

# Japan, Asian-Pacific Security, and the Case for Analytical Eclecticism

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In recent years *International Security* has published a large number of articles and exchanges articulating the advantages and shortcomings of different analytical perspectives in international relations.<sup>1</sup> Controversies about the merits of neoliberalism, constructivism, rationalism, and realism have become an accepted part of both scholarly debate and graduate teaching.

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1. On neoliberalism, see John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994/95), pp. 5–49; Robert O. Keohane and Lisa L. Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory," *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Summer 1995), pp. 39–51; Charles A. Kupchan and Clifford A. Kupchan, "The Promise of Collective Security," *ibid.*, pp. 52–61; John Gerard Ruggie, "The False Promise of Realism," *ibid.*, pp. 62–70; Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *ibid.*, pp. 71–81; and John J. Mearsheimer, "A Realist Reply," *ibid.*, pp. 82–93. On constructivism, see Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Summer 1998), pp. 141–170; Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *ibid.*, pp. 171–200; and John S. Duffield, Theo Farrell, Richard Price, and Michael C. Desch, "Correspondence: Isms and Schisms: Culturalism versus Realism in Security Studies," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 156–180. On rationalism, see Stephen M. Walt, "Rigor or Rigor Mortis? Rational Choice and Security Studies," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Spring 1999), pp. 5–48; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and James D. Morrow, "Sorting through the Wealth of Notions," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall 1999), pp. 56–73; Lisa L. Martin, "The Contributions of Rational Choice: A Defense of Pluralism," *ibid.*, pp. 74–83; Emerson M.S. Niou and Peter C. Ordeshook, "Return of the Luddites," *ibid.*, pp. 84–96; Robert Powell, "The Modeling Enterprise and Security Studies," *ibid.*, pp. 97–106; Frank C. Zagare, "All Mortis, No Rigor," *ibid.*, pp. 107–114; and Stephen M. Walt, "A Model Disagreement," *ibid.*, pp. 115–130. On realism, see Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, "Is Anybody Still a Realist?" *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall 1999), pp. 5–55; Peter D. Feaver, Gunther Hellmann, Randall L. Schweller, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, William C. Wohlforth, and Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, "Correspondence: Brother, Can You Spare a Paradigm? (Or Was Anybody Ever a Realist?)," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Summer 2000), pp. 165–193.

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Because the demand for academic spectacles continues to be strong, journal editors are not averse to committing their pages to polemics. *International Security* is no exception. The length of the first footnote of this article shows that the editors have made a truly exceptional effort to present all sides of various debates. This editorial policy, however, has its costs. Editors who publish grand paradigmatic debates have less space for other articles. More important, it is becoming increasingly difficult for scholars to disabuse their students of the notion that in international relations, paradigmatic clashes are what scholarship should be about rather than the disciplined analysis of empirical puzzles, as is true of other fields of political science and the social sciences more generally.

Given the substantial proportion of pages that *International Security* has devoted to grand debates in the last decade, it is our sense that the intellectual returns from these exchanges are diminishing sharply. Extolling, in the abstract, the virtues of a specific analytical perspective to the exclusion of others is intellectually less important than making sense of empirical anomalies and stripping notions of what is “natural” of their intuitive plausibility. With specific reference to Japanese and Asian-Pacific security affairs, this article argues against the privileging of parsimony that has become the hallmark of paradigmatic debates. The complex links between power, interest, and norms defy analytical capture by any one paradigm. They are made more intelligible by drawing selectively on different paradigms—that is, by analytical eclecticism, not parsimony.

We illustrate this general point with specific reference to Asia-Pacific, an area central to security affairs since the end of the Cold War. In the first section, we question briefly what is supposedly “natural” or “normal” about Japan. In the second section, we analyze the formal and informal bilateral and embryonic multilateral security arrangements that mark Japanese and Asian-Pacific security affairs. Next we argue that styles of analysis that focus exclusively on either material capabilities, institutional efficiencies, or norms and identities overlook key aspects of the evidence. We conclude with some general reflections on the advantages and disadvantages of analytical eclecticism for understanding Japanese and Asian-Pacific security affairs.

### *What Is a “Natural” or “Normal” Japan?*

To many observers, U.S.-Japan security arrangements and Japan’s passive stance on issues of defense are unnatural, to be superseded sooner or later by

an Asia<sup>2</sup> freed from the shackles of U.S. primacy and a Japan no longer restrained by pacifism. We disagree on both empirical and analytical grounds. Based on the evidence, we argue that an eclectic theoretical approach finds that there is nothing “natural” about a multipolar world with U.S. primacy and nothing that is “normal” about a Japan without the institutional legacy of Hiroshima and defeat in World War II.

According to one group of Asia experts, the ongoing presence of U.S. forces in South Korea and Japan prohibits the restoration of a regional balance of power as the “natural” course of events in Asia-Pacific. Chalmers Johnson, for example, argues that U.S. policy has a stranglehold over Japan and regional that carries an exorbitant cost to both the United States and its regional partners.<sup>3</sup> Far better, Johnson argues, to recall the U.S. military and let Asians be in charge of Asia. With the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the United States no longer needs its far-flung empire, military or otherwise. China’s high-growth economy, the eventual reunification of North and South Korea, and a Japan that overcomes its self-willed form of political paralysis are all natural developments that U.S. policymakers need to recognize. According to Johnson, only by bending to the natural course of history will the United States escape from the mounting cost of empire blowback at home that he suggests threatens the very fabric of American society.

Our main empirical finding points to a different conclusion: The continued U.S. presence in Asia appears to be beyond doubt for the short to medium term, that is, for the next three to ten years. Formal and informal bilateralism is thriving in Asia-Pacific, while an incipient multilateralism is beginning to take shape.<sup>4</sup> Whether this incipient multilateralism will become sufficiently strong

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2. The precise meaning and geographic scope of “Asia” and “Asia-Pacific” are highly controversial. Geography is a subject matter of both material reality and political construction. For the purposes of this article, we have chosen Asia-Pacific as the most general concept that encompasses U.S. relations with Asia and that also describes security affairs in East and Southeast Asia. See Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, “Collective Identities and the Origins of Multilateralism in Europe but Not in Asia in the Early Cold War,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., August 31–September 3, 2000; and Martin W. Lewis and Kären E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

3. Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Henry Holt, 2000); and Chalmers Johnson, ed., “Dysfunctional Japan: At Home and in the World,” special issue of *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 24 (2000), p. 4.

4. The parallel to economic developments is striking. After the debacle of the 1999 World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in Seattle, the Japanese government, seeking to forestall isolation, wasted little time in beginning to negotiate bilateral free-trade arrangements with Singapore, South Korea, and Mexico, with the intent of eventually building a free-trade area in Asia-Pacific

and durable to offer a partial complement to traditional balance-of-power politics, as evidently has happened in Western Europe, remains an open question. But in the short to medium term, most of the governments in Asia-Pacific will continue to welcome the U.S. presence. As has been true in Europe since 1989, in Asia-Pacific the United States is seen as more distant and more benign than other regional powers, such as Japan and China. The period of U.S. security reassurance, to be sure, may well be limited to a few decades. But in Asia-Pacific, there is nothing natural about incipient multilateralism or the tendency to balance power. History is not a series of deviations from a “natural” state of stable or unstable affairs. Rather it is an open-ended process in which the accumulation of events and experience from one period alters the contours of the next. Nothing about this process is “natural” unless we permit our analytical perspectives to make it so.

Another group of Asia-Pacific analysts takes a different, more threatening view of Japan that also cuts against this article’s analytical and empirical grain. According to this view, Japan is once again becoming a “natural” major power. It is spending more money on developing its military prowess and power projection capabilities. Japan’s military is beginning to equip itself with both shield and spear. By passing the International Peace Cooperation Law (which authorized the Japanese military to participate in United Nations’ peacekeeping operations); purchasing modern fighter planes such as the F-2; and moving to acquire airborne refueling capabilities, develop spy satellites, and adopt a theater missile defense system, the Japanese are signaling their intention to play a more active role in regional security.

Also according to this view, Japan’s domestic politics is increasingly revealing traits that mark the return to a “normal,” right-wing nationalism. The Japanese military is no longer viewed as a pariah and is evidently experiencing a process of normalization.<sup>5</sup> In both houses of the Diet, panels were set up in 2000 to debate a possible revision of the 1947 Constitution, with the war-renouncing Article 9 likely to be at the center of the debate. In 1999 the Diet enacted legislation to implement new defense guidelines giving the Japanese military broader missions. Moreover, the Diet passed an anti-organized crime law that allows wiretapping of citizens’ telephones and electronic mail, and it

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that would supplement the WTO. Robert Scollay and John P. Gilbert, *New Regional Trading Arrangements in the Asia Pacific?* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 2001), pp. 1–4.

5. Sabine Fruehstueck, “Normalization and the Management of Violence in Japan’s Armed Forces,” Department of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2000; and interview 10-00, Tokyo, January 14, 2000.

curtailed the civil liberties of members of Aum Shinrikyo, the religious cult that organized the 1995 sarin nerve gas attack in the Tokyo subway, by passing a law that allows law enforcement to monitor the cult's activities. In addition, in 1999 the Diet officially recognized the sun flag as Japan's national flag and a song that celebrates the emperor's reign as its national anthem. In October 1999 a newly appointed parliamentary vice minister of defense, Shingo Nishimura, claimed that the Diet ought to consider arming the country with nuclear weapons. This and his subsequent resignation created a furor that, in the words of Howard French, "laid bare deep fault lines in the new and politically shaky coalition government."<sup>6</sup> And former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori has made a number of public statements evoking the spirit of Japanese nationalism in the 1930s. Most recently, in April 2001 controversial junior high-school history and social studies textbooks that downplay Japanese aggression in Asia, and are tinged with nationalistic sentiments, passed screening by the ministry of education. In sum, this more threatening view seems to suggest that there is ample reason to bemoan the stubborn ignorance with which U.S. policymakers and media continue to deny obvious historical parallels between contemporary Japan and Japan of the 1930s.<sup>7</sup>

The above news items are like dots that we can connect to create an image of a Japan readying itself to strike militarily once again. But these dots can be connected in many other ways. How we go about drawing connections depends largely on the implicit analytical lenses that we use to interpret Japanese politics. Because it regards as "natural" the displacement of a 1960s' style liberal pacifism by a 1930s' style militant nationalism, a pessimistic interpretation of the evidence neglects many facets of Japanese politics and society that may be worth consideration. But none of the political movements on the left or the right is "natural." Instead they influence one another in a process of historical evolution that is likely to be combinatorial in creating unforeseen outcomes. The kind of nationalism that will shape Japanese politics remains largely unknown. Falling back on past events to make sense of snippets of current news

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6. Howard W. French, "U.S. Copters? No, No, No. Not in Their Backyard," *New York Times*, January 20, 2000, p. A6.

