

博士論文

Doctorate Thesis

Polarizing Diplomacy: How Partisanship Has Influenced Japanese and
U.S. Policy toward China

(分極化する外交政策：党派心が日米の対中国政策に与える影響について)

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Introduction

Even as it becomes more apparent that domestic politics influences a state's international behavior, the role of political parties on state behavior still does not get the consideration it deserves. While the recognition that foreign and domestic politics are intertwined has thankfully taken hold, a focus on interests has led too many analyses astray leading to two mistakes. The first is the assumption that domestic politics accounts for deviations from a more ideal national interest rather than taking the whole for simply what it is and seeing those "deviations" as intrinsic components of the national interest, good or bad. When domestic politics are considered as an intrinsic factor, it is more often to investigate how domestic parochial interests are brought to bear on foreign policy decision making. The second mistake is that the hunt for "who benefits" has led to too many futile hunts for explanations that only turn up strawmen. By looking for cynical causes anywhere they end up finding them everywhere, or even artificially create explanations of interest where none existed. Worse yet, there is the presumption that those who are not looking for material interests are themselves "on the take," lacking a certain fortitude or honesty when they look for explanations unrelated to interests.

The failure to consider the influence of domestic partisanship could also be because of an assumption that political parties having an influence on foreign policy means also assuming that political parties have distinct foreign policies of their own or that there are interests and perspectives unique to each political party. Chaudoin, Milner, and Tingley offer the conventional pushback against the idea that policy changes meaningfully between transitions of parties in power, writing that "If the governing party changed policy each time a different party came to office, the United States could not make credible commitments to its partners...each political party must be willing to continue the main lines of a liberal internationalist policy orientation once in office."¹

This assumption does not hold up empirically or anecdotally. Each successive governing party frequently changes policy, even if at the margins, and even these perhaps subtle changes may send important signals about the interests and worldview of a governing party. While most every political party platform will contain language on foreign policy, while candidates are expected to articulate a worldview consistent with that of their party, and while certain parties may be inclined towards certain perspectives at certain moments, the exact interests they pursue and perspectives they hold are mostly transient with the moment rather than essential to their identity. Complaints that the parties are all the same have missed the meaningful differences that divide them while those who emphasize the differences, who think the chasms cannot be crossed, miss the common fundamental vision held among parties. In other words, the degree of difference between successive administrations matters more than absolute differences, an idea that is supported by the literature on political partisan polarization. Instead, understanding the relationship between political parties and state behavior means understanding the role that parties play in shaping the choices available to decision makers, in other words, partisanship can influence the political space available to decision makers as they navigate foreign policy choices. Partisanship, defined as the bias towards and identity with one's own party and dislike towards opposing parties, operationalizes domestic attitudes, interests, cleavages, and ideational preferences but most importantly structurally connects foreign policy decision makers with domestic voters and stakeholders. When parties and voters become polarized, or increasingly opposed to one another, the need for parties to create and exploit differences

¹ Chaudoin, Stephen, Milner, Hellen V., Tingley, Dustin. "The Center Still Holds: The Potential for Liberal Internationalism Survives." *International Security*. vol. 35, no. 1, 2010, pp. 75-94.

between themselves incentivizes them to emphasize difference rather than pursue interests. This drive to create, emphasize, and exploit differences makes it harder for foreign policy decision makers to build coalitions or at least count on opposition acquiescence and raises the political costs for making the “wrong” choice, the result of which limit the choices and political space available to decision makers. This explanation is not meant to replace the role of interests or to insist that political parties have distinct foreign policies, but to complement these explanations to create a stronger and more complete framework for how political parties interact with these other factors. Understanding the behavior of competing states or the geopolitical context, as realism emphasizes, is only half of the equation for understanding state behavior – the other half is to understand the reasons why states respond to those contexts the ways that they do.

The aim of the current study is to demonstrate how domestic political partisanship can account for the advances in the literature and explain the decision making of foreign policy elites in ways that previous explanations could not. This study will explain how the literature has shown that domestic political culture explains the formation of state preferences more than only the international strategic context which is most often used to explain preference formation. While much work has focused on the role of public opinion, sectoral interests, audience costs, and more in shaping decision makers’ actions, these explanations are based on a foundation of rational interests that does not adequately account for advances in literature on political science, public opinion, political psychology, or behavioral factors. The findings from this research requires that considerations of domestic-foreign linkages move past simply identifying self-interested moves, as game theory and linkage studies would demand and focus more on domestic political contexts. Qualitative methodology is the only way to illuminate the narratives and ideas that permeate the ways in which perceptions are formed in foreign policy decision making.

This study will begin by outlining the literature on the linkages between domestic politics and foreign policy making to understand the state of current work on these topics. While there has been important work completed on these subjects, they are often too focused on discrete negotiations and crises and rely too heavily on rationalist assumptions of the pursuit of material interests. As Andrew Moravcsik writes, “Societal ideas, interests, and institutions influence state behavior by shaping state preferences, that is, the fundamental social purposes underlying the strategic calculations of governments.”² Domestic politics is the best explanation as to why the United States withdrew from the nuclear agreement with Iran,³ why Japanese decision makers feared that Nixon’s election would force them to confront difficult conversations on Japanese rearmament,⁴ why Boer commandos in South Africa waited until the election of William Gladstone to begin armistice negotiations to end the First Boer War.⁵

The study will then explore partisanship and polarization and will demonstrate how both are essential to understanding foreign policy choice despite being only thinly linked to policy and ideological preferences. What matters instead is the nature and degree in difference of opinions between people, including decision makers, identifying with a given party. This section will draw on literature

² Moravcsik, Andrew. “Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics.” *International Organization*, vol. 51, no. 4, 1997, pp. 513–553.

³ Zurcher, Anthony. “Three reasons behind Trump ditching Iran Deal,” *BBC News*, May 8, 2018. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-43902372> Accessed March 7, 2020.

⁴ Pyle, Kenneth B. *Japan in the American Century*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018.

⁵ Le May, G.H.L., *The Afrikaners: An Historical Interpretation*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996.

emphasizing the oppositional aspects of political partisanship rather than its rationalist or instrumentalist aspects. Divides are essential to understanding both how civil societies split into certain cleavages, usually around class, economic sector, geographic region, or value system and often not only identifying what one was for but also what one was against. In periods of intense polarization, partisanship even becomes essential to the self-concept and people rely on parties and party elites to understand their own position on a given issue, making divisions between parties essential for understanding the political landscape. In the United States at least, differences between the parties are exaggerated in the minds of the public and for highly salient issues where public opinion is more forcefully brought to bear, this can create a feedback mechanism whereby decision makers become more responsive to public opinion on issues that decision makers have sought to distinguish a difference.

This section makes the important qualification that partisanship varies across time and place – while much literature has focused on the polarizing politics of the United States, it is not representative of the whole of liberal democracies and to that end Japan will be considered to understand the variations between partisan dynamics. One difference is that while Americans are intimately familiar with the left/right dichotomies like that of egalitarianism versus individualism, the axis of Japanese debates more often turn on questions of pacifism and issues of centralized bureaucratic state power versus decentralized “people” power, and Japanese voters also do not identify with their political parties nearly to the same extent that Americans do. Yet there are certainly similarities in the mechanics of partisanship which suggest that there is more than enough to compare voters in both liberal democracies against each other even as voters use those mechanics differently.

This study will investigate its argument by considering Japanese and U.S. perceptions of China since 1994. Japan and the United States are selected because they are liberal democracies whose politics are organized around parties but with differing partisan and voter dynamics, perceptions of China are selected both countries’ relationships with China touch on aspects that are essential to almost every political actor in the United States and Japan – economic, security, normative, and more. Both countries have foreign policy networks that favor engagement and that favor confrontation, and all with deferent biases and preferences that will make a comparison between Japan and the United States especially fruitful. 1994 is a significant year for partisan politics for several reasons. For one, both countries were visibly beginning to move on from the Cold War political consensus that governed their foreign policies for the preceding forty years. In the United States, this meant the “Republican Revolution” with the election of Newt Gingrich as speaker of the house and a wave of conservative Republicans elected to Congress and institutionalizing the polarizing trends that had been setting in for the past twenty years. In Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party had found itself out of government for the first time since 1955 and electoral reform was passed to (among other things) create a system of ideologically defined parties alternating in power like that of the United States and United Kingdom. China was also transforming between the economic liberalization of Deng Xiaoping, the impact of the Tiananmen Square massacre, the internalization of lessons for military reform from what it saw as its humiliation in the 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis, all forming the landscape for its ascension to great power status.

The case study, which will be elaborated in three chapters covering the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010, will demonstrate how China’s evolution ricocheted off changes in the domestic politics of Japan and the United States. China’s leadership transitions and decision making developed in ways that both confirmed and tested the assumptions of the different foreign policy camps in Japan and the United States. Even the

violence of the Tiananmen Square massacre was encouraging to Americans who thought that a nascent democracy movement could gain momentum with the right push from the United States. Indeed, the 1990s were a period when there was evidence to confirm most any assumption could be found – advocates of engagement could point to China’s liberalizing reforms and growing economy, confrontationists could point to the Taiwan Straits crisis and China’s politicization of Japan’s apology diplomacy,

The 2000s were the period of greatest divergence in how Japan and the United States responded to China. For Japan there was a certain reckoning with its earlier experience in apology diplomacy as Koizumi Junichiro, while not denying Japan’s imperialist atrocities towards China, took an approach that asserted Japan’s right to commemorate its history as it wished and free from foreign interference – though also antagonizing China in the process. There were still proponents of engagement, but they were increasingly challenged by those who viewed China as a threat to Japan’s security and began to see themselves paying a higher political cost than before. In the United States, 9/11 and the following wars in Afghanistan and Iraq decreased the political salience of U.S. policy towards China, and decision makers settled on an “engage and balance” framework that built upon China’s ascension to the WTO and gently testing China’s ability to behave as a global leader.

In the 2010s, both Japan and the United States tried their hand at greater engagement only to later settle on a more confrontational approach though not to the same degree. For Japan, this was due to the debacle with Hatoyama Yukio’s premiership in the first DPJ government in 2009. While he tried to build a sort of “East Asian Community” and expressed hope that Japan could reorient itself from Washington to Beijing, his ambiguous vision and decision making structures crippled his intentions to the extent that even Beijing did not see much use in trying to use Hatoyama’s government to “flip” Japan away from the United States. In fact, Beijing became more confrontational, specifically over the disputed Senkaku Islands, and Hatoyama’s DPJ successors found themselves constrained by a public and opposition LDP that had no appetite for engagement and a bureaucracy in no interest to help. When Abe returned to power in 2012, his political capital and diminished opposition allowed him to pursue his own “engage and balance” framework towards China by softening tensions after the Senkaku Islands crisis while implementing security reforms and deepening economic and political partnerships both in the region and globally. While the United States did not commit to engagement as far as Hatoyama, there were still a significant group of decision makers in the Obama administration that believed in a great power G2-style partnership with China. This group was instead challenged by more “hawkish” elements that were interested in a framework that was closer to “engage and balance” as in the preceding administration. While the dispute was never really resolved within the Obama administration, as in Japan, China’s more assertive behavior under the leadership of Xi Jinping coalesced the view that China was a threat that demanded confrontation.

