrupted inflows of capital in the form of foreign direct investment and purchase of United States Treasury bonds. Yet one knows that once 'trust' evaporates, capital will abruptly flow out. Without any historical precedent, this exercise might be of use in figuring out the longevity of the American empire.

The third condition is demography. An empire must have demographic vigor. Of all the major countries, India, the United States and the United Kingdom are the only ones which are projected to enjoy a demographic rise to 2050. Projected change in the population size is 71% for India, 31% for the United States and 6% for the United Kingdom. Percentage change in the population size is -3% for China, -34% for Japan and -34% for Russia. Most important here is the projection that China will start a demographic decline somewhere between 2020 and 2040. China's GNP rise is estimated to slow down accordingly. Therefore the challenge to the hegemonic position the United States faces can only come during the period when China will be still on the

<sup>18</sup>Mann, *Incoherent Empire*.

<sup>19</sup>Inoguchi, 'Twentieth-Century World Order Debates'.

<sup>20</sup>Sakaiya, *Sekai o tsukutta otoko*.



rise, i.e. between 2010 and 2030. Thereafter what Mark Haas calls a ‘geriatric peace’ might ensue,<sup>21</sup> keeping the United States going forward still further as the hegemon when all the other major powers, including China, Russia, Europe and Japan, are trimming defense expenditure due to the need to sustain social policy expenditure on an aging population.

Underlying the above summary of prevailing Japanese thinking are two major factors: the fact that China’s rise will be constrained by the soon-to-commence demographic decline there; and that the United States’ continuing hegemonic vigor will be sustained by unrestrained inflows of capital, immigrants, and technological innovations at least through the first half of this century. I turn now to examine the current direction of Japan’s foreign policy thinking on moderating the direct influence of the United States.

### **Japan’s Dehierarchization Moves**

By dehierarchization I mean, using David Lake’s conceptualization, a series of actions that aim at diluting direct hegemonic influences on ‘client’ or ‘supporter’ states.<sup>22</sup> Although Japan is essentially a state subordinate to and benefiting from United States hegemony, it has been trying to dilute the direct influence of this. Two issues are foremost here: troop reductions and regionalist drive.

The level of United States troops on the Japanese archipelago is very high, amounting to some 20–25,000 depending on inclusion or non-inclusion of United States sailors who use port facilities in Japan. This is the largest of all the United States military personnel contingents stationed abroad. Since military personnel costs overwhelm weapons purchase and R&D expenditure, an unhealthy situation for an armed force, the United States Armed Forces (under the banner of the Revolution of Military Affairs) have executed drastic cuts to personnel expenditure including troop reductions abroad. Japan spends an enormous amount of money to help defray United States military expenditure in Japan. Indeed it is in Japan’s interest for United States troop reduction to occur, without jeopardizing combat and deterrence effectiveness. The fact is that Futenma, which is one of the most disputed military bases on Okinawa, has still not been relocated more than ten years after the agreement to do so was signed off by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto in 1996. When Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld wanted to examine progress there in 2005, the target year for completion of base relocation, he was informed that it was still at the negotiation stage between the central government and the local Okinawan government. He was so upset that he bypassed Japan on a visit to Korea and China.<sup>23</sup> Okinawa, the major battleground of the United States – Japan war in 1945, and now the location of United States major military bases in Japan, has been reluctant to further accommodate United States troops. At the same time a full troop reduction may not be wholly welcomed by the Okinawans who see troops as a source of their income. Yet the problem is that literally all the candidate sites in Japan’s main islands for relocation have declined the central government’s request since 1996. The central government has thus created a plan to relocate the Futenma base to a nearby off shore military base adjacent to Camp Schwab in Okinawa. But a further complication arose when those residents and non-

<sup>21</sup>Haas, ‘A Geriatric Peace?’

<sup>22</sup>Lake, ‘Escape from the State of Nature’.