7. Official reactions in Beijing to recent developments in Japan have been remarkably restrained considering that some of China's harshest critics of Japan hold powerful positions, especially in the Chinese military. See David Shambaugh, "China's Military Views the World: Ambivalent Security," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Winter 1999/2000), pp. 52-79; Thomas J. Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Spring 1999), pp. 49-80; and interviews 01-98, 04-98, 03-00, 04-00, Beijing, June 15 and 16, 1998, and June 13, 2000.

is a mistake. Instead our analysis should focus on the institutional norms and practices that Japan's political and other public leaders use to evolve novel forms of politics and policy.<sup>8</sup>

No polity remains frozen in time, and none returns to its "natural," historical origin. Obviously, it would be wrong to rule out the emergence of a new kind of nationalist politics in Japan. Here and elsewhere in Asia-Pacific, historical animosities and suspicions run deep. Thomas Berger may therefore be correct in looking to ethnic and racial hatreds as the most likely source of future military clashes in Asia-Pacific.<sup>9</sup> But the combined legacies of Japanese nationalism and pacifism are likely to produce new political constellations and policies that will resist analytical capture by ahistorical conceptions of a "normal" Japan. Real life is likely to be both more complicated and more interesting.

### *Bilateralism and Multilateralism in Japanese and Asian-Pacific Security*

Analytical eclecticism is particularly well suited to capture the complexities of the fluid security environment in Asia-Pacific. Japan's security policy, and Asian-Pacific security affairs more generally, rest on a firm foundation of formal and informal bilateral agreements, supplemented by a variety of embryonic multilateral arrangements.<sup>10</sup>

#### BILATERALISM

In the early years of the Clinton administration, growing bilateral trade conflicts, Japanese uncertainty about U.S. strategy in Asia-Pacific, and an increasing emphasis on Asia-Pacific in Japanese foreign policy all pointed to the possibility of a loosening of bilateral ties between Japan and the United States. Despite these potential signals, a series of reevaluations of strategic options in both Tokyo and Washington culminated in the April 1996 signing of the Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security and the September 1997 Revised Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation. The joint declaration calls for a review of

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8. Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, *Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms, and Policy Responses in a Changing World* (Ithaca, N.Y.: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 1993); and Peter J. Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996).

9. Thomas Berger, "Set for Stability? Prospects for Conflict and Cooperation in East Asia," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 26 (2000), pp. 405–406.

10. This section draws on more extensive evidence reported in Nobuo Okawara and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Japan and Asian-Pacific Security: Regionalization, Entrenched Bilateralism, and Incipient Multilateralism," *Pacific Review*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (2001), pp. 165–194.

the 1978 Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, and the revised guidelines spell out the roles of the U.S. military and Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in the event of a crisis. The latter refers specifically to "situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security" as the context in which the two governments could provide each other with supplies and services.<sup>11</sup>

In the context of modern warfare, the expanded regional scope of the new Japanese-U.S. defense cooperation arrangements has somewhat diluted Japan's traditional postwar policy against the use of force in the absence of a direct attack. SDF operations, for example, will no longer focus solely on the defense of the Japanese home islands.<sup>12</sup> In a future crisis, this may make it difficult for the Maritime Self-Defense Force to delineate Japan's defense perimeter.<sup>13</sup> The 1995 revised National Defense Program Outline (which calls for the SDF's acquiring the capability to cope with situations in areas surrounding Japan that could adversely affect its peace and security) and the Defense Cooperation Guidelines have effectively broadened the mission of the SDF. The mission of Japan's military is no longer simply the defense of the home islands against a direct attack, thus securing Japan's position in a global anticommunist alliance. In the eyes of the proponents of the revised mission of the SDF, Japan's military is also committed to enhancing regional stability in Asia-Pacific and thus, indirectly, Japan's own security.

The importance of bilateralism is not restricted to Japan's security relations with the United States. As an example, senior Japan Defense Agency (JDA) officials met annually between 1993 and 1997 and again in 1999 with their Chinese counterparts to discuss a variety of issues of mutual concern. (The 1998 hiatus was most likely occasioned by the adoption of the revised U.S.-Japan guidelines.<sup>14</sup>) In addition, Japan has initiated regular bilateral security talks with Australia (since 1996), Singapore (since 1997), Indonesia (since 1997), Canada (since 1997), and Malaysia (since 1999).<sup>15</sup> In brief, the JDA is increasingly engaging Asia-Pacific in a broad range of bilateral security contacts.<sup>16</sup>

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11. *Gaiko Forum* [Foreign affairs forum], special issue, November 1999, pp. 134–135, 141; and Defense Agency, *Defense of Japan, 1999* (Tokyo: Japan Times, 2000), p. 236.

12. Interview 03-99, Tokyo, January 12, 1999.

13. Interviews 12-99 and 13-99, Tokyo, January 14, 1999.

14. Interview 13-00, Tokyo, January 14, 2000.

15. Boeicho (Defense Agency), *Boei Hakusho* [Defense white paper] (Tokyo: Okurasho Insatsukyoku, 2000), p. 187.

16. Interviews 10-00 and 13-00, Tokyo, January 14, 2000. With the tightening of U.S.-Japan security relations after 1994, Japan has become more self-conscious in developing a broad set of bilateral defense talks and exchanges that both complement its persistent dependence on the United States and cement the U.S. presence in the region. By 1999 Japan had committed to about ten regular bi-

Informal bilateralism has been Japan's most important response to transnational crime. Combating problems such as illegal immigration, organized crime, money laundering, the distribution of illegal narcotics, and terrorism remain almost without exception under the exclusive prerogative of national governments. Nevertheless, Japan's National Policy Agency (NPA) has begun systematic cultivation of contacts with law enforcement agencies in other Asian-Pacific countries in an effort to increase trust among police professionals throughout the region. In so doing, the NPA hopes to create a climate in which Japan's police will be able to cooperate more easily with foreign police forces on an ad hoc basis.<sup>17</sup>

The NPA seeks this cooperation primarily by encouraging the systematic exchange of information through the development of personal relationships with law enforcement officials from other countries. This is especially true of Japan's bilateral contacts with Burma, Cambodia, China, Laos, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. In the view of the NPA, bilateral police relations are good or excellent with the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Hong Kong, South Korea, and the United States. High-level police contacts with law enforcement authorities in Taiwan are good, but Taiwan's ambiguous diplomatic status severely constrains cooperation at lower levels.

Japan's relations with China are difficult because of the strong central control that China's vast Public Security Department bureaucracy exercises over its localities, such as Fujian Province, where drugs are produced and shipped to Japan. The department's insistence on strict observance of its rules and procedures seriously undermines bilateral police cooperation.<sup>18</sup> The NPA remains

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lateral talks, too many for the two officials assigned by the JDA to this task. India, for example, was interested in commencing bilateral defense consultations, but Japan stalled, not for reasons of policy but simply because of resource constraints. Interview 13-00, Tokyo, January 14, 2000.

17. This intensification of bilateral contacts builds on a small foundation of transnational police links that Japan's NPA had developed before the 1990s. For example, the NPA has organized short-term training courses for small numbers of police officials from other Asian-Pacific states dealing with drug offenses (since 1962), criminal investigations (since 1975), organized crime (since 1988), police administration (since 1989), and community policing (since 1989). National Police Agency, International Cooperation Division, International Affairs Department, *Police of Japan, '98* (Tokyo: National Police Agency, 1998), p. 62. Japan also runs regular international seminars dealing with criminal justice issues. Finally, Japanese experts travel to various countries in Asia-Pacific to train local law-enforcement personnel. These seminars and visits help to enhance the capacity of Asian-Pacific police forces, by spreading information and establishing contacts that might be useful in subsequent, ad hoc coordination of police work across national borders. Keisatsucho (National Policy Agency), *Keisatsu Hakusho, 1997* [White paper on police, 1997] (Tokyo: Okurasho Insatsukyoku, 1997), pp. 95-99; Jack Donnelly, "International Human Rights: A Regime Analysis," *International Organization*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Summer 1986), p. 628; and Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security*, pp. 68-71.

18. Interview 06-99, Tokyo, January 13, 1999.



nonetheless eager to strengthen its contacts with police officials from Fujian.<sup>19</sup> For example, the NPA funds projects that send Japanese researchers to north-east China. These researchers investigate the local conditions that permit China's crime syndicates to operate in Japan. They also develop closer ties with provincial police forces.<sup>20</sup> Even more significant are recent joint operations between the Japanese and Chinese police. For instance, in 1997 the NPA helped Japan's prefectural police departments in contacting the police in Hong Kong, Canton, and Shanghai. International police cooperation resulted in several arrests in 1997–98.<sup>21</sup> In addition, NPA officials met with their Shanghai and Cantonese counterparts, having already established ties with the Hong Kong police before 1997.<sup>22</sup>

#### MULTILATERALISM

The 1990s also witnessed the gradual emergence of a variety of Asian-Pacific multilateral security arrangements involving track-one (government to government), track-two (semigovernmental think tanks), and track-three (private institutions) dialogues.<sup>23</sup> Differences in the institutional affiliation of national research organizations participating in track-two activities, however, confound efforts to draw a sharp distinction among different tracks. They vary from being integral to the ministries of foreign affairs (the two Koreas, China, and Laos), to being totally (Vietnam) or partly (Japan) funded and largely (Vietnam) or moderately (Japan) staffed by the ministry of foreign affairs, to having very close proximity to the prime minister (Malaysia), to exhibiting high degrees of independence (Thailand and Indonesia).<sup>24</sup> For most Japanese officials, whatever the precise character of these dialogues, they involve semi-official or private contacts that are useful to the extent that they facilitate government-to-government talks; however, they have no value in and of themselves.<sup>25</sup>

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19. Interviews 09-99 and 10-99, Tokyo, January 13, 1999.

20. Interviews 04-00, Tokyo, January 12, 2000.

21. Interviews 08-99 and 10-99, Tokyo, January 13, 1999; and Kazuharu Hirano, "Hito no Mitsuyu? Kokusai Soshiki Hanzai no Genjo to Gaiji Keisatsu no Taio" [Alien smuggling? Current state of transnational organized crime and police countermeasures], *Keisatsu-gaku Ronshu* [Journal of police science], Vol. 51, No. 9 (September 1998), pp. 45–46.

22. Interview 10-99, Tokyo, January 13, 1999.

23. Diane Stone, "Networks, Second Track Diplomacy, and Regional Cooperation: The Role of Southeast Asian Think Tanks," paper presented at the Thirty-eighth Annual International Studies Association Convention, Toronto, Canada, March 22–26, 1997; and Jun Wada, "Applying Track Two to China-Japan-U.S. Relations," in Ryosei Kokubun, ed., *Challenges for China-Japan-U.S. Cooperation* (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 1998), pp. 154–183.