Across the entire period, decision makers’ choices were guided by advocates of specific policy directions. These “foreign policy networks” may be thought of as a conceptual tool to understand how preferences become ascendent at a given moment, illuminating both processes of change and the influence of political parties on foreign policymaking. These networks are guided not only by preferences of “engage” or “confront” or “hawks” or “doves” but also by different motivations for these preferences which almost as important for distinguishing them from one another as are their preferences themselves. These networks

reflect not only economic or sectoral interests but also act as expressions of the national self-concept and articulate how each country perceives itself and its role in the world.

These networks are rooted in each country's self-image rather than only material and parochial interests. They provide a framework for how decision makers see the world and a link to an ideational tradition that provides guidance and sometimes even legitimacy. Arguments in favor of economic engagement were not rooted only in personal enrichment, but also in a genuine belief that engagement could change the relationship for the better. As a result, they connect material interests with ideational traditions and philosophies in ways that current explanations of foreign-domestic linkages cannot account for.

This will help overcome the contradiction that while partisanship may be a strong identification with one's party and antagonism toward opposing parties, but foreign policy choices are not neatly bifurcated into two opposing and dialectical camps. The challenge for foreign policy decision makers is to assert multilayered and complex preferences into political systems that are based around oppositional organizations. By organizing decision makers into loosely defined foreign policy camps it will be possible to better understand how foreign policy choices are made against the backdrop of the domestic political context and the geopolitical situation.

It will be seen that decision makers are compelled to act as mediators among the various foreign policy networks and their preferences with their freedom to choose dictated by a combination of the geopolitical situation, leadership ability, political space. Where the first two factors have been well accounted for in the literature, this study will address the final factor – political space – and argue that it is bound by the domestic political context and more specifically by partisan polarization. This influence goes deeper than simply audience costs or public opinion into the influence and popularity of certain key stakeholders, how decision makers themselves perceive and understand public opinion, the accumulated legacy of past administrations' policies, and more. Partisan politics will be seen to have influenced decision maker choices in ways that are not explained by geopolitics or leadership. In both Japan and the United States, changes in Chinese behavior were essential to understanding the development of each country's "China policy" but domestic politics is responsible for setting which policy choices are available to decision makers.

More clearly understanding the political space before them and how the preferences of their international partners can evolve means that decision makers can focus on the achievable rather than the aspirational. By delinking preferences from parties, it will be possible for decision makers to better understand and anticipate how a country's foreign policies will shift instead of assuming that they will change depending on the party in power. Rather than focusing on political parties themselves, observers can look towards the level of polarization, proximate advisors, and leadership capacity and political space (as well as the geostrategic context) to better understand how an administration's preferences may form. This is admittedly a convoluted formula but offers a more clear and more grounded perspective on the decision making nature of a given administration. It is also not as complicated as it may seem since it simply requires observers to focus on different mechanisms than those which they may already be focused on. Being better able to decipher the lava lamp of a country's preferences should make the exercise worthwhile.

Most important of all is that partisanship does not shape preferences on its own but circumscribes the field in which choices are made, a concept that this study refers to as "political space." Highly polarized

environments see leaders enjoying limited space while environments with less polarization see more political space available to leaders. Partisanship is of course not the only variable that influences political space, but it is the one that has been so far underexplored in international relations literature and more misapplied in political science literature that focuses on foreign policy decision making. This study's argument is not that partisanship usurps things like the geostrategic context or leadership but that it should take a rightful place alongside variables such as these when we try to understand the nexus of foreign policymaking and domestic politics.

The findings also make clear the importance of process to decision making. The most successful administrations (in the sense that they articulated and pursued a consistent, clear vision that guided their decision making) had minimal infighting and largely had a common vision with the executive. Those that faced the most difficult times suffered from almost the exact opposite – unclear and inconsistent visions, competition and infighting among key decision makers, and muddled decision making structures. While a nod to the “Team of Rivals” hypothesis can allow for the possibility that constructive rivalry among decision makers can make for better policymaking, the case studies discussed here often present evidence that competition created confusion rather than clarity. A note of caution specific to Japan may be to warn against periods of “revolving-door” leadership since these periods saw Japan's prime ministers being the most reactive to events instead of taking the initiative. Given the increasing centralization of decision making in the prime minister's office and the relative marginalization a bureaucracy that could provide continuity and institutional memory during “revolving door” periods, this could be especially problematic for Japan in the future.

This also points towards the importance of optimizing the political space that is available. While it is easy to surrender political space, usually irrevocably, it is much harder to gain it. The DPJ's Kan and Noda both spent most of their premierships hiding from the legacy of their predecessor Hatoyama and saw their choices constrained partly by the domestic political frustration with Hatoyama's leadership. Clinton began his administration with the goal of confronting China on its human rights abuses but had to readjust when that approach failed, only to find that the choices which were available to him were so constrained that he wished he could campaign against his own policy. The leaders who were most able to build political space for themselves either enjoyed public support for their approach (Koizumi), saw the most contentious political debates deflected onto another issue (George W. Bush), or enjoyed an unusual period of relative calm in domestic politics (Abe's second administration). In all cases, the freedom they enjoyed was more the result of circumstance than leadership, but most all (except for possibly Koizumi) were able to optimize the space to achieve policy gains that may not have been possible otherwise.

Chapter 1

The Importance of Domestic-Foreign Linkages

This chapter will begin by introducing the idea of how domestic politics and foreign policy making are linked and making the case of the importance of this linkage when thinking about foreign policy decision making. It will then broadly survey the existing literature on domestic-foreign linkages, beginning with Robert Putnam's two-level games, Jeffery Legro's cooperation "two-step," and similar work which takes an abstracted, generalized approach to the question of linkages that are chiefly concerned exclusively with domestic decision makers and international choices. The chapter will then turn towards the relationship between the public and foreign policy decision makers, demonstrating that the relationship between decision maker choices and public opinion is more complex than a question of "who follows who," relying on factors like cues, audience costs, voter cleavages, and more. What is important for this study is the idea that the nature and degree of divisions among voters and elites matters more than the level of agreement on specific preferences. This section concludes by suggesting that political partisanship can address many of the gaps in the existing literature by completing the picture of how domestic politics interacts with foreign policy decision makers.

Introduction

Contemplating the relationship between domestic politics and foreign affairs goes back millennia. Thucydides and Machiavelli both ponder whether republics or authoritarian systems are more reliable internationally and academic research has long considered this and other related questions as well. For all the interest in the ways that domestic sources influence foreign policy, either from societal ideas, parochial interests, or institutions, attempts to systematize these influences into a coherent analytical framework have not yet formed a complete and cohesive theory. Some of the most notable attempts to conceptualize the domestic-foreign nexus have significant limitations that limit their ability to explain state behavior and that of decision makers. For example, two-level games theory and liberal international relations theory, which will be discussed below, both rest on rationalist assumptions of interest formation, that domestic actors and decision makers are rational and promote self-interest under conditions of scarcity and competition. These approaches may be useful for generating observational findings that can help explain specific outcomes, but their assumptions of rationality are limited against more recent research on the relationship between social psychology and preference formation.

To be sure, there is important and compelling work that has tried to systematize the relationships between domestic politics and foreign policy, importantly accounting for the social context in which politics takes place. Moravcsik summarizes this, writing that "the nature and intensity of national support for any state purpose – even apparently fundamental concerns like the defense of political and legal sovereignty, territorial integrity, national security, or economic warfare – varies decisively within the social context."⁶ De Graaf and Van Apeldoorn put it well when they write that states "are not so much actors in their own right as entities that always act through people – policy-making, governing elites; and those elites are in turn are embedded in wider social networks, relating them to broader social structures that shape their ideas and worldviews, and hence their policy-making."⁷ Berinsky puts it concisely when he writes

⁶ Moravcsik 1997.

⁷ de Graaff, Nana and Van Apeldoorn, Bastiaan. "US-China relations and the liberal world order: Contending elites, colliding visions?" *International Affairs*, vol, 94, no. 1, 2018, pp. 113-131.

“Theories of war and politics must account for the effects of the domestic political process.”⁸ Jeff Frieden connects domestic politics to state behavior on the international stage when he writes that “interests themselves are domestically derived and expressed within the domestic political economy.”⁹ Nana de Graaf and Bastian Van Apeldoorn, in describing the evolving response of the U.S. to changes in Chinese foreign policy, write that “a comprehensive understanding of these developments and their implications for the liberal world order requires a perspective that takes into account the *domestic* and *social* sources of foreign policy, rooted in a domestic political economy that is interlinked with an evolving global political economy, crucially mediated by elite networks and elite strategies” (italics original).¹⁰ Linking economic openness to domestic ideology, Dennis Quinn and A. Maria Toyoda write “to omit ideology as an explanatory variable for economic globalization is to risk omitted variable bias.”¹¹

But attempts to explain domestic-foreign linkages have remained limited – either ensconced within individual disciplines and failing to draw on an interdisciplinary approach that could offer more insight, failing to keep pace with innovations in understanding new insights from international relations and political science research, or using an epistemological approach to explain broad trends when an approach that can explain specific cases would be more desirable, or vice versa. An understanding of the current literature on linkage studies can help explain the state of academic understandings of domestic-foreign interactions as well as clarify the gaps that need to be addressed.

Despite the limitations of present research, there is extensive work that addresses the issue from a variety of angles to explain a variety of facets. Generally, work in this area has alternated between rationalist explanations that preference actors’ self-interest and explanations that preference the specific domestic features of a given country, such as culture or institutions. From this work, it becomes easier to appreciate that variance across states is not just the product of the international environment or relevant domestic institutions, but the product of social contexts that shape beliefs and preferences.

Quinn & Toyoda offer an example of the debate between self-interest and domestic structure.¹² In their investigation of the effects of changes in both global and domestic ideology and voter preferences on government policy related to international financial flows, they argue that changes in domestic ideology influence how open or closed an economy is to international finance. They take a constructivist approach, writing that “The realist perspective is primarily operationalized in terms of a state responding to either international pressures from or experiences of other states... Constructivist understandings, in contrast, see diffusion processes operating through cultural channels. These analyses rely heavily on the existence of dominant or elite actors who are the propagators and receptors of ideas.” Their argument rests on the idea that global ideology changes the incentives and opportunities that confront decision makers, rather than actors’ self-interest.