<sup>23</sup>‘Japan off Rumsfeld itinerary’.

governmental organizations for the environment and peace joined forces to oppose the relocations. This has resulted in a virtual standstill in negotiations as of December 2007. Nevertheless, the central government wants to carry out the relocation to a site near Camp Schwab.

Along with troop reductions, the promotion of what is called 'independent alliance' has been another strategy to reduce direct hegemonic influence without losing benefits.<sup>24</sup> The Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation with Australia was concluded between the two former prime ministers Shinzo Abe and John Howard in March 2007, to further strengthen political ties. It is an addition to Japan's and Australia's alliances with the United States. Though it looks redundant since they are both an ally of the United States, it makes the security picture more complex and the security hierarchy less strict.<sup>25</sup> Abe wanted to initiate a similar agreement with India but faced strong internal opposition based on the argument that an alliance with India is harmful to the Japan – China friendship and that accommodating a nuclear India is tantamount to the denial of Japan's non-nuclear policy line. It is notable that Prime Minister Fukuda's major speech at the annual meeting of the Association for South-East Asian Nations in November 2007 did not contain a single reference to India.

Regionalist drive is another form of dehierarchization. The East Asian Summit which started in 2005 contains Australia, India and New Zealand along with 10 ASEAN member states and three Northeast Asian states, Japan, Korea and China. Its strategic purpose is avoiding being denounced as a potential anti-American Asian grouping and at the same time avoiding formation of a grouping that would reinforce the predominance of China in East and Southeast Asia.<sup>26</sup>

A far more vigorous regionalist drive is to conclude what are called bilateral Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). These are more commonly known as bilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). The Japanese government wants to take into account more complex and country specific peculiarities in reaching free trade accords. Hence EPAs allow more flexibility.<sup>27</sup> After the Japan – Singapore EPA was concluded in 2004, three Northeast Asian countries scrambled into Southeast Asia to conclude FTAs or EPAs. China concluded the China – ASEAN FTA in 2005. Korea and Japan concluded a similar one with ASEAN shortly thereafter. China was able to conclude one with all the ASEAN members en bloc and thereby remain in the lead. China made use of the developing country status articles of the World Trade Organization which allow developing countries to defer specifying the degree of trade liberalization for ten years after concluding an agreement. Japan has been building up its EPA with each of the ASEAN member countries one by one and trying to assemble them and transform them de facto into a regionally integrated market. It is another form of dehierarchization being attempted by Japan. Economic dehierarchization has been under way since early 2000 when East and Southeast Asia began trading more vigorously among themselves than with the United States. Yet market liberalization in the service sectors has been somewhat slow and here much remains to be done, at least from the viewpoint of the United States government.

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>For a detailed account of the Australia – Japan security ties see D. Walton's article in this special issue.

<sup>26</sup>U.S. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld Bypasses Japan', *Asahi shimbun*, 6 October 2005, 1.

<sup>27</sup>Lake, 'Escape from the State of Nature'.

## Conclusion

I have described the changing foreign policy lines of Japan since 1945 in response to the changing international environment and policy priorities of the United States. Japanese foreign policy lines have been changing fairly regularly, every 15 years, with the core purpose remaining intact. Since the Japanese foreign policy line has been tied to that of the United States, especially the currently evolving role of global ordinary power, further examination is needed to rethink the course of American hegemony in the second half of this century. I have analyzed American hegemony in terms of three key conditions for its sustenance: military, currency and demographic hegemony. Similarly, the current thinking on how to reduce direct hegemonic influence on Japan amidst the relentless tide of financial and market liberalization and against the backdrop of the impasse in Iraq and Afghanistan have been briefly examined. Troop reduction, independent alliance, regional integration via East Asian summits and economic partnership agreements are examples of how Japan, to some extent, can moderate the influence from Washington. All in all, the current phase of global ordinary power has barely started. It looks as if the pacifist tenet and the principle of non-use-of-force will be modified to facilitate Japan playing more 'ordinary roles' within the framework of a good alliance, and as a good UN member and a good neighbor of East Asia.

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