24. Interview 04-00, Tokyo, January 12, 2000.

25. Interview 01-00, Tokyo, January 11, 2000. Track-two institutions thus tend to support rather than undermine the state. There are instances when we should think of them not as nongovern-

The trend toward security multilateralism in Asia-Pacific is reflected in several track-two dialogues. Since 1993, for example, Japan, seeking to enhance mutual confidence on security, economic, and environmental issues, has participated with China, Russia, South Korea, and the United States in the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD). In addition, since 1994 a Japanese research organization (the Japan Institute of International Affairs) has cosponsored with its American and Russian counterparts (the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, respectively) the Trilateral Forum on North Pacific Security, which is regularly attended by senior government officials from all three countries. Furthermore, since 1998 Japan has conducted semiofficial trilateral security talks with China and the United States.<sup>26</sup>

Important track-two talks arguably occur in the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP),<sup>27</sup> whose predecessor was the ASEAN-affiliated Institutes for Strategic and International Studies. In the early 1990s, the institutes played a crucial role in encouraging ASEAN to commence systematic security dialogues. And with the establishment of the track-one ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994, the track-two activities of these institutes have grown in significance. For example, they prepare studies that may be too sensitive for governments to conduct, and they organize meetings on topics that for political reasons governments may be unwilling or unable to host.

Track-two activities shape the climate of opinion in national settings in which security affairs are conducted. They can also help decisionmakers in ar-

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mental organizations (NGOs) but as governmentally organized NGOs. In many states in Asia-Pacific, the divide between public and private is easily bridged. Prominent businesspeople and scholars, nominally in the private sector, are often linked informally to politicians and bureaucrats whose attendance at track-two meetings in their "private" capacity is polite fiction. Hence the choice between the multilateralism of different tracks can be a matter of political convenience for governments. Diane Stone, *Capturing the Political Imagination: Think Tanks and the Policy Process* (London: Frank Cass, 1996), pp. 9–25. But both the nature of private-sector participants and the pattern of influence between such participants and their governments vary widely.

26. "Nichi-Bei-Chu no Anpo Taiwa Shido" [Japan-U.S.-China security dialogue starts], *Asahi Shimbun*, July 16, 1998, 14th ed.; Yosuke Naito, "Private-Sector Northeast Asia Security Forum Upbeat," *Japan Times*, September 28, 1999; Akiko Fukushima, "Japan's Emerging View of Security Multilateralism in Asia," University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, Policy Paper 51 (June 1999), p. 36; and Yoshitaka Sasaki, "Asian Trilateral Security Talks Debut," *Asahi Evening News*, November 7, 1997.

27. Interview 04-00; Sheldon W. Simon, "Security Prospects in Southeast Asia: Collaborative Efforts and the ASEAN Regional Forum," *Pacific Review*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (1998), pp. 207–209; Stone, "Networks, Second Track Diplomacy, and Regional Cooperation," pp. 21–25; Wada, "Applying Track Two to China-Japan-U.S. Relations," pp. 162–165; and Brian L. Job, "Non-Governmental Regional Institutions in the Evolving Asia Pacific Security Order," paper prepared for the Second Workshop on Security Order in the Asia Pacific, Bali, Indonesia, May 30–June 2, 2000.

articulating new ideas. Over time, they may socialize elites either directly or indirectly to different norms and identities. They may also build transnational coalitions of elites with considerable domestic influence. In brief, they have become an important feature of Asian-Pacific security affairs.

An embryonic multilateralism is also evident on issues of internal security. Since 1989 the NPA has hosted annual three-day meetings on how to combat organized crime. Funded by Japan's foreign aid program, these meetings are designed to strengthen cooperative police relationships.<sup>28</sup> Also, confronting its third wave of stimulant abuse since 1945, Japan convened an Asian Drug Law Enforcement Conference in Tokyo in the winter of 1999.<sup>29</sup> Ironically, at that meeting the director of the United Nations Drug Control Program chastised the Japanese government for its limited commitment to multilateral efforts to curtail regional trafficking in methamphetamines.<sup>30</sup> The NPA attended as an observer a May 1999 meeting in which the five Southeast Asian-Pacific countries (Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam) and China formally approved a policy strategy to deal with international drug trafficking.<sup>31</sup> And in January 2000, the NPA organized a conference, attended by officials from thirty-seven countries, to discuss how police cooperation could stem the spread of narcotics.<sup>32</sup>

Because terrorism is a direct threat to the state, it has been an item on the internal security agenda of the multilateral Group of Seven/Eight meetings since the mid-1970s. More recent summit meetings in Ottawa (December 1995), Sharm al-Sheikh (March 1996), Paris (July 1996), Denver (June 1997), and Cologne (1999) reflect the concerns that this threat continues to generate. Since the

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28. Since 1996 the NPA, in an effort to build more cooperative international police relations to suppress the smuggling of narcotics and after consultations with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, has begun to host two annual meetings in Tokyo. Each gathering involves forty to fifty high-level police officials: one with representatives from China in attendance; the other with representatives from Taiwan. Each lasts four days, but the official part of the program consists of only a one-day plenary session. The rest of the time is spent on group tours of Japanese police facilities, sight-seeing, and socializing. Interview 06-99, Tokyo, January 13, 1999.

29. The meeting was attended by representatives from five Southeast Asian-Pacific countries (Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam) and China, as well as by officials from the United Nations and observers from eight countries and the European Union. Jiro Haraguchi, "Yakubutsu Taisaku no Genjo to Kadai" [Current state of and problems concerning drug control], *Keisatsu-gaku Ronshu* [Journal of political science], Vol. 52, No. 7 (July 1999), pp. 30, 36-37; Toshio Jo, "Tokyo Pledges to Finance U.N. Anti-Drug Plan," *Asahi Evening News*, February 3, 1999; and Hisane Masaki, "Seven Nations to Gang Up against Illegal Stimulant Use," *Japan Times*, December 6, 1998.

30. H. Richard Friman, "International Drug Control Policies: Variations and Effectiveness," Department of Political Science, Marquette University, 1999.

31. Haraguchi, "Yakubutsu Taisaku no Genjo to Kadai," pp. 36-37.

32. "Asia-Pacific States Vow to Combat Drugs," *Asahi Evening News*, January 28, 2000.

September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, these concerns have catapulted to the top of the security agenda of the United States and the G-7/8. Over the last few years, Japan has sought to create similar regional collaborations in Asia-Pacific.<sup>33</sup> Generally speaking, however, on the issue of internal security the absence of multilateral regional institutions in Asia-Pacific remains striking. A recent inventory of transnational crimes lists several global institutional fora in which these concerns are addressed but, besides CSCAP's working group on transnational crime for Asia-Pacific, there is only one other regional forum: the ASEAN ministry on drugs.<sup>34</sup>

#### BILATERALISM AND MULTILATERALISM

Asia-Pacific's entrenched bilateralism and incipient multilateralism need not conflict.<sup>35</sup> Amitav Acharya speaks of an interlocking "spider web" form of bilateralism that compensates in part for the absence of multilateral security cooperation in Asia-Pacific.<sup>36</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, for example, a commit-

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33. In June 1997, for example, the NPA was instrumental in helping to create the Japan and ASEAN Anti-Terrorism Network, which seeks to strengthen ties among national police agencies, streamline information gathering, and coordinate investigations when acts of terrorism occur. Following up on an initiative taken by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto during his travels through Southeast Asia in January 1997, the NPA and the ministry of foreign affairs jointly hosted in October 1997 a Japan-ASEAN Conference on Counterterrorism for senior police and foreign affairs officials from nine ASEAN countries. National Police Agency, *Police of Japan*, '98, p. 53. Interview 07-99, Tokyo, January 13, 1999. And in October 1998, the NPA and foreign ministry cohosted a joint Asian Pacific-Latin American conference on counterterrorism. Based on findings from the 1996-97 Peruvian hostage crisis—in which a Peruvian antigovernment group, demanding that President Alberto Fujimori order the release of all of its members from prison, occupied the Japanese ambassador's official residence in Lima for 127 days—the NPA sought to strengthen international cooperation on antiterrorist measures. Gaimusho (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), *Gaiko Seisho, 1999* [Foreign affairs blue book, 1999] (Tokyo: Okurasho Insatsu-kyoku, 1999), Vol. 1, pp. 103-104; Hishinuma, Takao, "Japan to Propose Antiterrorism Meeting at G-7 Summit," *Daily Yomiuri*, May 9, 1997; and Keisatsucho (National Policy Agency), *Keisatsu Hakusho, 1999* [Police white paper, 1999] (Tokyo: Okurasho Insatsu-kyoku, 1999), p. 231.

34. James Shinn, "American Stakes in Asian Problems," in Shinn, ed., *Fires across the Water: Transnational Problems in Asia* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1998), pp. 170-171.

35. David H. Capie, Paul M. Evans, and Akiko Fukushima, "Speaking Asian Pacific Security: A Lexicon of English Terms with Chinese and Japanese Translations and a Note on the Japanese Translation," Working Paper (Toronto: Joint Centre for Asia Pacific Studies, University of Toronto-York University, 1998), pp. 7-8, 16-17, 60-63, IV/3-4, 7.