⁸ Adam J. Berinsky. “Assuming the Costs of War: Events, Elites, and American Public Support for Military Conflict”. *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 69, No. 4 (Nov., 2007), pp. 975-997.

⁹ Frieden, Jeffrey. “Sectoral conflict and foreign policy, 1914-1940.” *International Organization*, vol. 42, no. 1, 1988, pp. 59-90.

¹⁰ de Graaf and Van Apeldoorn 2018.

¹¹ Quinn, Dennis P. and Toyoda, A. Maria. “Ideology and Voter Preferences as Determinants of Financial Globalization.” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 51, no. 2, 2007, 334-363.

¹² Ibid.

More generally, Chaudoin et al¹³ describe existing theories that explain domestic-international interactions as falling into five categories: independence, direct system effects, indirect system effects, and interdependence. More specifically, attempts to define the national interest within the framework of domestic politics have variously attempted to use socioeconomic and sectoral pressures^{14,15}, public opinion^{16,17}, domestic political institutions^{18,19}, and culture²⁰ to explain both the formation of national interest and the expression of public pressure upon its creation. Almost none of these authors take a monocausal approach – Frieden for example writes that “underlying socioeconomic interests are mediated through a set of political institutions that can alter their relative influence,”²¹ Kupchan and Trubowitz note the restraining effect that nuclear brinkmanship had on U.S. strategy,²² and Willick writes that “political conflict is manifested by new and more differentiated social groupings which reflect economic, professional, and bureaucratic interests”²³ – but the literature to this point provides a set of possible explanations to consider the intersection of domestic politics and foreign policy.

Robert Putnam’s work on two-level games remains one of the most notable attempts to link domestic and international politics and attempts to stress the role of domestic politics in shaping the determinants of foreign policy.²⁴ He summarizes his thesis by writing, “Central executives have a special role in mediating domestic and international pressures precisely because they are directly exposed to both spheres, not because they are united on all issues nor because they are insulated from domestic politics.”²⁵ At the national, domestic level, domestic groups attempt to secure their interests by pressuring the government to adopt their preferences at the international level and that government will try to secure their domestic position by building a coalition of such groups while attempting to minimize the adverse consequences at the international level. As Putnam writes, evoking the image of the game that his theory describes, “clever players will spot a move on one board that will trigger realignments on other boards, enabling them to achieve otherwise unattainable objectives,” and must reconcile domestic and international imperatives simultaneously.²⁶

¹³ Chaudoin, Stephen, Milner, Hellen V., Pang, Xun. “International Systems and Domestic Politics: Linking Complex Theories with Empirical Models in International Relations.” *International Organization*. Vol. 69, no. 2, 2014, 1-35.

¹⁴ Frieden 1988.

¹⁵ Trubowitz, Peter. *Defining the National Interest*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

¹⁶ Page, Benjamin I. and Shapiro, Robert Y. “Effects of Public Opinion on Policy.” *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 77, no. 1, 1983, pp. 175-190.

¹⁷ Berinsky 2007.

¹⁸ Monroe, Alan D. “American Party Platforms and Public Opinion.” *American Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 27, no. 1, 1983, pp. 27-42.

¹⁹ Thomas Risse-Kappen. “Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal Democracies”. *World Politics*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (Jul., 1991), pp. 479-512.

²⁰ George O. Totten and Tamio Kawakami. “The Functions of Factionalism in Japanese Politics”. *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Summer, 1965), pp. 109-122.

²¹ Frieden 1988.

²² Kupchan, Charles A. and Trubowitz, Peter L. “Dead Center: The Demise of Liberal Internationalism in the United States.” *Quarterly Journal: International Security*, vol. 32, no. 2. (Fall 2007): 7-44.

²³ Willick, Daniel H. “Foreign Affairs and Party Choice”. *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 75, No. 4, Part 1 (Jan., 1970), pp. 530-549.

²⁴ Putnam, Robert D. “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games.” *International Organization*, vol. 42, no. 3, Summer 1988, pp. 427-460.

²⁵ Ibid 1988.

²⁶ Ibid 1988.

More formalized explanations of domestic-foreign linkages continued after Putnam's work on two-level games. Jeffery Legro describes the transference of domestic preferences into international policy outcomes as a "two-step," the first step being the formation of preferences and actors and the second step is the interaction among international actors that leads to an outcome.²⁷ Yet rather than taking sides in the debate between rationalists and advocates of culture, Legro argues that the two need not be mutually exclusive and that cultural influence can be measured using social science methodology. Like Robert Putnam's two-level games, he uses domestic influences to explain interaction considerations between negotiators on the international stage. This differs from the classic approach that sees state preferences as exogenous, or the result of changes in the strategic context, and he writes that "culturally shaped agents tend to discount the environmental data and facts that contradict the existing orthodoxy...culture is a determinant of resource decisions that in later periods tend to reinforce the viability of cultural assumptions regardless of their fit with situational 'strategic' circumstances."²⁸ In other words, culture informs state preferences more than the strategic context since culture informs strategic considerations.

Alexander Wendt's 1994 paper takes a more abstracted approach that qualifies the rational materialist approach which he argues explain prices or constraints rather than tastes, and argues instead that "the key structures in the states system are intersubjective, rather than material, and...state identities and interests are in important part constructed by these social structures, rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics."²⁹ Applied to this research, partisanship and polarized worldviews can inform a state's self-concept and by extension its preferences and interests. Also relevant is his discussion of the possibility for the transnational convergence of domestic values, which may lead partisans in one country to identify sympathetically with those in a counterpart, for example over the question of China. As he writes, "Societal convergence can result from rising interdependence, in which case, its effects will be hard to separate from the latter. But it may also stem from demonstration effects, diffusion, and 'lesson drawing' (in which one society learns from another that one form of societal organization is 'better' than another)."³⁰

Meanwhile, authors like Frank L. Klingberg³¹, Stephen Krasner³², and Harvey Starr³³ have pointed to cyclical patterns in U.S. foreign policy, looking at, in Klingberg's case, alternations of extroversion and introversion or other similar patterns, using measures such as naval spending, U.S. territorial annexations, armed expeditions, and content analysis of party platforms. Brian Pollins & Randall Schweller attempted to build on these analyses by offering system-level explanations for such cycles, connecting patterns in the global economy with domestic/societal level explanations for foreign policy behavior by the United

²⁷ Legro, Jeffery W. "Culture and Preferences in the International Cooperation Two-Step." *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, No. 1, March 1996, pp. 118-137.

²⁸ Ibid 1996.

²⁹ Wendt, Alexander. "Collective Identity Formation and the International State." *The American Political Science Review*. vol. 88, no. 2, June 1994, pp. 384-396.

³⁰ Ibid 1994.

³¹ Klingberg, Frank L. "The Historical Alternation of Moods in American Foreign Policy." *World Politics*, vol. 4, 1952, pp. 239-273.

³² Krasner, Stephen D. Defending the National Interest: Raw Material Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.

³³ Starr, Harvey. "Alliances: Tradition and Change in American Views of Foreign Military Entanglements." In American Thinking about Peace and War, Booth, Ken and Wright, Morehead, eds. Sussex: Harvester Press, 1978.

States.³⁴ As they note, this approach follows the “second image reversed” theory international systems explain domestic systems and consequently state behavior, rather than domestic systems explaining state behavior. An important limitation of this approach is that it treats state behavior not only as binary (states are either introverted or extroverted), but that the only expression of state behavior is through armed aggression or other belligerent action. While this does not discount the empirical findings of these studies, it does call into question how much these studies can explain about state behavior since economic policy or international institutionalism – both of which are important expressions of a state’s international behavior – are left out of the research.

The Public and Foreign Policy

Especially among democracies, it would seem to be a safe assumption that domestic-foreign linkages can be explained by the interaction between public preferences and decision maker preferences, consequentially giving public opinion pride of place when looking for explanations. Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro offer what might be considered to be the “conventional,” or at least the most intuitive, evaluation of the relationship between public opinion and public policy in their study “Effects of Public Opinion on Policy” where they write “we find considerable congruence between *changes* in preferences and in policies, especially for large, stable opinion changes on salient issues...public opinion is often a proximate cause of policy, affecting policy more than policy influences opinion” (*italics original*).³⁵ This may represent the democratic ideal where policymakers defer to the public will. They acknowledge the difficulty in establishing causality and instead focus on establishing congruency in the direction of policy and opinion shifts. Their findings include the important caveat that congruencies are most often found on highly salient issues, leaving the possible inference that low-salience issues are possibly free from pressures of public opinion. These findings may also mirror those of Miwa’s (discussed later), where policymakers are able to align with public opinion on areas where public sentiments are clear and definite.

Page and Shapiro’s basic conclusions were echoed by Alan Monroe in his study on the relationship between party platforms and public opinion, where he found that U.S. political parties “tended to adopt positions favored by a majority of the public,” but also found that parties would go against public opinion on issues that were especially important to core constituencies, leaving him to conclude that the cleavage theory as the best explanation of party decision making.³⁶ His conclusion is especially relevant for more recent considerations of the practical impacts of political partisanship when he writes, “While parties generally seek positions that will be popular with the electorate, the dynamics of the nominating process and convention decision making mean that minority positions favored by relevant interest groups and party activists may sometimes be adopted.”³⁷ In so doing, he appears to make a structural explanation, blaming the U.S. electoral process with its primaries and conventions for providing the necessary conditions for the cleavage theory to take hold. Whether the cleavage theory would be as relevant in systems more dissimilar to the United States is an open question.

³⁴ Pollins, Brian M. and Schweller, Randall P. “Linking the Levels: The Long Wave and Shifts in U.S. Foreign Policy.” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 43, no. 2, April 1999, pp. 431-464.

³⁵ Page and Shapiro 1983.

³⁶ Monroe 1983.

³⁷ *Ibid* 1983.

The complex ways in which decision makers interact with and are guided by public opinion and domestic pressures in general have given rise to extensive literature, heavily influenced by game theory, that tries to use a typology of governance to explain state behavior in the context of public pressure and forms a bridge between abstracted models like two-levels games with research on public opinion. Bueno de Mesquita and Smith offer a useful summary of the literature on linkage research, which they write covers insights “drawn from theories concerned with moral hazard, adverse selection, and the associated problems of signaling intentions and competence effectively and consistently to foreign rivals, domestic backers, and domestic political opponents.”³⁸ Linkage politics focuses on domestic political heterogeneity across states to understand “how democratic institutions incentivize leaders to engage in patterns of foreign policy behavior that differ from the patterns of autocrats.”³⁹ The essential assumption made of political leaders is that they are rational self-interested actors who operate to optimize their self-preservation.