36. Amitav Acharya, *A Survey of Military Cooperation among the ASEAN States: Bilateralism or Alliance?* Occasional Paper No. 14 (Toronto: Centre for International and Strategic Studies, 1990); and Amitav Acharya, "Regional Institutions and Security Order in Asia," paper prepared for the Second Workshop on Security Order in the Asia-Pacific, Bali, Indonesia, May 30-June 2, 2000, p. 18. In early 2001 Dennis C. Blair, the commander in chief of the U.S. Pacific Command at the time, also spoke of forming a "web of regional relationships and capabilities" on the basis of bilateral security relationships in the Asia-Pacific. See Dennis C. Blair and John T. Hanley Jr., "From Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia-Pacific Security Arrangements," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Winter 2001), pp. 7-17.

ment to anticommunism provided the rationale for joint police operations and cross-border "hot pursuits" of communist guerrillas (e.g., between Malaysia and Indonesia and between Malaysia and Thailand). And as Michael Stankiewicz observes, efforts in the 1990s to deal with the North Korean nuclear crisis illustrated "the increasing complementarity between bilateral and multilateral diplomatic efforts in Northeast Asia."<sup>37</sup> Equally interesting, improvements in bilateral relations in Asia-Pacific, occasioned by the conflict on the Korean Peninsula, are fostering a gradual strengthening of multilateral security arrangements such as the NEACD and the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization. Thus the potential for a flash point crisis between North Korea and its neighbors has been a source for strengthening nascent multilateral security arrangements in Northeast Asia. The April 1999 creation of the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group by Japan, South Korea, and the United States to orchestrate policy toward North Korea is but the most recent example of this trend.<sup>38</sup>

Japanese diplomacy thus is beginning to make new connections between bilateral and multilateral security dialogues.<sup>39</sup> This policy accords with the argument of the Advisory Group on Defense Issues in its report to the prime minister that "the Japan-U.S. relationship of cooperation in the area of security must be considered not only from the bilateral viewpoint but, at the same time, also from the broader perspective of security in the entire Asia/Pacific region."<sup>40</sup> According to one member of that advisory group, Akio Watanabe: "I don't feel it's a question of choosing one framework or the other. From my standpoint, the issue is the necessity of redefining the Japan-U.S. security relationship within the new international conditions of the post-cold-war era."<sup>41</sup> Takashi Inoguchi agrees when he writes that "the Japan-U.S. relationship could develop into an arrangement having multilateral aspects."<sup>42</sup>

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37. Michael Stankiewicz, "Preface: The Bilateral-Multilateral Context in Northeast Asian Security," *Korean Peninsula Security and the U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines*, IGCC (Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation) Policy Paper No. 45 (San Diego, Calif.: Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue VII, October 1998), p. 2.

38. The group decided to meet at least once every three months. Takaaki Mizuno, "Nichi-Bei-Kan ga Chosei Group" [Japan, U.S., and South Korea Form Coordinating Group on North Korea], *Asahi Shimbun*, April 26, 1999, evening, 4th ed.; Masato Tainaka, "Nations Renew N. Korea Efforts," *Asahi Evening News*, March 31, 2000; and interviews 02-99 and 05-99, Tokyo, January 11-12, 1999.

39. Interviews 02-99 and 05-99, Tokyo, January 11-12, 1999.

40. Advisory Group on Defense Issues, *The Modality of the Security and Defense Capability of Japan: The Outlook for the 21st Century* (Tokyo: Advisory Group on Defense Issues, 1994), p. 16.

41. Takeshi Igarashi and Akio Watanabe, "Beyond the Defense Guidelines," *Japan Echo*, December 1997, p. 36.

42. Takashi Inoguchi, "The New Security Setup and Japan's Options," *Japan Echo*, Autumn 1996, p. 37. A similar "twin-track" stance also characterizes Japan's trade policy since the WTO debacle

Japan's government takes a pragmatic approach: It views multilateralism as a complement rather than as a substitute for bilateralism. The informal exchange of information on a range of difficult issues around the edges of official talks enhances predictability and helps to build trust. Although multilateral dialogues do not solve problems, they can make the underlying system of bilateral security arrangements in Asia-Pacific operate more smoothly.<sup>43</sup> Given this sense of pragmatism, it is not surprising that, as Paul Midford<sup>44</sup> notes, Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama's July 1991 proposal for a new multilateral security dialogue in Asia-Pacific did not resemble the European-style multilateralism that John Ruggie<sup>45</sup> has analyzed: Nakayama's proposal excluded socialist states such as the Soviet Union; it was implicitly discriminatory by according the United States and Japan special status as major powers; and it did not advocate diffuse reciprocity but recognized instead the role of the United States as a security provider in Asia-Pacific and the circumstances of Japan as operating under domestic legal restrictions.

With Japan's active support, Asia-Pacific in the 1990s began to develop an embryonic set of multilateral security institutions and practices. But compared with the scope and strength of both its formal and informal bilateral arrangements, Asia-Pacific's achievements in multilateralism remain limited at best. Even ASEAN's long-standing and relatively successful multilateralism has encountered serious setbacks since Asia's 1997 financial crisis. The multilateralism that Japan has traditionally supported has been modest. In sum, formal and informal bilateral approaches, supplemented by nascent forms of multilateralism, are defining both Japanese security policies and Asian-Pacific security relations. As we show in the next section, analytical eclecticism is particularly well suited to the task of analyzing the fluid politics of Japanese and Asian-Pacific security.

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in Seattle. See Gillian Tett, "Tokyo Shifts Trade Policy," *Financial Times*, May 12, 2000, p. 1; and more generally Muthia Alagappa, "Asia-Pacific Regional Security Order: Introduction and Analytical Framework," paper prepared for the Second Workshop on Security Order in the Asia-Pacific, Bali, Indonesia, May 30–June 2, 2000, pp. 6–7.

43. Interviews 01-00, 02-00, 03-00, and 04-00, Tokyo, January 11–12, 2000.

44. Paul Midford, "From Reactive State to Cautious Leader: The Nakayama Proposal, the Miyazawa Doctrine, and Japan's Role in Promoting the Creation of the ASEAN Regional Forum," paper prepared for the annual conference of the International Studies Association, Minneapolis, Minnesota, March 17–21, 1998.

45. John Gerard Ruggie, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution," in Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 3–47.

### *Analytical Eclecticism in the Analysis of Japanese and Asian-Pacific Security*

A robust bilateralism and incipient multilateralism in Japanese and Asian-Pacific security affairs are typically not well explained by the exclusive reliance on any single analytical perspective—be it realist, liberal, or constructivist. Japan's and Asia-Pacific's security policies are not shaped solely by power, interest, or identity but by their combination. Adequate understanding requires analytical eclecticism, not parsimony.

#### DISADVANTAGES OF PARSIMONIOUS EXPLANATIONS

Strict formulations of realism, liberalism, and constructivism sacrifice explanatory power in the interest of analytical purity. Yet in understanding political problems, we typically need to weigh the causal importance of different types of factors, for example, material and ideal, international and domestic. Eclectic theorizing, not the insistence on received paradigms, helps us understand inherently complex social and political processes.

**REALISM.** Realist theory has various guises. Drawing on an increasingly rich literature, Robert Jervis,<sup>46</sup> for example, operates with a twofold distinction (between offensive and defensive realism). Alastair Johnston<sup>47</sup> favors a more complex fourfold categorization (balance of power, power maximization, balance of threat, and identity realism). Although they formulate their analyses somewhat differently, they and other realists share many insights—the most important being the effects of the security dilemma on state behavior. Realists such as Kenneth Waltz underline the brevity of the uni-polar moment that the United States has enjoyed since the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union.<sup>48</sup> For them, however, the magnitude of current U.S. capabilities is less important than the policy follies—such as interventions in areas of the world not directly tied to the national interests of the United States—that squander it. Hence “the all-but-inevitable movement from unipolarity to multipolarity is taking place not in Europe but in Asia. . . . Theory enables one

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46. Robert Jervis, “Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate,” *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 42–43.

47. Alastair Iain Johnston, “Realism(s) and Chinese Security Policy in the Post-Cold War Period,” in Ethan B. Kapstein and Michael Mastanduno, eds., *Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies after the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 261–318.

48. Kenneth N. Waltz, “Realism after the Cold War,” Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University, December 1998.

to say that a new balance of power will form but not to say how long it will take."<sup>49</sup> Though distinctively his own in style of argumentation, Waltz's analysis is in broad agreement with other types of realist analysis that consider factors besides the international distribution of capabilities, such as absolute security needs and threats. Japan and China are rising great powers in Asia-Pacific. In view of a large number of potential military flash points, the security dilemma confronting Asian-Pacific states is serious. Between 1950 and 1990, one study reports 129 territorial disputes worldwide, with Asia accounting for the largest number. Of the 54 borders disputed in 1990, the highest ratio of unresolved disputes as a fraction of total contested borders was located in East and Southeast Asia.<sup>50</sup> In this view, Asia-Pacific may well be "ripe for rivalry."<sup>51</sup> For realists, balancing against the United States as the only superpower, currently by China and in the near future by Japan, is the most important prediction that the theory generates.<sup>52</sup>

Realist theory, however, is indeterminate. It cannot say whether Japan will balance with China against the United States as the preeminent threat or whether it will balance with the United States against China as the rising regional power in East Asia.<sup>53</sup> Balance-of-power theory predicts that a withdrawal of U.S. forces from East Asia would leave Japan no choice but to rearm. Alternatively, balancing theory can also support a very different line of reasoning in which Japan, though wary of China, might recognize China's central position in Asia-Pacific and stop far short of adopting a policy of full-fledged remilitarization.<sup>54</sup> To infer anything about the direction of balancing requires auxiliary assumptions that typically invoke interest, threat, or prestige—all variables that require liberal or constructivist styles of analysis. Moreover, it is unclear whether a united Korea will balance against Japan (with its powerful

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49. *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 19.

50. Paul K. Huth, *Standing Your Ground: Territorial Disputes and International Conflict* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 32.

51. Aaron L. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia," *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Winter 1993/94), pp. 5–33; and Richard K. Betts, "Wealth, Power, and Instability: East Asia and the United States after the Cold War," *ibid.*, pp. 34–77.

52. Mike M. Mochizuki, "American and Japanese Strategic Debates: The Need for a New Synthesis," in Mochizuki, ed., *Toward a True Alliance: Restructuring U.S.-Japan Security Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1997), pp. 43–82.

53. This limitation is not restricted to realist analysis of Asian-Pacific security affairs. In strict analogy, realism was unable to specify whether at the end of the Cold War European states would balance with Germany against the United States as the remaining superpower or with the United States against a united Germany as a potential regional hegemon.

54. The astonishing reticence on, and lack of contact with, Taiwan that characterizes the Japanese bureaucracy provides some evidence for this view. See interview 04-00, Tokyo, January 12, 2000.



navy that might ultimately control the sea-lanes on which Korean trade depends so heavily) or against China (with the strongest ground forces in Asia and with whom Korea shares a common border).<sup>55</sup> Thus realist theory points to omnipresent balancing behavior but tells us little about the direction of that balancing.

Nor do military expenditures alone yield a clear picture of the geostrategic situation in Asia-Pacific. Asia's 1997 financial crisis slowed Asian-Pacific arms rivalries and lowered military spending.<sup>56</sup> Thus instead of worrying about escalating arms rivalries, some defense experts began to express greater concern over potential risks created by possible imbalances in military modernization and financial strength. After 1997 countries less affected by the financial crisis—such as China, Japan, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan—appeared to be much better positioned to harness sophisticated technologies to enhance their military strength.<sup>57</sup>

**LIBERALISM.** On its own, liberal theory also encounters serious difficulties. Some analysts have suggested that the U.S.-Japan alliance can last only if it articulates common values. Mike Mochizuki and Michael O'Hanlon, for example, have advocated that the alliance should become as "close, balanced and principle-based as the U.S.-U.K. special relationship." Not a common military threat but common interests derived from shared democratic values,

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55. Victor D. Cha, "Abandonment, Entrapment, and Neoclassical Realism in Asia: The United States, Japan, and Korea," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (June 2000), pp. 261–291.