Kurt Taylor Gaubatz offers a similar, but qualitative, take on the relationship between government type and adherence to international commitments, and argues that “distinctive institutions and preferences should enhance the ability of democratic states to make credible international commitments.”⁴⁰ By reviewing the arguments and incentives for why democratic states may enter and abide by international commitments, he builds on and anticipates much of the work on audience costs and linkage politics.

The problem for abstracted models like two-level games, linkage research, and more is that its creation of general principles of state behavior almost never works deductively to understand specific cases. Decision makers and the media that follow them have no interest in the ways in which regimes issue more credible threats of war or the general game theoretic trends regarding political opposition response to the foreign adventurism of domestic leaders, but in the immediate dilemma confronting them at the moment. This does not discount the empirical validity of the findings of linkage research but limits their applicability to academic discussions rather than the channels where decision makers receive their information, where narrative and experience are more influential. This does not mean that relevant explanations can only be ad-hoc or general observations, but that deductive reasoning is more relevant for understanding specific cases than most linkage research will allow.

Still, concepts such as audience costs carry explicative weight in attempting to understand decisions across different political contexts. Potter & Baum offer support for audience costs but with the caveat that domestic institutions and political processes matter, providing a mediating effect by influencing the number of political parties in a state and by extension, the depth and effects of opposition to the executive, as well as the public’s access to information.⁴¹ Like Thomas Risse-Kappen (discussed later), they believe this helps explain heterogeneity across democracies. They write “Fewer parties translate into diminished options for voters and a lesser likelihood that they will punish at the ballot box.” In this sense, parties serve as “whistleblowers” that should ideally ensure that foreign policy mistakes will be elevated in the public consciousness, but the authors add that “these processes might be too subtle to be observed

³⁸ Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce and Smith, Alastair. “Domestic Explanations of International Relations.” *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 15. 2012. pp. 161-181.

³⁹ Ibid 2012.

⁴⁰ Gaubatz, Kurt Taylor. “Democratic states and commitment in international relations.” *International Organization*. vol. 50, issue 1, 1996, 109-139.

⁴¹ Baum, Matthew A. and Potter, Philip B.K.. “The Relationships Between Mass Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis”. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2008 11:1, 39-65.

by an adversary seeking to judge credibility in a one-off encounter” suggesting, as this paper hopes to argue, that bargaining models, such as two-level games, are limited in the degree to which they can explain domestic-state interactions. If these processes are too subtle to be noticed in a one-off interaction, they may yet offer a better model for understanding state behavior over a period of time.

Fundamental to many analyses, the idea of domestic-international linkage is to arbitrate between elites and the public, seeking to understand whose preferences are ascendant and when. Shapiro & Bloch-Elkon argue that public opinion polarization over George W. Bush’s foreign policies is consistent with elite-driven attitude change, finding that elite divisions increased from 1998-2004, with opinion trends in the mass public tracking similarly, though less pronounced.⁴² Adam Berinsky, in his study on American public support for military conflict, provides further evidence of elites cues when he finds that if elites disagree about the wisdom of intervention, then the public will be divided as well but if elites arrive at a relative consensus on conflict then the public will “give them great latitude to wage war.”⁴³

An important point suggested by the findings of Trubowitz and Seo is that domestic policymakers and foreign policy decision makers operate from a different set of incentives – while the latter are governed by the prevailing level of geopolitical risk, the former can focus primarily on domestic political incentives.⁴⁴ While this should be obvious, it makes clear that the window of ideal outcomes, what some would call “win sets,” are not always congruent.

But it is not as simple as decision makers following the foreign policy preferences of the public or the mass public mindlessly following the preferences of elites – the role of information and salience play a significant role in determining both which issues are relevant to the public and how their opinions are formed. Philip Converse, writing in “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics” (1964), claimed that “the true motivations and comprehensions of (mass) supporters may have little or nothing to do with the distinctive beliefs of the endorsed elite.”⁴⁵ William Riker argues that voting is better viewed as a tool for retraining officials and elites rather than as a mechanism to establish a sense of the “general will.”⁴⁶ Risse-Kappen echoes these findings when he writes “the *indirect effects of public opinion* are far more important...the main role of the public in liberal democracies is to influence the coalition-building processes among elite groups.”⁴⁷

In this sense, what may be consequential to understanding the relationship between the public and elites is not the presence of shared opinions (the next chapter will demonstrate how partisanship is only thinly linked to policy and ideological preferences) but nature and degree of divisions among each. In other words, members of the public will not become free traders because certain members of the elites support free trade, but because they perceive the divisions and adopt the policy orientations as an expression of those divisions, with divisions in public opinion on foreign policy track with broader divisions elsewhere.

⁴² Shapiro, Robert Y. and Bloch-Elkon, Yaeli. “Do the Facts Speak for Themselves? Partisan Disagreement as a Challenge to Democratic Competence”. *Critical Review*, 20:1-2, (2008) 115-139.

⁴³ Berinsky 2007.

⁴⁴ Trubowitz, Peter and Seo, Jungkun. “The China Card: Playing Politics with Sino-American Relations.” *Political Science Quarterly*. vol. 127, no. 2. 2012, pp. 189-211.

⁴⁵ Converse, Philip E. “The nature of belief systems in mass publics.” *Critical Review*. vol. 18, 2006, 1-74.

⁴⁶ Riker, William H. “The Two-Party System and Duverger's Law: An Essay on the History of Political Science.” *The American Political Science Review*. vol. 76, No. 4, December 1982, pp. 753-766.

⁴⁷ Risse-Kappen 1991.

Risse-Kappen finds that the “bifurcation of the American people into ‘militant internationalists’ and ‘cooperative internationalists’ is strongly correlated with ideological divisions between conservatives and liberals and, to a lesser extent, with partisanship; the cleavages have increased since the 1970s.” Egan reaches a similar finding when he writes that “liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans present Americans with highly divergent prototypes along the lines of race, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. Recent research indicates that Americans are not only aware of these demographic differences between the two political camps but that they exaggerate them in their minds.”⁴⁸ To put it more simply, under situations of polarization, the public does not follow preferences on issues, but patterns of conflict among elites.

Jacobs and Page attempt to determine who among experts, organized interest (business and labor), and public opinion/ordinary citizens is best at influencing foreign policy and find that the general public has less effect on the preferences of government officials while the business community and experts have a much more significant impact.⁴⁹ They note that their research has not considered the impact of the public on agenda setting, on policymakers’ anticipation of later, or retrospective public opinion, or on the rhetorical packaging of policy choices – all of which are important caveats to consider when considering the role of public influence on foreign policymaking.

Dominguez reaches a similar conclusion in her study on the role of endorsements in congressional primaries, finding that primary outcomes are driven by both the activities of party leaders and by candidate decisions.⁵⁰ By finding that endorsements are a critical determinant of campaign success, even when controlling for candidate funding and candidate quality, she illustrates the importance of candidate networking since the endorsements that networks could provide can be critical in determining the outcome of a race, especially in low information environments. Connecting her findings to research on elite cues reinforces the idea that elite signals can provide a critical course of information to publics in low-information environments. Such an emphasis on networking can reinforce partisan conditions as ambitious candidates seek to curry favor among elites to win an endorsement for their campaign.

The role of institutions also matters in this discussion. Risse-Kappen argues that in the United States, the practical impact of societal pressures are more limited because of the “openness” of domestic institutional structures – in other words, the ability for a variety of actors to compete with relative success also dulls the impact of these success, or as he writes, “the domestic structure does not provide institutional support for lasting consensus among the elites,” writing later that “the frequent volatility and unpredictability of American policies seems to result from constantly shifting coalitions in Washington’s domestic political consensus.”⁵¹ Chaudoin, Milner, and Tingley, as mentioned above, push back on this final argument, claiming that “If the governing party changed policy each time a different party came to office, the United States could not make credible commitments to its partners...each political party must be willing to continue the main lines of a liberal internationalist policy orientation once in office.”⁵² Yet each successive governing party frequently changes policy, even if at the margins, and even these perhaps

⁴⁸ Ibid 1991.

⁴⁹ Jacobs, Lawrence R., Page, Benjamin I. “Who Influences U.S. Foreign Policy?” *American Political Science Review*. vol. 99, no. 1, February 2005, pp. 107-123.

⁵⁰ Dominguez, Casey B.K. “Does the Party Matter? Endorsements in Congressional Primaries.” *Political Research Quarterly*. vol. 64, no. 3, 2011, pp. 534-544.

⁵¹ Risse-Kappen 1991.

⁵² Chaudoin, Milner, & Tingley, 2010.

subtle changes may send important signals about the interests and worldview of a governing party. In other words, the degree of difference between successive administrations matters more than absolute differences.

Frieden, in his historical analysis of sectoral conflict and foreign economic policy from 1914-1940, offers an example of how divisions, animated by both interest and ideology, influence foreign policy preferences of decision makers.⁵³ He links the dynamics of rising and falling influence of certain stakeholders, such as the financial sector, with U.S. interest in pursuing an internationalist economic policy. The financial sector's push (with help from allies in the State Department and Federal Reserve) towards a more activist economic policy, driven by an interest in European economic reconstruction after World War I, was not seamless and faced pushback from an anti-internationalist political block in Congress and other segments of the Executive Branch that was committed to U.S. domestic industry and worried about foreign competition. The competition was such that Frieden writes "The United States faced a bewildering array of foreign policy problems in the 1920s, and in virtually every case the tension between internationalists and nationalists defined the discussion and outcome."⁵⁴ He later writes that "The internationalists were almost always defeated, forced to compromise, or forced to adopt some form of semi-official arrangement that help the process out of the public eye" ultimately resulting in a "foreign economic policy in the 1920s and early 1930s that was dualistic and irrational."⁵⁵ He concludes that competition among domestic economic interests is what sets the opportunities and constraints within which the national interest is defined.

Hugo Meijer used a similar approach as Frieden's in his study tracking the U.S. domestic groups which sought to influence defense export control policy towards China.⁵⁶ Similar to Frieden, Meijer finds that domestic economic interests, set by certain key stakeholders (in this case U.S. tech sector who advocated an open economic relationship with China) were vital in determining the shape of policy.

A general theme across the literature which considers the relationship between elites and the public is that public attitudes are almost always elite-driven, rather than the other way around. Even audience costs are not so much the expression of public interest but rather elite fear of voter punishment. To that end, the discussion about whether elites or the public is the center of gravity, regardless of its eventual resolution, can help elucidate the agent-structure problem by showing that each variable is reinforcing.

The (Ir)Rational State

So far, most explanations of the domestic-foreign nexus, even those that rely on domestic structural factors, assume rationality, either on the part of decision makers, the interests of voters, or in state interactions. The problem with much of the literature on the domestic-foreign nexus is that it does not adequately account for advances in literature on political science, public opinion, political psychology, or behavioral factors. In his 2005 paper on the role of rationality and psychology in international relations, Jonathan Mercer writes, "Rational choice theories explain how one should reason, not how one actually reasons... a perfectly rational process can yield an undesired outcome, such as in a prisoners' dilemma,

⁵³ Frieden 1998.

⁵⁴ Ibid 1998.

⁵⁵ Ibid 1998.

⁵⁶ Meijer, Hugo. "Actors, Coalitions and the Making of Foreign Security Policy: U.S. Strategic Trade with the People's Republic of China," *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*, Vol 15, No. 3, 2015, pp. 433-475.

but this will be the product of the situation, not a property of the individual's judgement process. Rational choice theory is primarily normative, not positive."⁵⁷ It is unclear why voting publics should be subject to emotion and identity-driven motivations but not elites – or why either actor would be in a vacuum. As Putnam wrote, "A more adequate account of the domestic determinants of foreign policy and international relations must stress *politics*: parties, social classes, interest groups (both economic and noneconomic), legislators, and even public opinion and elections, not simply executive officials and institutional arrangements."⁵⁸ Those factors can explain many of the gaps in the domestic-foreign literature and can provide a more complete picture of the relationship between elites and their public that explains the formation of national interests more completely.

Frieden writes that his analysis of U.S. foreign economic policy in the interwar period provides "little support for theories that regard nation-states as rational, unitary actors in the international system...national interest is not a blank slate upon which the international system writes at will; it is internally determined by the socioeconomic evolution of the nation in question."⁵⁹ Jervis, Lebow, and Gross Stein write "leaders often have no choice but to draw upon ideas and insights that may involve the emotional rather than the calculating part of the brain."⁶⁰ Hafner-Burton, Haggard, Lake, and Victor write that "Foreign policy choices will also differ depending on factors such as the social preferences of decision makers or their cognitive motivation."⁶¹

Pushing back against rationalist assumptions of self-interest, Kahneman and Tversky found that decision makers understood utility of gains and losses from an assigned reference point that they set, rather than in terms of absolute utility, leading to significant and consistent over- and underestimation of probabilities.⁶² Hafner-Burton, Haggard, Lake, and Victor also note that "Individuals tend to make choices not with respect to total returns but with respect to deviations from the status quo."⁶³

As the following chapters will demonstrate, advances in research on affective politics and behavioral studies will show that understanding either domestic politics and international politics requires that considerations of domestic-foreign linkages move past simply identifying self-interested moves, as game theory and linkage studies would demand, and more deeply considering the fact that decision makers are products of their domestic context, a fact that binds them to all of the vagaries of domestic politics rather than standing above it. But some stand above it more than others, and some even live in the muck. And whichever it might be, that standing has meaning for how they interact on the international stage and pursue their state's interests abroad.

⁵⁷ Mercer, Jonathan. "Rationality and Psychology in International Politics." *International Organization*. Vol. 59, No. 1, Winter 2005, pp. 77-106.

⁵⁸ Putnam 1988.

⁵⁹ Frieden 1988.

⁶⁰ Jervis, Robert, Lebow, Ned, and Gross Stein, Janice. *Psychology and Deterrence* Baltimore: University of Maryland Press, 1985.

⁶¹ Hafner-Burton, Emilie, Haggard, Stephen, Lake, David A., Victor, David G. "The Behavioral Revolution and International Relations." *International Organization*, vol. 71, Supplement 2017, sp. 1-31.

⁶² Kahneman, Daniel and Tversky, Amos. "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk." *Econometrica*, vol. 47, no. 2, March 1979, pp. 263-291.

⁶³ Hafner-Burton et al. 2017.

The Influence of Partisanship?

Several authors already have connected the domestic political partisan context to how a state conducts its foreign policy. Kupchan and Trubowitz summarize the practical implication of heightened partisanship in the United States, writing “ideological polarization has a consequential effect on the conduct of foreign policy by shaping the president’s willingness and ability to pursue liberal internationalism.”⁶⁴ Snyder, Shapiro, and Bloch-Elkon argue that domestic political polarization in the United States gave the George W. Bush administration the political space in which a “preventative war” against Iraq became possible.⁶⁵ Kupchan and Trubowitz also reflect on the impact of economic growth on public policy during the Cold War, a period when bipartisanship was unusually strong, and write that “economic growth acted like a political balm, easing the class tensions sparked by the Depression and making it easier for the country’s political leaders to find common ground on foreign as well as domestic policy.”⁶⁶

Kupchan and Trubowitz offer one of the most complete discussions which link domestic partisan politics to foreign policy in their piece discussing the relationship between Cold War bipartisanship and the U.S. preference for liberal internationalism abroad. Writing towards the end of the George W. Bush administration with the U.S. involved in politically controversial wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, they argue that the domestic political coalitions that enabled a centrist Cold War consensus to prevail are beginning to disappear, and they make the case that there is a relationship between domestic political coalitions and the range of foreign policy choices available to decision makers. In making their argument, they echo Frieden’s approach of looking at domestic political coalitions (something that Trubowitz also looked at in his study of U.S. foreign policy, *Defining the National Interest*). Perhaps ominously for those who support the liberal international order, they write that “the rise of liberal internationalism in the United States corresponded with an unprecedented surge in bipartisan cooperation on matters of foreign affairs,” suggesting that liberal internationalist U.S. foreign policy is incompatible with high levels of partisanship.⁶⁷ While Frieden describes interwar U.S. foreign economic policy as erratic and irrational, Kupchan and Trubowitz write that the Cold War bipartisan consensus “provided for constancy and continuity in foreign policy even as elections shifted power from one party to the other.”⁶⁸ As bipartisan consensus eroded, U.S. administrations had increasing incentives to look towards “wedge” issues that might motivate supporters and divide their political opponents – the authors offer an example of a memo that Matthew Dowd, George W. Bush’s chief pollster wrote for Karl Rove that argued that “the most effective policies would polarizing ones – those designed to mobilize the Republican Party’s base.”⁶⁹

For the United States, it should be clear that deeper partisan divisions will impact the national interest and conduct of foreign policy. Though Kupchan and Trubowitz describe regional fragmentation as returning in ways that will require the coalition-building that Frieden describes earlier, their analysis is state-based and a more-likely scenario is addressed in a footnote where they write “Other analysts suggest that the

⁶⁴ Kupchan, Charles A. and Trubowitz, Peter L. “The Illusion of Liberal Internationalism's Revival.” *International Organization*, vol. 35, no. 1, Summer 2010, pp. 95-109.

⁶⁵ Snyder, Jack, Shapiro, Robert Y., Bloch-Elkon, Yaeli. “Free Hand Abroad, Divide and Rule at Home.” *World Politics*, vol. 61, no. 1, “International Relations Theory and the Consequences of Unipolarity,” January 2009., pp. 155-187.

⁶⁶ Kupchan and Trubowitz 2007.

⁶⁷ Ibid 2007.

⁶⁸ Ibid 2007.

⁶⁹ Ibid 2007.

digital economy is contributing to this process of balkanization by detaching workplace from geography, enabling Americans to make decisions about where they live based on lifestyle, values, and political orientation”⁷⁰ (the proliferation of supply chains should also be added to the list of contributing factors).

Kupchan and Trubowitz argue convincingly that the domestic political conditions which enabled bipartisan consensus have disappeared while, in what may offer a glimpse of future U.S. statecraft, Frieden describes interwar foreign economic policy as erratic and irrational as competing economic and political interests vied for control. In short, it will be increasingly impossible to understand the U.S. national interest without understanding its domestic politics and it will be impossible to understand its domestic politics without understanding the dynamics of political partisanship.

Conclusion

The literature demonstrates certain key factors that are essential for constructing the argument that this study hopes to make – that domestic politics matters for state behavior, that there is more than rational self-interest animating foreign policy decision makers, and that domestic partisan politics influences the political space available to decision makers. A review of the literature also demonstrates certain gaps that need to be addressed as systemic factors rather than intervening variables – the nonrationality of decision, the impact of highly polarized environments on decision making, the relative influence of political networks across different settings – which can help provide a clearer picture of the relationship between domestic politics and international politics.

The aim of the current study is to demonstrate how domestic political partisanship mediates these factors and acts as a critical influence on the decision making of foreign policy elites. The following chapter will explain what is meant by partisanship, using an expanded definition to include not only formal political parties but also connected stakeholders such as interest groups and media and thought leaders, while also drawing on advances in research on affective politics to create a more realistic picture of the domestic influences on foreign policy decision makers. In short, the influence of partisan politics preferences explanations based on affective perceptions and worldviews, rather than maximization of self-interest, making it imperative to understand both the nature of decision maker worldviews and the ways in which those worldviews are translated into policymaking. This approach can better account for domestic political contexts than current methods while also addressing the nonrationality of decision making.

⁷⁰ Ibid 2007.

Chapter 2

Understanding Partisanship

Introduction

This chapter will explain how partisanship is a missing variable that can more completely explain the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy decision making. It will begin by defining partisanship as the “strong bias in favor of one’s party and strong dislike or prejudice against other parties”⁷¹ and will then discuss its basic features with an emphasis on polarization which occurs when parties and voters become increasingly divided on ideology. It will then discuss how partisanship manifests specifically in the United States and Japan as the two subjects of this paper’s case study, followed by a comparison of partisanship in both countries to understand differences and similarities.

For an American, polarization – the degree of division between political parties – has become such a natural condition of politics, if not the country, that it is hard to imagine that the concept might be difficult to understand. The entirety of modern American political discourse is organized around partisan polarization – talking heads compete on TV representing each side of the partisan divide, “balanced” news coverage is understood to give due consideration to each partisan perspective, offices on Capitol Hill, the seat of the U.S. legislature, are vetted out depending on which party is in power, red and blue electoral maps are ubiquitous and their meaning is understood instantly, “third parties” must operate in opposition to this duopoly, even in the term in which they are referred. If an American is asked why their country is so divided, the instinctual answer will almost always begin with a partisan division. Partisanship has become such a natural, even correct, situation for Americans that for them there is no difference between the political and the partisan.

The challenge, then, in explaining partisan polarization is for a non-American audience to understand that this phenomenon matters and for American audiences to understand that partisanship may not always matter elsewhere as much as it might in their own country, if it even matters at all. But there is no disputing its political importance – as Bafumi and Shapiro write, in the United States, partisanship is more connected to salient policy issues than at any time over the past thirty years. At its essence, partisan polarization does not mean that political actors and activists froth at the mouth when they hear the name of the opposing party or shift their policy positions as dramatically as U.S. Republicans have in identifying Russia as the country’s greatest geopolitical threat in 2012 to making apologies when the same country is demonstrated to interfere in U.S. presidential elections in 2016. Surveys of the American public consistently show mass support for what would be called a “liberal internationalist” foreign policy: support for alliances, military deterrence, liberalized trade, and commerce. But these preferences are not usually reflected in most of the preferences of party elites or activists, nor are they always reflected in U.S. foreign policy. There are clearly certain intervening forces that mediate whose preferences are privileged and when.