56. Taking account of weakening currency values, defense spending (measured in U.S. dollars, 1997 prices) was cut in 1998 by 39 percent in Thailand, 35 percent in South Korea, 32 percent in the Philippines, 26 percent in Vietnam, and 10 percent in Japan—if measured in yen, this represents the first reduction since 1955. Asagumo Shimbun-sha, *Boei Hando Bukku* [Defense handbook] (Tokyo: Asagumo Shimbun-sha, 1998), pp. 263–267; and Tim Huxley and Susan Willett, *Arming East Asia*, Adelphi Paper 329 (Oxford: International Institute for Strategic Studies [IISS], 1999). Many analysts expect that these reductions will continue for several years. Michael Richardson, "Asian Crisis Stills Appetite for Arms," *International Herald Tribune*, April 23, 1998; and National Institute for Defense Studies, *East Asian Strategic Review, 1998–1999* (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies, 1999), pp. 33–35. Only China, Taiwan, and Indonesia have avoided cuts in military expenditures. Huxley and Willett, *Arming East Asia*, p. 16. See also Frank Umbach, "Military Balance in the Asia Pacific: Trends and Implications," pp. 12–17, and Desmond Ball, "Military Balance in the Asia Pacific: Trends and Implications," papers prepared for the Fourteenth Asia-Pacific Roundtable, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, June 3–7, 2000. Since the end of the Cold War, Japanese defense expenditures show rates of increase that are much smaller than those of China. Between 1990 and 1997, while China's defense spending increased 45 percent from \$25.1 billion to \$36.5 billion, Japan's defense budget increased only 18 percent from \$34.3 billion to \$40.8 billion (1997 exchange rates). Asagumo Shimbun-sha, *Boei Hando Bukku*, p. 267; and Koro Bessho, *Identities and Security in East Asia*, Adelphi Paper 325 (Oxford: IISS, 1999), p. 35. Differences in China's and Japan's inflation rates overstate, however, the real increases in Chinese expenditures in the first half of the 1990s.

57. Michael Richardson, "Asia's Widening Arms Gap: Uneven Spread of New Weapons Systems May Jeopardize Balance of Power in East," *International Herald Tribune*, January 7, 2000.

Mochizuki and O'Hanlon argue, are the best guarantor for sustaining the U.S.-Japan alliance.<sup>58</sup>

What would happen, however, if the United States or Japan were no longer a member of the "free world"? Liberal analysis is hindered by the theory's underlying assumption that identities are unchanging. Do liberal values really constitute both the United States and Japan as actors? This is implausible. The promotion of democracy as a positive value, for example, is handled very differently by the U.S. and Japanese governments. The philosophical assumption informing U.S. policy is that democracy and human rights should proceed hand in hand with economic development. In contrast, Japanese policy assumes that economic development is conducive to the building of democratic institutions. This difference in philosophy leads to an equally noticeable difference in method. The United States operates with legal briefs, economic sanctions, and "sticks." Japan prefers constructive engagement through dialogue, economic assistance, and "carrots."<sup>59</sup> Such systematic differences in approach undercut a liberal redefinition of the U.S.-Japan alliance. To Japan they make the United States appear high-handed and evangelical, while to the United States Japan seems opportunistic and parochial. These differences point to the importance of collective identities not shared rather than of democratic institutions that are shared.

An alternative neoliberal analysis of the U.S.-Japan alliance focuses not on shared values but on efficiency.<sup>60</sup> For example, after the 1993–94 missile crisis on the Korean Peninsula, policymakers in Japan and the United States became convinced that their bilateral defense guidelines needed to be revised to enhance the efficiency of defense cooperation. The 1960 Mutual Cooperation and Security Treaty and the 1978 Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation had left unclear the role to be played by Japan in regional crises. Specifically, they left undefined both the extent to which Japan would provide logistical support and whether the U.S. military would have access to Japan's SDF and civilian facilities. The 1997 revised defense guidelines reduce these ambiguities and thus help to prepare Japan for potential participation in both possible U.S.

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58. Mike M. Mochizuki and Michael O'Hanlon, "A Liberal Vision for the U.S.-Japan Alliance," *Survival*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Summer 1998), p. 127.

59. Yasuhiro Takeda, "Democracy Promotion Policies: Overcoming Japan-U.S. Discord," in Ralph A. Cossa, ed., *Restructuring the U.S.-Japan Alliance: Toward a More Equal Partnership* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS [Center for Strategic and International Studies] Press, 1997), pp. 50–62.

60. Miles Kahler, *International Institutions and the Political Economy of Integration* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1995), pp. 80–81, 107–116; and Takashi Inoguchi and Grant B. Stillman, eds., *North-East Asian Regional Security: The Role of International Institutions* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1997).

and UN operations undertaken, in the eyes of the proponents of the revised guidelines, in the interest of regional peace and security. This is an instance of government policies seeking to lower transaction costs and enhance efficiencies through institutionalized cooperation.<sup>61</sup>

The revision of the defense guidelines was, however, a central feature of Japanese security policy in the last decade that eludes neoliberal explanations. It extends the scope of the U.S.-Japan security arrangement under the provisions of the treaty for the maintenance of peace and security in “the Far East” to include “situations in areas surrounding Japan.” The operative understanding of “the Far East” in Article 6 of the security treaty was geographically defined by the Japanese government in 1960 as “primarily the region north of the Philippines, as well as Japan and its surrounding area,” including South Korea and Taiwan. The revised guidelines explicitly state that the phrase “situations in areas surrounding Japan” (short for “situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan’s peace and security”) is conceptual and has no geographic connotations. In situations when rear-area support may be required, these areas are not necessarily limited to East Asia.<sup>62</sup>

This ambiguity has given rise to much debate in Japan and beyond. Under the revised guidelines, U.S.-Japanese cooperation in combat is obligatory only in situations involving the defense of Japan’s home islands. In the view of revision advocates, problems may emerge in a crisis not involving an attack on Japan—including any that arise in the Asia-Pacific region—but that would require general defense cooperation with the United States in the interest of regional stability and security. For some the revised defense guidelines free Japan to provide logistical and other forms of support to the United States, falling short of military combat, as long as the crisis is politically construed as constituting a serious security threat to Japan.<sup>63</sup> Adopting a less flexible approach, the ministry of foreign affairs director of the North American Affairs

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61. Council on Foreign Relations Independent Study Group, *The Tests of War and the Strains of Peace: The U.S.-Japan Security Relationship* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1998), pp. 20–26.

62. The political leadership has denied, however, that “situations in areas surrounding Japan” involve no geographic element whatsoever. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi claimed before the lower house budget committee that the “Middle East, the Indian Ocean, and the other side of the globe” cannot be conceived of as being covered by the new guidelines. According to this interpretation, even though an interruption of oil supplies from the Middle East would constitute a potentially serious threat to Japan, that threat, insofar as it is located in the Middle East or the Indian Ocean, would not be covered by the guidelines. “Shuhen Jitai; Chiriteki Yoso Fukumu” [Situation in areas surrounding Japan includes geographical factor], *Asahi Shimbun*, January 27, 1999, 14th ed.; and interview 01-99, January 11, 1999.

63. Interview 03-99, Tokyo, January 12, 1999.

Bureau stated in May 1998, before the Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee, that “situations in areas surrounding Japan” were restricted to those occurring in the Far East and its surrounding areas.<sup>64</sup>

In the future, the clash between more or less flexible interpretations of the scope of U.S.-Japan defense cooperation will be shaped by changing international and domestic political conditions. The ambiguity that lurks behind conflicting viewpoints and temporary victories of one side or the other is central to how Japanese officials adapt security policy to change. According to the government’s official interpretation, it is the specific security threat at a specific time that in the judgment of the cabinet and the Diet will determine whether that threat will be covered by the ambiguous wording of the revised guidelines. Thus the scope of the areas surrounding Japan is variable and depends on a functional and conceptual, rather than a geographic and objective, construction of Japan’s changing security environment.

Neoliberal explanations of the U.S.-Japan alliance cannot explain the deliberate ambiguity in the definition of the term “surrounding area” in the revised defense guidelines. This ambiguity undercuts efficiency because it leaves unspecified the contingencies under which the Japanese government might choose to participate in regional security cooperation measures. Yet for the guidelines’ advocates, ambiguity, by deflecting criticism in Japan, may well increase U.S.-Japanese defense cooperation. In seeking to create flexibility in policy through a politics of interpretation and reinterpretation of text, ambiguity is a defining characteristic of Japan’s security policy.<sup>65</sup>

CONSTRUCTIVISM. Parsimonious constructivist analysis of Japanese and Asian-Pacific security also lacks plausibility. Contrary to claims by neoliberals, multilateral institutions do more than facilitate the exchange of information. ASEAN processes of trust building, for example, appear to be well under way.<sup>66</sup> The ARF is more than an intraorganizational balancing of threats and

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64. “Shuhen Jitai no Chiriteki Han’i; Kyokuto to sono Shuhen” [Geographical scope of situation in areas surrounding Japan is Far East and its surrounding areas], *Asahi Shimbun*, May 23, 1998, 14th ed. Because the statement ran afoul of the government’s wariness of Chinese criticism of the revised guidelines, the official was removed from his post. “Seifu Hokubei Kyokucho wo Kotetsu” [Government removes director of North American Affairs Bureau from post], *Asahi Shimbun*, July 7, 1998, evening, 4th ed.; and “Shuhen Jitai ni Aimaisa” [Situation in areas surrounding Japan is ambiguous], *Asahi Shimbun*, July 8, 1998, 14th ed.

65. Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security*, pp. 59–130.

66. Simon, “Security Prospects in Southeast Asia”; Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order* (London: Routledge, 2000); Acharya, “Regional Institutions and Security Order in Asia”; Amitav Acharya, “Institutionalism and Balancing in the Asia Pacific Region: ASEAN, U.S. Strategic Frameworks, and the ASEAN Regional Forum” (Toronto: Department of Political Science, York University; and Singapore: Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, 1999); Amitav Acharya, “Collective Identity

capabilities. Yuen Foong Khong writes that it is the only “mechanism for defusing the conflictual by-products of power balancing practices” in Asia-Pacific.<sup>67</sup> It is thus understandable why governments are eager to adjust regional security institutions to new conditions rather than to abandon them altogether. Exclusive reliance on balancing strategies of the kind favored by realists appears to Asian-Pacific governments to be fraught with risk.<sup>68</sup>

In three carefully researched case studies dealing with relations between Malaysia and the Philippines between the 1960s and 1990s, ASEAN’s policies after Vietnam’s 1978 invasion of Cambodia, and the period of strategic uncertainty after the end of the Cold War, Nikolas Busse has shown that ASEAN norms have noticeably influenced government policy.<sup>69</sup> In the 1990s, specifically, ASEAN members did not balance against the destabilizing possibilities of U.S. disengagement, Japanese reassertion, and Chinese expansion. Instead member states sought to export the ASEAN way of intensive consultation to East Asia through the ARF and the Workshops on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea that Indonesia has convened since 1990. More recently, the ASEAN plus Three meetings have provided a forum for discussion of security issues involving ASEAN members, Japan, South Korea, and China.<sup>70</sup> And in 2000, the ARF officially accepted North Korea as a member. Busse’s research points to the importance of the legitimacy, success, and prominence of norms of informal consultations; consensus building; and nonintervention for Asian-Pacific security. In brief, ASEAN’s strategy made China, the United States, and Japan part of ongoing security dialogues that replicate three important ASEAN norms: informal diplomacy, personal contacts, and respect for the principle of nonintervention.

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and Conflict Management in Southeast Asia,” in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, eds., *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 198–227; Amitav Acharya, “A Regional Security Community in Southeast Asia?” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (September 1995), pp. 181–182; Amitav Acharya, “The Association of Southeast Asian Nations: ‘Security Community’ or ‘Defense Community’?” *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (Summer 1991), pp. 159–177; Yuen Foong Khong, “Making Bricks without Straw in the Asia Pacific?” *Pacific Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1997), pp. 289–300; and Yuen Foong Khong, “ASEAN’s Collective Identity: Sources, Shifts, and Security Consequences,” paper prepared for the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, Massachusetts, September 3–6, 1998.

67. Khong, “Making Bricks without Straw in the Asia Pacific?” p. 296.

68. Acharya, “Institutionalism and Balancing in the Asia Pacific Region.”

69. Nikolas Busse, *Die Entstehung von kollektiven Identitäten: Das Beispiel der ASEAN-Staaten* [The rise of collective identity: The example of the ASEAN states] (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2000); and Nikolas Busse, “Constructivism and Southeast Asian Security,” *Pacific Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1999), pp. 39–60.

70. Interview 01-00, Singapore, June 7, 2000. South Korea used to be wary of ASEAN-led multilateral consultations, which it saw as being focused primarily on South China Sea issues. See Hideya

The redefinition of collective identities, however, is a process measured in decades, not years. The accomplishments of various track-one and track-two security dialogues in Asia-Pacific remain limited. Bilateralism and multilateralism, as Acharya has pointed out, are less threat and more uncertainty oriented.<sup>71</sup> Collective identity is therefore less directly at stake than are trust and reputation. Skeptics have joked that the bark of the ARF is worse than its bite. The ARF has sidestepped the most pressing security issues in Asia: conflicts on the Korean Peninsula, across the Taiwan Strait, and in the South China Sea. North Korea's nuclear and missile programs have become a major source of instability in Asia-Pacific.<sup>72</sup> Hoping to defuse this crisis, the United States, Japan, China, and South Korea are all engaged in complicated, inter-linked diplomatic initiatives that exclude both ASEAN and the ARF. The same is true of the smoldering Taiwan Strait crisis. With China declaring the status of Taiwan a domestic matter, the ASEAN norm of nonintervention has prevented the ARF from playing a mediating role in this crisis.<sup>73</sup> Finally, in the South China Sea the ARF has been slightly more engaged while still falling well short of seeking the role of active mediator between clashing state interests.<sup>74</sup>

The restricted scope of ARF activity is reflected in its minuscule organizational resources. Since its first meeting in 1994, the ARF has modeled itself after ASEAN. It has "participants" rather than "members," thus signaling the premium that it places on a lack of permanency and formality. ARF has no headquarters or secretariat, and it is unlikely that either will be established.<sup>75</sup> Although there are a number of intersessional working groups, the ARF itself meets annually for one day only.<sup>76</sup>

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Kurata, "Multilateralism and the Korean Problem with Respect to the Asia-Pacific Region," *Journal of Pacific Asia*, Vol. 3 (1996), pp. 132–138.

71. Acharya, "Regional Institutions and Security Order in Asia," p. 18.

72. Christopher W. Hughes, "The North Korean Nuclear Crisis and Japanese Security," *Survival*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Summer 1996), pp. 79–103.

73. This is not an exception. All Asian states either voted against or abstained from voting on the September 27, 1999, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees resolution calling on the UN secretary-general to establish an international commission of inquiry into violations of international law in East Timor. Rosemary Foot, "Global Institutions and the Management of Regional Security in the Asia Pacific," paper prepared for the Second Workshop on Security Order in the Asia-Pacific, Bali, Indonesia, May 30–June 2, 2000, p. 20.

74. Interviews 08-98, 01-00, and 07-00, Beijing, June 21, 1998, June 13, 2000, and June 15, 2000.

75. Interview 07-00, Tokyo, January 13, 2000.

76. In 1996, for example, Japan cochaired the ARF working group on confidence- and security-building measures. Boeicho (Defense Agency), *Boei Hakusho* [Defense white paper] (Tokyo: Okurasho Insatsu-kyoku, 1999), p. 187; Gaimusho, *Gaiko Seisho*, 1998, p. 31; and Hisane Masaki, "Japan to Co-chair Peacekeeping Group," *Japan Times*, July 17, 1998.

The ARF has been weakened further by three developments in the late 1990s. First, Asia's financial crisis has put new strains on relations among several ASEAN members (including Malaysia and Singapore) and has illustrated, in the words of former Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew, that "we can't help each other."<sup>77</sup> Second, the ARF was unable to act in a politically meaningful way in the 1999 crisis in East Timor. The United Nations, not the ARF, was the central international arena and actor to which Indonesia turned. Third, there are some indications that, according to Michael Leifer, the accession of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam to ASEAN is leading to "revisionary fragmentation," with the three governments meeting separately at times from the older ASEAN members.<sup>78</sup> In addition, the United States is putting increasing emphasis on bilateral diplomatic and military relationships. Since 1996, for example, it has strengthened its links with Japan and Australia and has expanded its military access to ASEAN members such as Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.<sup>79</sup>

The Taiwan problem has imported the ARF's track-one problems into track-two talks. The ARF has not admitted Taiwan as a participant. After China joined CSCAP in 1996, Taiwanese participation in working group discussions occurred only by special invitation that had to be vetted informally by China.<sup>80</sup> Procedural and political controversies thus lurk just below the surface and tend to hamper progress in CSCAP. Its working groups are typically staffed by relatively young researchers given to a relatively free and informal style of exchanging views. The Chinese representative, however, is often unwilling to participate in these discussions except to stop them whenever they veer toward the politically sensitive issues of Taiwan's status or sovereignty disputes in the South China Sea. In the context of the working group discussions, some

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77. Quoted in "ASEAN's Failure: The Limits of Politeness," *Economist*, February 28, 1994, p. 44; Acharya, "Institutionalism and Balancing in the Asia Pacific Region," pp. 3, 26; and Jürgen Rüländ, "ASEAN and the Asian Crisis: Theoretical Implications and Practical Consequences for Southeast Asian Regionalism," *Pacific Review*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (2000), p. 439.

78. Michael Leifer, "Regionalism Compared: The Perils and Benefits of Expansion," paper prepared for the Fourteenth Asia-Pacific Roundtable, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, June 3–7, 2000, p. 4.

79. Acharya, "Institutionalism and Balancing in the Asia Pacific Region," p. 2.

80. Akiko Fukushima, *Japanese Foreign Policy: The Emerging Logic of Multilateralism* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 149, 155, 197; Toshiya Hoshino, "Nichi-bei Domei to Asia Taiheiyo no Takoku-kan Anzen Hoshō: Nihon no Shiten" [Japan-U.S. alliance and multilateral security in the Asia-Pacific: A Japanese perspective], in Hideki Kan, Glenn D. Hook, and Stephanie A. Weston, eds., *Asia Taiheiyo no Chiiki Chitsujō to Anzen Hoshō* [Regional order and security in the Asia-Pacific] (Kyoto: Minerva Shobo, 1999), p. 181; Takashi Terada, "The Origins of Japan's APEC Policy: Foreign Minister Takeo Miki's Asia-Pacific Policy and Current Implications," *Pacific Review*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (1998), p. 361; interviews 01-98 and 02-98, Beijing, June 12, 1998; and Brian Job, personal communication, July 1, 2000.

Japanese participants interpret China's role as bordering on systematic obstructionism of the track-two process.<sup>81</sup>

The self-blocking tendencies of security multilateralism require much patience and reinforce, in the eyes of Japanese policymakers, the advantages of bilateral approaches to security issues.<sup>82</sup> The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) is the undisputed center for Japan's active involvement in a broad range of track-two activities.<sup>83</sup> Founded in the late 1950s and well connected in Japan, Asia-Pacific, and throughout the advanced industrial world, the JIIA has acted as the coordinator and secretarial office in Japan not only for CSCAP (since 1994) but also for the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (since 1980), and for the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (since 1998).<sup>84</sup> Bilateralism marks the activities of JIIA. Based on a decade-long tradition of bilateral meetings with think tanks, universities, and international affairs institutes in North America and Western Europe, regular bilateral exchanges with Asian-Pacific countries have increased sharply only since the mid-1980s—for example, with the China Institute of International Studies (since 1985), the South Korean Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (since 1986),

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81. Interviews 01-98, 02-98, and 07-00, Beijing, June 15, 1998 and June 15, 2000; and interview 04-00, Tokyo, January 12, 2000. The dynamics in CSCAP's working groups differ, however. Interview 09-00, Tokyo, January 13, 2000. With its twenty to thirty participants, the working group on transnational crime, for example, meets semiannually to deal with more specific issues. It is staffed by equal numbers of police professionals, policy experts, and scholars (mostly criminologists), who are more interested in exchanging information than in discussing solutions to policy problems. The working group has recently added the issue of illegal trafficking in people, migrants, and women and children to its traditional topics of illegal trade in narcotics and small firearms. The nature of the subject matter and the group's diversity yield a different style of discussion and group dynamic. Chinese representatives balk when infrequent policy discussions even suggest ways to cooperate that might be seen as infringing on state sovereignty. Although they do not tend to participate actively, the Chinese typically do not object to discussion of the problems that organized crime in China creates for other countries and the region as a whole. In meetings of this working group, China thus looks less obstructionist to its Asian-Pacific neighbors than it does in discussions of traditional national security issues in other working groups; but Chinese officials are clearly less forthcoming in a multilateral setting than in bilateral police discussions and joint operations.