This chapter will make the argument that partisan polarization is an essential factor for understanding the ascendancy of foreign policy preferences. The basic definition of partisanship that will be used here, described more thoroughly below, is to mean the dynamics and machinations of political parties and their supporters contesting for power and policy, with polarization representing the degree of opposition

⁷¹ Nolan McCarthy. Polarization: What Everyone Needs to Know. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. pp. 2

between the parties. This is an intentionally broad definition that attempts to reconcile partisanship's instrumental and rational aspects with its affective and social aspects, both of which are necessary to understand how it is brought to bear on foreign policy decision making.

What is partisanship?

Nolan McCarthy offers a conventional definition when he defines partisanship as “strong bias in favor of one’s party and strong dislike or prejudice against other parties.”⁷² Koger et al write in their 2010 paper “real American parties are broader and less hierarchical than the formal party...a modern ‘party’ includes interest groups, consultants, 527s, and perhaps even partisan media. This more expansive party...has been dubbed the extended party, the party matrix, the expanded party, the party in the street, and an informal party organization.”⁷³ A similar definition is used by Zachary Albert, who writes that in his study, “parties are viewed as coalitions of formal party actors (e.g. politicians) connected to substantively or ideologically similar interest groups, think tanks, media outlets, and political activists...affiliated groups are considered ‘policy demanders’ who – by banding together with like-minded groups and investing in a single party over time – can increase their policy returns in the long run.”⁷⁴

As outlined above, partisanship is when political actors are accountable to a broad group of likeminded cohorts generally aligned towards a common political outcome. It is an essentially social function with a political purpose, most often (but not necessarily) organized around a formal organization towards this purpose. An important implication of McCarthy’s definition, specifically the “strong dislike or prejudice against other parties,” is that partisanship is not only the affirmation of one’s own agenda but the rejection of opposing agendas for no other reason than that they are in opposition, especially in cases of political polarization.

This definition is intentionally broad. Looking for comparisons to the American system will only reveal that the American case is mostly an outlier – many have observed the unique role and outsized importance that political parties play in the American system and research has shown that party loyalties are more common among the Americans and British than seen in other democracies. Partisanship is usually organized around political parties but not always – it is not unusual for actors to be united informally and divisions can often exist within parties that can sometimes be even more brutal than those between parties. They can be organized around self-interest or ideas but often both. Partisans may be organized around political policy differences, or they may adapt a more emotional attachment. They may be committed, ambivalent, or prepared to fight to the death. Partisan identities may usurp intensely personal signifiers like racial, religious, or gender identities or they may be barely enough to drag someone to the local polling station on election day.

There are also complexities that need to be teased out to understand partisanship’s relevance for policy. There are two forms of partisanship: the first is instrumental and relates to the machinations of political parties and elites to achieve political power, and the second is affective and relates to partisanship at the mass level. Though the self-interested and ostensibly rational political aims of partisans have led many to

⁷² Nolan McCarthy. *Polarization: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. pp. 2

⁷³ Koger, Gregory, Masket, Seth, Noel, Hans. “Cooperative Party Factions in American Politics.” *American Politics Research*, vol. 38, no. 1, January 2010, pp. 33-53.

⁷⁴ Albert, Zachary. “Partisan Policymaking in the Extended Party Network: The Case of Cap-and-Trade Regulations” *Political Research Quarterly*, Research Article, 2019.

use a rationalist lens to understand partisanship, partisanship's social functions demand that it also be thought of as a social psychological condition. Pachuki and Breiger describe this gap as a "cultural hole" when they refer specifically to the ways in which contemporary work on culture can help inform social network analysis.⁷⁵ This is essentially the issue with attempts to understand the implications of domestic politics for international state behavior – the political and the social have become analytically delinked even though each could provide important insights into how these levels can be mutually constitutive.

The traditional view of political party development describes partisanship as a self-interested, rational act. Parties were seen to form around sides of a given social cleavage like religion, class, ethnicity, or regionalism, with the assumption that voters were essentially rational when they selected a party, choosing one that could best represent their self-interests. But since the early 1960s, much research has found that class-based/interest-based voting has been replaced by ideological issue-based voting and is responsible for many of the partisan realignments in the United States and western Europe since the 1960s. Ronald Inglehart summarized the trend well when he wrote that "western politics are coming to polarize according to social class less, and according to values more."⁷⁶ Flanagan also summarized the dichotomy between economic- and identity-based voting and its basic stakeholders well: "If the salient issues are economic, then this competition takes the form of a contest between the haves and the have-nots...If the salient issues relate more to basic social values, then the competition assumes the form of a contest between the old values and the new, with the older and less educated strata clinging to the old values while the younger and more educated strata adopt new values."⁷⁷

In 1971, Inglehart was one of the first to capture this trend when he discussed the relationship between need attainment and party identification in a consideration of the rationalist model of party identification where voters align with the party that best expresses their economic interests.⁷⁸ He used Europe's postwar economic recovery as the background, writing that individuals of this period "have been socialized during a long period of unprecedentedly high affluence. For them, economic security may be taken for granted, as the supply of water or the air we breathe once could."⁷⁹ For younger voters growing up in this context, "post-bourgeois" values such as the need for belonging (social group identification) and intellectual needs (value-based voting) would take priority over economic security or class-based voting, believing that "political cleavages will no longer be based primarily on the familiar economic conflicts – but will, increasingly, be polarized according to differences in underlying value priorities."⁸⁰ He concluded by writing, "The new Left-Right continuum resembles the old in that it pits the forces of change against those of the status quo – but the values motivating change relate to life styles rather than [economic] acquisition, and the social bases supporting change show a corresponding shift"⁸¹ (it is interesting that he

⁷⁵ Pachucki, Mark A. and Breiger, Ronald L. "Cultural Holes: Beyond Relationality in Social Networks and Culture." *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 36, 2010, pp. 205-224.

⁷⁶ Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

⁷⁷ Scott C. Flanagan. "Value Cleavages, Economic Cleavages, and the Japanese Voter". *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (May, 1980), pp. 177-206.

⁷⁸ Ronald Inglehart. "The Silent Revolution in Europe: Intergenerational Change in Post-Industrial Societies". *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (Dec., 1971), pp. 991-1017.

⁷⁹ Ibid 1971.

⁸⁰ Ibid 1971.

⁸¹ Ibid 1971.

still places political divisions on a left-right continuum despite the apparent switch from interest-based to value-based voting).

From Inglehart's work, as well as from considerable research that followed, it becomes clear that political participation and partisanship drew from more than self-interested need attainment and cut more towards personal self-fulfillment, values, and social group identification. The social dimensions of partisanship introduce emotional and affective dynamics which are essential to understanding its implications for international relations. Lilianna Mason of the University of Maryland describes partisanship well when she writes:

*A partisan behaves more like a sports fan than like a banker choosing an investment. Partisans feel emotionally connected to the welfare of the party; and when the party is threatened, they become angry and work to conquer the threat, even if they disagree with some of the issue positions taken by the party. Then connection between partisan and party is an emotional and social one, as well as a logical one*⁸²

She goes on to write that stronger partisan identities lead to higher levels of bias, activism, and anger. Joseph Daniel Ura and Christopher R. Ellis write that "Partisanship is...the prism through which political information passes before emerging as observable behavior," underlining its importance in how voters understand the world and develop their preferences and interests.⁸³ Jordan Ragusa (2016) writes that "Among the political structures that might reinforce specific actions, none is more consequential than political parties."

Those social dynamics can have profound implications for the meaning of political questions. Duffy, Page, and Young describe how greater immersion in a group prompts greater conformity to its norms, implying that those more closely tied to political parties and to partisan politics more broadly will be especially subject to social identity pressures.⁸⁴ Much of the current research supports that possibility. Gries et al (2012) write that Americans think about the terms "liberal" and "conservative" in primarily cultural terms rather than ideological.⁸⁵ Describing modern partisan polarization in the United States, New York University's Patrick Egan goes so far as to say that "for more and more Americans, politics has become key to the self-concept, leading 'Democrat' and 'Republican' as well as 'liberal' and 'conservative' to become identities in themselves that have meanings far beyond shared policy preferences."⁸⁶ Schildkraut and Marotta, in their study of the relationship between race and political

⁸² Mason, Lilianna. "I Disrespectfully Disagree": The Differential Effects of Partisan Sorting on Social and Issue Polarization". *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (January 2015), pp. 128-145.

⁸³ Joseph Daniel Ura and Christopher R. Ellis. "Partisan Moods: Polarization and the Dynamics of Mass Party Preferences". *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (Jan., 2012), pp. 277-291.

⁸⁴ Duffy, Margaret, Page, Janis Teruggi, Young, Rachel. "Obama as Anti-American: Visual Folklore in Right-Wing Forwarded E-mails and Construction of Conservative Social Identity." *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 125, no. 496, Spring 2012, pp. 177-203.

⁸⁵ Gries, Peter H., Crowson, Michael H., and Cai, Huanjian. "God, guns, and . . . China? How ideology impacts American attitudes and policy preferences toward China." *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, vol. 12, 2012, pp. 1-40

⁸⁶ Patrick J. Egan. "Identity as Dependent Variable: How Americans Shift Their Identities to Better Align With Their Politics". Unpublished Manuscript, September 10, 2018.

attitudes among millennials, find that partisanship is the key factor (along with race) in determining political opinions.⁸⁷

This has very practical effects for polarization as Theriault and Rohde⁸⁸ and Jordan Ragusa demonstrates in his work on partisan cohorts and the “Gingrich senators.”⁸⁹ Ragusa’s argument (whose approach and methodology is more relevant for this research) is based on social learning theory, in which “individuals internalize norms and behavioral routines by modeling the actions of proximate actors...most human behaviors are learned unintentionally ‘through the influence of example.’” By measuring a senator’s ideological extremism with the absolute value of a member’s DW-NOMINATE score, with refinements to select for senators who first served in the House of Representatives and after the 96th Congress (the speakership of Republican Newt Gingrich), he is able to conclude that the Senate’s polarization is “largely a consequence of the replacement of moderate lawmakers with ideological extremists who were first elected to the House of Representatives” and demonstrates the socializing effect of partisan learning. He speculates that the process of this socialization begins first with learning party loyalty (the instrumental rationality of the effectiveness of teamwork), followed by learning party rivalry (witnessing the rewarding of partisan conflict), and the result of representing more homogenous congressional districts where there are fewer incentives to moderate or compromise.