82. Interview 04-00, Tokyo, January 12, 2000.

83. *Ibid.*

84. Although JIIA is important and has particularly close relations with the ministry of foreign affairs, both in terms of finance and personnel, other research organizations—including the Research Institute for Peace and Security and the Institute for International Policy Studies—are routinely engaged in similar kinds of meetings and exchanges that are designed to strengthen Asian-Pacific networks. The National Institute for Defense Studies, for example, has hosted since 1994 an annual security seminar focusing on the development of confidence-building measures. The seminar is attended by professional military personnel; in November 1998 participants from nineteen countries attended. Boeicho, *Boei Hakusho*, 1999, pp. 189–190, 422; Fukushima, "Japan's Emerging View of Security Multilateralism in Asia," p. 31; and interviews 02-99 and 04-99, Tokyo, January 11–12, 1999.



the North Korean Institute for Disarmament and Peace (since 1990), the Vietnamese Institute for International Relations (since 1992), and the Indian Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis (since 1995).<sup>85</sup>

#### ADVANTAGES OF ECLECTIC EXPLANATIONS

Compelling analyses of empirical puzzles can be built through combining realist, liberal, and constructivist modes of explanation. Realism and liberalism together, for example, can generate powerful insights into the mixture of balance-of-power and multilateral politics. A soft form of balance-of-power theorizing, for example, informs the 1995 Nye report that provides a rationale for continued U.S. military engagement in East Asia.<sup>86</sup> At one level the report is about increasing trust, communication, transparency, and reliability in a U.S.-Japan relationship marked by complex interdependence, thus seeking to stabilize the alliance and enhance predictability and stability in the region. But it is also about maintaining U.S. primacy. The 1997 Revised Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation spell out the operations that Japan would be expected to carry out in a regional crisis, and thus ensure that in such a crisis potentially hostile states could not drive a wedge between the United States and Japan; Japan's support of U.S. forces would be sufficiently robust to prevent a backlash in the U.S. Congress against either the alliance or the forward deployment of U.S. forces in Asia-Pacific; Japan's defense posture would continue to be guided by alliance planning; and finally, the United States would be able to win decisively in a possible military conflict with North Korea without shouldering excessive costs.<sup>87</sup>

In this realist-liberal perspective, the United States remains militarily and economically fully engaged in Asia-Pacific, thus reassuring Asian-Pacific states against the threat posed by Japan's present economic preponderance and potential military rearmament. Japan emerges as a potential economic and political leader contained within well-defined political boundaries. This double-barreled U.S. approach is rounded out by hopes for a unified and peaceful

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85. Such bilateral meetings and exchanges are also characteristic of other Japanese research organizations. The National Institute for Defense Studies, for example, runs a series of annual, bilateral meetings with representatives from China, Russia, and South Korea. It hosted eight researchers from ASEAN in 1999. Interview 04-99, Tokyo, January 12, 1999.

86. Doug Bandow, "Old Wine in New Bottles: The Pentagon's East Asia Security Strategy Report," *Policy Analysis*, No. 344, CATO Institute, May 18, 1999; Council on Foreign Relations Independent Study Group, *The Tests of War and the Strains of Peace*; and Joseph S. Nye, "The 'Nye Report': Six Years Later," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2001), pp. 95-104.

87. We would like to thank Michael Green for clarifying this point for us.

Korea and an economically prospering China increasingly engaged with the West, Japan, and the rest of Asia-Pacific.<sup>88</sup>

Japan's China policy also reflects a mixture of realist and liberal elements.<sup>89</sup> Just as Germany avoids at all cost having to choose between the United States and France, Japan avoids having to choose between the United States and China. Without risking its primary security relationship with the United States, Japan since the 1970s has consistently sought to engage China diplomatically. This entails an element of balancing as Japan seeks to constrain China, a potential opponent, through a policy of engagement. From Japan's perspective, countering China is possible only through alignment with the United States. Because China's military does not currently pose a serious threat to the region, and because military modernization is a costly and prolonged process measured in decades rather than years, the military aspects of the Japan-China relationship are relatively unimportant. Instead Japan's diplomacy aims at a slow, steady, and prolonged process of encouraging China to contribute more to regional stability and prosperity. On several issues—such as China's growing involvement in the ARF, an officially unacknowledged but nonetheless evident policy of seeking to enhance stability on the Korean Peninsula, and the somewhat greater flexibility with which the leadership in Beijing has addressed encroachments on China's sovereignty on issues of political authority and economic independence (as opposed to those involving territorial integrity and jurisdictional monopoly)—Japanese patience is being rewarded.<sup>90</sup> The settlement of virtually all of China's border conflicts, its acceptance into the World Trade Organization (WTO), and its far-reaching domestic reforms all point to a general political climate conducive to Japan's policy of engagement.<sup>91</sup>

A combination of realist and constructivist styles of analysis also has considerable heuristic power, as David Spiro and Alastair Johnston have

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88. James E. Auer, "A Win-Win Alliance for Asia," *Japan Times*, August 8, 1998.

89. Interview 03-00, Tokyo, January 11, 1999.

90. Interviews 01-98, 04-98, 05-98, 07-98, and 09-98, Beijing, June 15, 16, 19, 20, and 22, 1998; and Allen M. Carlson, "The Lock on China's Door: Chinese Foreign Policy and the Sovereignty Norm," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 2000. See also the cautious notes of optimism in Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," pp. 69–80.

91. A mixture of realist and liberal categories is also better than either alone to capture the combination of balancing and engagement characteristic of the diplomatic strategies of many Asian-Pacific states. Interview 02-00, Tokyo, January 11, 1999. Even though some Southeast Asian states (such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam) are wary of China because of past or current territorial disputes, they nevertheless seek to engage it in multilateral institutions such as the ARF. And even though Japan is the overwhelming power in Southeast Asia, its relations with states in the region have been good and are getting better in the wake of the Asian financial crisis.

argued.<sup>92</sup> The volatile issue of Taiwan, potentially the most serious trouble spot in Asia-Pacific, illustrates this analytical possibility.<sup>93</sup> The use of the term “surrounding areas” rather than “Far East” in the revised guidelines creates ambiguities, but they have been acceptable to both U.S. and Japanese defense officials for instrumental reasons. The United States has an interest in enhancing the deterrent effect of its alliance with Japan against China; Japanese officials have an interest in leaving undefined Japan’s response to a possible crisis over Taiwan. The advantages of ambiguity on Taiwan are widely acknowledged inside the Japanese government,<sup>94</sup> as are the risks.<sup>95</sup> In the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, the United States combined its diplomatic recognition of the People’s Republic of China with a commitment to Taiwan’s military defense. Japan, however, has kept its stance on Taiwan as ambiguous as possible. Japanese insistence on the domestic nature of the conflict between Beijing and Taipei, however, may not suffice in future crises. More than any other issue, Taiwan’s status potentially confronts Japan and the United States with serious difficulties in defense cooperation should China seek to resolve this issue through military means.<sup>96</sup>

A combination of constructivism and realism also offers historical insights. John Fairbank, for example, has offered a broad interpretation of East Asian international relations.<sup>97</sup> For many centuries, Asian international relations were institutionalized as a suzerain, rather than as a sovereign, system of states in which the central power did not seek to subordinate or intervene unduly in the affairs of lesser powers within its ambit.<sup>98</sup> China was the center of a system of tributary trade in which polities emulated and aligned with the central power. Focusing on systems with a preponderant source of power, Randall Schweller

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92. David E. Spiro, *The Hidden Hand of American Hegemony: Petrodollar Recycling and International Markets* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999); and Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

93. Christensen, “China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia,” pp. 62–69.

94. Interviews 02-99, 05-99, 11-99, and 13-99, Tokyo, January 11–12 and 14, 1999.

95. Interview 03-99, Tokyo, January 12, 1999.

96. Interviews 02-99 and 13-99, Tokyo, January 11 and 14, 1999.

97. John King Fairbank, ed., *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968).

98. David C. Kang, “Asian Nations Bandwagon,” in G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno, eds., *The Emerging International Relations of the Asia Pacific Region* (New York: Columbia University Press, forthcoming), pp. 14–16 (ms.); and Susanne Feske, “Japan und die USA: Zivilmächte im asiatisch-pazifischen Raum?” [Japan and the U.S.A.: Civilian powers in Asia-Pacific?] Trier Arbeitspapiere zum DFG-Forschungsprojekt “Zivilmächte in der internationalen Politik” [Trier working papers for the DFG research project “Civilian powers in international politics”] Trier, Germany, July 1997, pp. 18–19.

speaks of “bandwagoning for profit.”<sup>99</sup> Less material objects than profits narrowly construed were involved, however. In Asia tribute was not only trade. It was also an institutional transmission belt for collective norms and identities in Chinese culture. Power, trade, and culture were central in defining the political relationships between the Middle Kingdom and its neighbors.

The Sinocentric world order was anarchic and organized around the principle of self-help. Power and geographic location mattered, just as realism leads us to expect. Yet Chinese diplomatic practices also facilitated cultural emulation, thus yielding a system with a distinctive mixture of hierarchy and equality. In this Sinocentric world, discrepancies between norms and practice were common, as is true of the Westphalian system of sovereign states. But as Michel Oksenberg has observed, the nature of the misfit was different, so that certain ambiguous solutions of the past concerning territorial disputes over Taiwan, Tibet, and Hong Kong are today rendered more intractable.<sup>100</sup> Amending his own published work, Robert Jervis usefully underlines a theoretical point that many realists and neoliberals discount unduly: the dynamic and unanticipated consequences that institutions can have for preferences over outcomes, especially by affecting through domestic politics “deeper changes in what the actors want and how they conceive of their interests.”<sup>101</sup>

Liberalism and constructivism can also be combined to good effect. This decade, for example, has witnessed the growth of formal and informal multilateral security arrangements in Asia-Pacific. “Cooperative” approaches focus on military and nonmilitary dimensions of security, seek to prevent the emergence of manifest security threats, and are inclusive in their membership. Dia-

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99. Randall L. Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), pp. 72–107.

100. Michel Oksenberg, “The Issue of Sovereignty in the Asian Historical Context,” in Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *Problematic Sovereignty: Contested Rules and Political Possibilities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 83–104. See also Stephen D. Krasner, “Organized Hypocrisy in 19th Century East Asia,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (2001), pp. 173–197. Fairbank has been criticized often for taking the self-interested descriptions of Chinese court literati as unproblematic data describing how the system of tributary trade was actually working. For follow-up research that investigates how this system of trade may have operated in practice, see, for example, Morris Rossabi, ed., *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors, 10th–14th Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); John E. Wills, Jr., *Embassies and Illusions: Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K’ang-hsi, 1666–1687* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984); and James L. Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar: Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995). Fairbank’s failing is not uncommon. It is shared by realists who rely on Thucydides as an unquestioned historical source for the Peloponnesian War.