There is also much to suggest that bipartisanship is not a natural condition but the product of incentives and circumstance. Given that many have pointed to bipartisanship as enabling the liberal internationalist political coalitions that supported much of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War, the conditions under which it emerges should have important implications for the domestic political space for certain foreign policy choices. Trubowitz and Mellow argue that bipartisanship “is best understood as an electoral strategy that politicians use to broaden their appeal to voters outside of their party – to secure the support of so-called middle-of-the-road or swing voters by establishing a record as moderate and independent public servants”⁹⁰ – in effect, bipartisanship is a rational choice to attract voters. Implicit in this argument is that bipartisanship is not a natural condition and possible only when incentives permit. In other words, if incentives lead towards greater partisan polarization, then politicians will select that option. More specifically, they find that unemployment has a strong and inverse relationship with bipartisanship as politicians aim to tend to the interests of their parties’ base, bipartisan cooperation is more likely in periods of divided government as moderates hold greater leverage as “dealmakers,” bipartisanship is not impacted by major international crises (a somewhat significant finding given the common assumption that the Soviet threat led Democrats and Republicans to cooperate on foreign policy during the Cold War), bipartisanship is less likely to occur when parties are regionally polarized, and finally the congressional reforms of the 1970s made bipartisanship more difficult. McCarthy also points out that the Republican

⁸⁷ Deborah J. Schildkraut and Satia A. Marotta. “Assessing the Political Distinctiveness of White Millennials: How Race and Generation Shape Racial and Political Attitudes in a Changing America”. *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 4, No. 5, Immigration and Changing Identities (August 2018), pp. 158-187.

⁸⁸ Theriault, Sean M. and Rohde, Daniel W. “The Gingrich Senators and Party Polarization in the U.S. Senate.” *The Journal of Politics*. vol. 73, no. 4, 2011, pp. 1011-1024.

⁸⁹ Ragusa, Jordan. “Partisan Cohorts, Polarization, and the Gingrich Senators.” *American Politics Research*. vol 44, no. 2, 2016, pp: 296-325.

⁹⁰ Trubowitz, Peter and Mellow, Nicole. “‘Going Bipartisan’: Politics by Other Means”. *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol 120, Issue3, Fall 2005, pp 433-453.

Party was frequently a minority party during the more bipartisan era that aligned with the Cold War, supporting the suggestion that bipartisanship is the product of incentives instead of principle.⁹¹

But partisanship works in different ways in different places and at different times – the ways in which modern American polarization work are hardly the only ways in which partisan dynamics can manifest themselves, nor is the American model the inevitable outcome of partisanship, nor does it exhaust all the possibilities. Risse-Kappen summarizes this well when he writes “similarities in public attitudes across various countries do not necessarily lead to similar policies.”⁹² Partisanship exists wherever there is politics and whenever actors can organize themselves to achieve political goals, and it accordingly manifests itself in a variety of ways across different contexts.

Risse-Kappen and Potter & Baum⁹³ take an institutional approach to explain this heterogeneity, arguing that domestic political systems mediate the ways in which public sentiment influences foreign policy elites and consequentially state behavior. Abstract principles may also influence how a country’s voters and activists align – while Americans are intimately familiar with the left/right dichotomies egalitarianism versus individualism, the axis of Japanese debates more often turn on questions of pacifism and issues of centralized bureaucratic state power versus decentralized “people” power. For reasons of circumstance and history, questions of individualism (at least as the idea has been understood in the United States) have never exerted much force on political debates in Japan and even U.S. debates on economic fundamentals like public spending do not correlate with ostensible liberal-conservative dichotomies (that a considerable volume of U.S. political science literature takes this spectrum for granted as a universal condition among liberal democracies is a discussion for another day).

Risse-Kappen takes an approach that looks at domestic institutions when he argues that “the impact of public opinion does not depend so much on the specific issues involved or on the particular pattern of public attitudes as on the *domestic structure* and the *coalition-building process* in the respective country” (italics original), in other words “domestic structures determine how political systems respond to societal demands.” He hypothesizes that different policy outcomes across countries with comparable trends in mass public opinion can be explained by variances in domestic structures rather than the “international status of states.” He (correctly) points out the importance of identifying how public opinion and societal groups influence the policymaking process in different ways and at different stages, with some groups possessing more interest and agency in influencing the process at different stages than other, perhaps less interested groups. Suggesting the importance of political space, he writes “mass public opinion set broad and unspecified limits to the foreign policy choices.” Within this, he includes the structure of society as one of three factors influencing this process (along with political institutions and policy networks), in which he includes “polarization, the strength of social organization, and the degree to which societal pressure can be mobilized.” He concludes that “domestic structures are the intervening variable between public opinion and foreign policy.”

⁹¹ McCarthy, 2019.

⁹² Risse-Kappen, 1991.

⁹³ Baum and Potter, 2008.

Huckfeldt, Ikeda, and Urban Pappi explore patterns of disagreement between the Germany, Japan, and the United States, focusing on the personal experience of political disagreement among individual citizens.⁹⁴ They conclude that socially integrated citizens provide a necessary dynamic in democratic decision making at an individual level, generating the potential for deliberation and reflection in electorates. In a potentially important finding for partisanship in the United States, they postulate that “a society that is politically polarized along a social cleavage that serves to segregate patterns of social interaction, we should expect levels of political agreement to increase.”⁹⁵ A possible inference from this may be that increasing partisan identification and political coherence among partisans may indicate deepening social cleavages that were not readily apparent.

There are certainly similarities in the mechanics of partisanship – voters’ ability to map party ideologies, receive cues from elites, and change value patterns – which suggest that there is more than enough to compare voters in both liberal democracies against each other. But there are also significant differences in how voters in each country use those mechanics – in short, the United States has intensified its partisan polarization while Japan responds with ambivalence – that suggest that deeper explanations are needed than settling the question with the answer of domestic political institutions or electoral rules. An especially important difference between American voters and Japanese voters is that the latter does not identify nearly as strongly with its political parties as the former does; the presence of activists that have become so defining of the American political scene does not nearly exist at the same levels in Japan. As several studies have noted, when partisans feel more strongly identified with their party, they are more likely to act on behalf of the party.^{96,97,98} Without such identification, as in Japan, voters will likely remain somewhat detached from parties and inhibit the development of political polarization. If voters can be compared in these ways, then it would reason that elites in each country as well as their relationship with voters can be distinguished in similar ways.

Yet it may be that there are some more fundamental social or psychological traits which motivate people’s political dispositions. Bayram finds that cosmopolitans (those who identify with an international community or values) are “dutiful compliers” with legal obligations while noncosmopolitans are instrumental compliers and employ a cost-benefit approach to compliance.⁹⁹ There may also be other, more abstract and fundamental divisions between Democrats and Republicans that may speak to potentially different ways of looking at order itself. In his study of policy networks related to cap-and-trade, Zackary Albert writes “Democrats are more likely to form ties in a hierarchical way – with prominent organizations influencing less prominent copartisans without being influenced in turn – while

⁹⁴ Huckfeldt, Robert, Ikeda, Ken’ichi, Urban-Pappi, Franz. “Patterns of Disagreement in Democratic Politics: Comparing Germany, Japan, and the United States.” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 49, no. 3, July 2005, pp. 497-514.

⁹⁵ Ibid 2005.

⁹⁶ Kathleen A. Ethier and Kay Deaux. “Negotiating social identity when contexts change: Maintaining identification and responding to threat”. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 67(2), Aug 1994, 243-251.

⁹⁷ Leonie Huddy. “From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory”. *Political Psychology* Vol. 22, No. 1 (Mar., 2001), pp. 127-156.

⁹⁸ Leonie Huddy, Lilianna Mason, Lene Aarøe. “Expressive Partisanship: Campaign Involvement, Political Emotion, and Partisan Identity”. *American Political Science Review*, 109(1), (2015) 1-17.

⁹⁹ Bayram, A. Burcu. “Due Deference: Cosmopolitan Social Identity and the Psychology of Legal Obligation in International Politics.” *International Organization*, vol. 71, supplement S1, April 2017, pp. S137-S163.

two Republicans are likely to form mutual influence ties.”¹⁰⁰ Skinner, Masket, and Dulio make interesting observations about the differences between Democrats and Republicans (and perhaps by extension, liberals and conservatives) and their relationship to hierarchy: they write “On the individual level, Republicans appear to be more comfortable than Democrats in leaving important party decisions up to party leaders, while Democrats seem to prefer aspects of internal democracy... Democrats feel comfortable engaging in formal recognition of diversity – Republicans avoid it when they can. Democrats demand open discussion and representativeness; Republicans prefer top-down leadership and demonstrations of unity.”¹⁰¹ Close observers of politics will see such findings are intuitively true, not just in the United States but also elsewhere (it may, in a very abstract sense, help explain the clumsy heterogeneity of Japan’s myriad left/liberal opposition parties).

An important caveat is a warning of essentialism’s limits. Values are not fatalistic or determinative – habit cannot be confused with culture. Essentialist discussions of “Asian values” have little explicative worth and even less normative worth. The point in discussing values is not to brand essential characteristics on each culture to create a “that’s just the way things are” short cut, but to follow the lava lamp of which values and interests were preponderant, when, and why.

Partisanship in the United States

The period under investigation is significant because the “Republican Revolution” of 1994 is widely recognized as marking the collapse of the bipartisan “Cold War consensus” and its replacement with the hyperpartisanship that governs policymaking in the United States. As Shapiro and Bloch-Elkon noted in 2008, “differences between Democrats and Republicans, and liberals and conservatives, have been as high as 70 percentage points. By comparison, partisan differences did not reach more than 20 points during the Korean War.”¹⁰² Trubowitz and Mellow write “Most voters today have seen virtually nothing but the erosion of cooperation during their voting lifetime.”¹⁰³ Kupchan and Trubowitz write “The United States’ deepening polarization means that its leaders can no longer confidently expect to win strong, bipartisan support for the ambitious mix of power and partnership of the Cold War era.”¹⁰⁴ Regarding the intersection of party choice and foreign affairs, Daniel Willick finds that “differences of opinion regarding the Cold War often reflect and reinforce political conflict based on issues of social class.”¹⁰⁵ Put differently, the Cold War gave new language to divides that previously existed rather than creating new divides.

The ways in which this happened frequently draw on Inglehart’s findings from 1971 where economic and class-based voting are replaced with cultural and value-based voting. Like Inglehart, Manza, Hout, and Brooks discussed the possibility that class politics usually associated with industrial capitalism gave way to newer types of social and attitudinal cleavages, looking at the relationship between social structures, social action, and political institutions, as well as the social bases of citizens’ political behavior.¹⁰⁶ They

¹⁰⁰ Albert 2019.

¹⁰¹ Skinner, Richard M., Masket, Seth E., Dulio, David A. “527 Committees and the Political Party Network.” *American Politics Research*, vol. 40, no. 1, 2012, pp. 60-84.