101. Jervis, “Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation,” pp. 61–62.

logues and various confidence-building measures are crucial to the creation of mutual trust.<sup>102</sup> These seek to lower the costs of making political contacts, facilitate the exchange of information, enhance transparency, and strengthen trust between governments.<sup>103</sup>

Multilateral security institutions can enhance efficiencies and over time alter underlying preferences and thus redefine interests.<sup>104</sup> The analytical difference between these two effects is mirrored in the attitudes of Japanese officials between a more skeptical and “realistic” stance on Asian security institutions on the one hand and a more enthusiastic and “pacifist” one on the other.<sup>105</sup>

Over longer periods, multilateral security institutions can do more than create efficiencies in the relations between governments. They can redefine identities and acceptable standards of behavior and thus reduce or enhance fear and hostility or the collective pursuit of economic prosperity and political cooperation. Scholars who have written on the ARF, for example, have made a strong case for the importance of informal and formal dialogues as ways of creating not only more transparency but also arenas of persuasion and a partial change in preferences and interests.<sup>106</sup>

Analytical eclecticism offers distinct advantages. Whether they stress materialist or ideational factors, rationalist analytical perspectives such as realism and liberalism are enriched when employed in tandem. They are also enriched by the incorporation of constructivist elements. When realists and liberals in

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102. Mataka Kamiya, “The U.S.-Japan Alliance and Regional Security Cooperation: Toward a Double-Layered Security System,” in Cossa, *Restructuring the U.S.-Japan Alliance*, pp. 21–22.

103. Interview 13-99, Tokyo, January 14, 1999.

104. Peter Alexis Gourevitch, “The Governance Problem in International Relations,” in David A. Lake and Robert Powell, eds., *Strategic Choice and International Relations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 137; and Jervis, “Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation,” pp. 58–63.

105. Interview 04-00, Tokyo, January 12, 2000.

106. Acharya, “Institutionalism and Balancing in the Asia Pacific Region”; Amitav Acharya, “Regionalism and the Emerging (Intrusive) World Order: Sovereignty, Autonomy, Identity,” paper presented at the CSGR (Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation) Third Annual Conference, After the Global Crisis What Next for Regionalism? Scarman House, University of Warwick, September 16–18, 1999; Acharya, “Collective Identity”; Acharya, “A Regional Security Community”; Busse, *Die Entstehung von kollektiven Identitäten*; Busse, “Constructivism and Southeast Asian Security”; Joseph Y.S. Cheng, “China’s ASEAN Policy in the 1990s: Pushing for Multipolarity in the Regional Context,” Contemporary China Centre, City University of Hong Kong, n.d.; Alastair Iain Johnston, “The Myth of the ASEAN Way? Explaining the Evolution of the ASEAN Regional Forum,” in Helga Haftendorn, Robert O. Keohane, and Celeste A. Wallander, eds., *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 287–324; Khong, “ASEAN’s Collective Identity”; and Simon, “Security Prospects for Southeast Asia.”

their empirically informed theoretical and policy writings slight norms and identities, they undermine the contribution to knowledge and policy advice they seek to make.<sup>107</sup>

### Conclusion

The paradigmatic clashes in international relations theory and the field of security studies are part of a broader set of disagreements in political science and the social sciences. Theoretical debates between proponents of rationalist, culturalist, and historical-institutional approaches appear these days in various guises and combinations in virtually all fields of social inquiry. These debates reveal differences in problem focus, acceptable analytic methods, and substantive hypotheses. More important, they point to deep divides about unverifiable, underlying assumptions concerning the possibilities, character, and purpose of social knowledge; the different routes we take to gain that knowledge; and the ontological status and epistemological significance of the

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107. To the extent that recent analyses of Japanese and Asian-Pacific security have chosen to simply ignore or misinterpret sociology or constructivism, they have unnecessarily weakened the contribution they make by misconstruing sociological analyses as inherently optimistic (Robert M. Uriu, "Domestic-International Interactions and Japanese Security Studies," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1 [1998], pp. 76–93) and ahistorical (Robert M. Uriu, "Domestic-International Interactions and Japanese Security Studies," in James Sperling, Yogendra Malik, and David Louscher, eds., *Zones of Amity, Zones of Enmity: The Prospects for Economic and Military Security in Asia* [Leiden: Brill, 1998], pp. 85–86); failing to address explicitly the relevance of collective identities, while appealing obliquely to regional security communities that presuppose the existence of such identities (Mochizuki and O'Hanlon, "A Liberal Vision"); offering a misleadingly partial analysis of mercantilism that both neglects the ideological component of that intriguing concept and misinterprets a sociological explanation of Japanese foreign policy as dealing merely with an exceptional case in a realist world (Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels, "Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 4 [Spring 1998], pp. 171–203), in sharp contrast to the much richer and more compelling argument proposed by Richard J. Samuels in his book *Rich Nation, Strong Army: National Security and the Technological Transformation of Japan* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994); wavering between a cultural and a materialist presentation of realist theory (Michael J. Green, "State of the Field Report: Research on Japanese Security Policy," *Access Asia Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1 [September 1998], pp. 13, 15, 37); neglecting that, in the case of Japanese security, sociological analyses focus their attention not on specific variants of realism but on rationalist explanations more generally, and that they explain not merely national security narrowly construed but also internal and economic security more broadly understood, issues that elude realist theorizing (Tsuyoshi Kawasaki, "Postclassical Realism and Japanese Security Policy," paper prepared for the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Atlanta, Georgia, September 2–5, 1999); and by overlooking how norms that constitute Japan's collective identity as a "non-threatening, peace-loving, state" are nested in underlying and more fundamental norms of Japan as a nonmajoritarian political community (Daniel Okimoto, "The Japan-America Security Alliance: Prospects for the Twenty-First Century," Stanford University, Institute for International Studies, Asia/Pacific Research Center, 1998, pp. 28–29).

relations between agents and structures and of the material and ideal aspects of social life.<sup>108</sup>

Many scholars offer reasonable and seemingly convergent postulates on every side of these debates that stress the need to build bridges between multiple analytical perspectives. Yet paradigmatic debates rarely succeed in moving us closer to a better integrated or more unified perspective in the social sciences—and for good reason. According to Rudra Sil, standard rhetoric in the field of comparative politics, for example, emphasizes “not a unified synthetic approach, but rather the greater flexibility of a particular research tradition vis-à-vis the others; the objective is not to encourage theoretical integration but to ward off the standard criticisms each approach typically faces from proponents of competing approaches.” In this genre of academic writing, smart rhetorical posturing dictates pragmatic flexibility, not cultish monism, in the effort to subsume the particularistic and myopic concerns of competing perspectives without relaxing any of the original foundational assumptions of one’s own preferred perspective.<sup>109</sup>

Instead of approach-driven analysis, we advocate problem-driven research. The insistence on parsimony clashes with the complexity of social processes occurring within specific contexts of both time and space.<sup>110</sup> As this article has illustrated, and with no claim to originality, international relations analysis can build on the identification of empirical anomalies for any one analytical perspective. A problem-driven approach to research has one big advantage. It sidesteps often bitter, repetitive, and inherently inconclusive paradigmatic debates. Such debates detract scholars and graduate students from the primary task at hand: recognizing interesting questions and testing alternative explanations.

A glance at examples from other fields is instructive. A world of complex processes can be captured by thinking about what Arthur Koestler dubbed “holonic principles of architecture,” that is, the relation between the whole and its parts in two different ways.<sup>111</sup> First, following Herbert Simon, we can think of the social world as a set of nearly decomposable systems with tight causal

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108. Rudra Sil, “The Foundations of Eclecticism: The Epistemological Status of Agency, Culture, and Structure in Social Theory,” *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (2000), pp. 353–387.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 372.

110. Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997).

111. John Mathews, “Holonic Organisational Architectures,” *Human Systems Management*, Vol. 15 (1996), pp. 27–54. See also Arthur Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (London: Hutchinson, 1967).

linkages among subsystems of factors that form a loosely coupled broader ensemble.<sup>112</sup> In developing his point, Simon used the parable of two Swiss watchmakers, Tempus and Horus. Tempus assembled his watches from separate parts. When interrupted, he had to put the unfinished watch down on the table, where it fell apart, forcing him to start again. Tempus produced few watches. Horus, on the other hand, built his watches by assembling the individual pieces into modules that he subsequently put together. Horus produced many watches. The recent history of watchmaking illustrates a second point about the whole and its parts. Seiko watchmakers revolutionized miniaturization by splitting the motor into three components and inserting them into tiny spaces between the watch's gears. Rather than thinking, as did the Swiss, of motor and gear as natural components that help in the production of the watch, Seiko engineers thought of the total product and the purpose and role of each component in relation to the whole.<sup>113</sup>

In contemporary social theory, the variable relation between the whole and its parts is the core insight of structuration theory. Thinking of political reality as a sequence or co-occurrence of structure and agency opens up the possibilities for an agnostic epistemological stance in which empirical puzzles drive the analysis within a broader perspective that is not committed a priori to the primacy of either agency or structure, materialism or idealism.<sup>114</sup> Choosing such an agnostic position has the advantage of being in agreement with much extant research practice: the implicit relaxation of strong a priori epistemological and ontological commitments in the process of relating substantive findings to analytical perspectives. In the analysis of international relations, too, epistemological flexibility that supports a problem-driven, eclectic analytical stance in both scholarship and teaching suits the needs of individual scholars.

This is not to argue that analytical eclecticism is cost-free. This approach may be too flexible to define by itself a research program capable of mobilizing strong political preferences and enduring professional ties. The advantages of eclecticism, however, may well outweigh these costs. Scholars and policymakers try to gain analytical leverage over multilayered and complex connections between power, interest, and norms. Analytical eclecticism highlights

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112. Herbert A. Simon, *The Sciences of the Artificial*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981), pp. 200–202.

113. Mathews, "Holonic Organisational Architectures," pp. 27–28.

114. Sil, "Foundations of Eclecticism," pp. 376–380; and Christopher Daase, *Kleine Kriege-Grosse Wirkung: Wie Unkonventionelle Kriegführung die Internationale Politik Verändert* [Small wars—big effects: How unconventional warfare alters international politics] (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1999), pp. 255–268.



different layers and connections that parsimonious explanations conceal. And it is attuned to empirical anomalies that analytical parsimony slights. Eclecticism protects us from taking as natural paradigmatic assumptions about the world. It regards with discomfort the certainties that derive from relying solely on a single paradigm. And it protects us, imperfectly to be sure, from the inevitable failings of any one paradigm, unfounded expectations of what is natural, and the adoption of flawed policies that embody those very expectations. Theory and policy are both served better by eclecticism, not parsimony.