¹⁰² Shapiro and Bloch-Elkon, 2008.

¹⁰³ Trubowitz and Mellow, 2005.

¹⁰⁴ Kupchan and Trubowitz, 2007.

¹⁰⁵ Willick, 1970.

¹⁰⁶ Jeff Manza, Michael Hout and Clem Brooks. “Class Voting in Capitalist Democracies Since World War II: Dealignment, Realignment, or Trendless Fluctuation?” *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 21 (1995), pp. 137-162.

describe five possible explanations that have been offered to account for this shift: 1) social mobility and the growth of the middle class, 2) emergence of new forms of division that have replaced the salience of class, 3) “cognitive mobilization” approaches, 4) value change approaches associated with the emergence of a “second left,” and 5) changes in party strategies and evolving structures in global capitalism. Bafumi and Shapiro) have also presented evidence demonstrating that partisanship has become more ideological and issue-based since the end of the Vietnam War and is visible in the strength of partisan voting and while U.S. voters are more strongly anchored by left/right ideological dichotomies, partisanship is not only rooted in economic divides but increasingly by social and religious values.¹⁰⁷

As the evolution to value- and identity-based voting took hold, the role of social dynamics in partisan identification became more apparent. In two separate papers in 1997, Clem Brooks and Jeff Manza found that new ideological conflicts such as race, religion, gender, and more have developed alongside social group-based cleavages (like economic class) in the U.S. electorate,¹⁰⁸ and that “party identification and partisan affect substantially mediate the effects of social group membership, views of the welfare state, and attitudes toward social issues,”¹⁰⁹ tracking not just the role of value-based voting, but also the social and affective aspects that come with partisan identification.

But more than transferring from economic-based voting to value-based voting, the literature makes a strong case that values do not define partisanship so much as partisanship defines values – and even personal identity. One of the earliest studies that suggested this possibility was written by George Belknap and Angus Campbell that described the results of a survey that considered the relationship between political party identification and attitudes towards foreign policy. Their findings essentially demonstrated that division of views on foreign policy questions was consistently related to partisan identification with views reflecting the positions held each party’s leadership. Interestingly, they find that attitudinal differences are most pronounced when party identification is associated with high information level. As they write, “one cannot escape the implication that party identification carries with it a sense of shared values.” As they acknowledge, their findings beg the question of whether people identify with a given party because of ideological predilection or if they hold certain ideological preferences based on party identification. Importantly, they found that respondents divide more sharply on issues which “personalize” party conflict than they do on strictly ideological questions, suggesting that “people are responding primarily as Republicans or Democrats rather than as isolationists, interventionists, imperialists, or whatever.”

The findings of Patrick Egan’s “Identity as Dependent Variable: How Americans Shift Their Identities to Better Align with Their Politics” takes this even further and finds that partisanship actually influences identities, including ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and class with significant shares of Americans changing their identities to fit their partisan affiliation rather than the reverse which has been the focus of much of the research in this area.¹¹⁰ He writes that “the more that an identity group’s members are

¹⁰⁷ Joseph Bafumi and Robert Y. Shapiro. “A New Partisan Voter”. *The Journal of Politics* , Vol. 71, No. 1 (Jan., 2009), pp. 1-24.

¹⁰⁸ Clem Brooks and Jeff Manza. “Social Cleavages and Political Alignments: U.S. Presidential Elections, 1960 to 1992”. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 62, No. 6 (Dec., 1997), pp. 937-946.

¹⁰⁹ Clem Brooks and Jeff Manza. “The Social and Ideological Bases of Middle-Class Political Realignment in the United States, 1972 to 1992”. *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 62, No. 2 (Apr., 1997), pp. 191-208.

¹¹⁰ Egan 2018.

concentrated in one of the two political groups, the greater the differences in rates at which political group members tend to switch their identities to align with political group prototypes.”¹¹¹

Exactly how this trend to values-based voting occurred – whether it is a bottom-up phenomenon that reflects social divisions or is elite-driven – is more uncertain and the subject of academic debate. For example, Highton and Kam look at the causal relationship between partisanship (party identification) and issue orientations and find that the causal flow is dynamic and context dependent.¹¹² There is likely something of a feedback loop at work since arguing that elite polarization has given the public an example to follow begs the question of how elites became divided. Arguing that elites pander to existing social cleavages fails to explain how public polarization occurred and became politically salient. An important corollary relevant to this study is how much elite polarization is reflected in the polarization (if any) of *foreign policy* elites.

Snyder et al argue that economic elites have invented political “wedge issues” to attract voters to support their economic program even though voters would have no material benefit from supporting such a program which limits progressive taxation and demands state subsidies for capital.¹¹³ One example is the race/ethnic card, used, as they argue, by upper-caste Hindus who have exploited ethnic tensions to protect their economic position and economic elites in the American South playing the race card to prevent poor whites from allying with poor blacks. They also include “cultural” issues like abortion or same-sex marriage as similar cleavage issues. They argue that George W. Bush’s foreign policy served as a wedge issue, where elites emphasized looming foreign threats to overshadow domestic class divisions, albeit a threat that resonated with poorer classes. It is an argument that makes considerable inferences from public polling data, but never establishes causality.

Trubowitz and Seo also consider the possibility that foreign policy can act as a wedge issue. They write that foreign policy setbacks create “strategic opportunities” for opposition parties to put the president and his party on the defensive, suggesting that foreign policy can be used as a “wedge issue.”¹¹⁴ They consider foreign policy issues to be an example of “wedge issue politics,” which they describe as “any calculated use of those policies or social prejudices to divide the opposing party’s political coalition, other by appealing to its core constituencies or by peeling away “swing” voters and groups who might otherwise align with it.” They also make the claim that “party leaders’ use of Sino-American relations as a tool of partisan politics came at considerable cost to America’s geopolitical interests and/or civil liberties.”

Adding further nuance to the ways in which interest-based voting is replaced with value-based voting, Geoffrey Layman and Thomas Carsey have described the effect as one of “conflict extension” rather than ideological realignment because “there has been a limited mass response to the growth of elite-level party polarization.”¹¹⁵ Conflict extension is essentially the idea that rather than voters replacing a position on one issue dimension with another position (like replacing class-based voting with value-based voting), voters instead adopt polarized views on cross-cutting issue dimensions like culture and social welfare,

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Benjamin Highton and Cindy D. Kam. “The Long-Term Dynamics of Partisanship and Issue Orientations”. *The Journal of Politics* 73, no. 1 (January 2011): 202-215.

¹¹³ Snyder et al, 2007.

¹¹⁴ Trubowitz and Seo, 2012.

¹¹⁵ Geoffrey C. Layman and Thomas M. Carsey. “Party Polarization and ‘Conflict Extension’ in the American Electorate”. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Oct., 2002), pp. 786-802.

following cues from party elites: “When party elites are unable to limit partisan conflict to a single, dominant issue dimension and are pressured to take consistently liberal or conservative positions on numerous issue agendas, this signals to party identifiers that they should do so as well.” They argue that this approach better captures the multidimensionality of mass issue attitudes, which leads them to their hypothesis that the only people that they expect to respond to elite polarization are party identifiers who are especially strong partisans who are aware of elite polarization, bringing their own views into line with developments observed among party elites. Their finding that “if Democrats and Republican elites take positions on multiple issue dimensions that are consistently liberal and consistently conservative, respectively, then politically-aware party identifiers will receive cues that their views on different issue agendas should go together and they should move toward polarized stands on each of those dimensions” explain why Republican voters so readily abandoned free trade – even at the cost of their own interests – once Trump and his protectionist outlook were elected.

Lupton, Myers, and Thornton meanwhile argue that “political sophistication constrains elites’ attitudes to a single ideological dimension, whereas much of the mass public is not fully capable of making the necessary connections between ideology and issue attitudes.”¹¹⁶ Like Layman and Carsey, they describe elite-level politics and issues as being structured “unidimensionally” along a traditional left/right liberal/conservative spectrum, while the public possesses more multidimensional issue attitudes that inhibit ideological thinking. As they write, “much of the mass public does not possess the cognitive and motivational characteristics that connect ideology and issue attitudes.” As they write in their conclusion, their findings “bring into sharper relief the distinction between the politically interested, involved, and knowledgeable and those in the mass public who find politics too abstract and uninteresting.” Though the authors write that elites “think of the world in abstract, ‘liberal’ and ‘conservative’ terms,” the discussions in Walter Russell Mead’s work on the history of U.S. foreign policy¹¹⁷ and Campbell & Chollett’s piece describing Washington, DC’s foreign policy “tribes”¹¹⁸ suggest that reality is more complicated, at least as it relates to foreign policy. Indeed, for all of the discussion that these authors and others offer of elite attitudes and discord, they offer little discussion to suggest how elite attitudes become divided in the first place except a cursory (and tautological) mention of their interest and involvement in politics.

Joseph Ura & Christopher Ellis offer a possible elite-driven explanation for polarization that returns to economic-based voting cleavages, arguing that it may be initiated partly by the parties’ different responses to political-economic conditions. Their findings also echo the importance of elite polarization, as they write “partisan polarization may more generally emerge from one party’s more rapid adjustment to an emerging state of the world or a new issue, rather than a more fundamental divergence in political worldviews.”¹¹⁹

The relationship between the level of information held by the public with their division on a given policy issue is taken up in later research. Information – both what it is and how it flows – is important for understanding polarization. Shapiro & Bloch-Elkon found that U.S. partisans disagreed on even the basic

¹¹⁶ Robert N. Lupton, William M. Myers, and Judd R. Thornton. “Political Sophistication and the Dimensionality of Elite and Mass Attitudes, 1980-2004”. *The Journal of Politics*, Volume 77, Number 2 2015.

¹¹⁷ Walter Russell Mead. *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*. New York: Knopf, 2001.

¹¹⁸ Kurt M. Campbell and Derek Chollet (2007) *The New Tribalism: Cliques and the Making of U.S. Foreign Policy*, *The Washington Quarterly*, 30:1, 191-203.

¹¹⁹ Ura and Ellis, 2012.

facts of the Iraq War, like whether or not the United States was making significant progress in its goals, whether Saddam Hussein held weapons of mass destruction, and Iraq's connections with al Qaeda.¹²⁰ Potter & Baum, for example, find that "elite discord – including discord among multiple parties – serves as a heuristic which signals to voters that they should engage with the policy process... elite discord can produce a 'polarization effect' by sparking more critical media coverage, resulting in heightened attention from the public."¹²¹ Grace Skogstad writes that parties and politicians have "found themselves unable to realize their activist agendas without the informational resources and acquiescence or active support of social actors,"¹²² indicating that cue-giving works in both directions, rather than elites sending cues to the general public or their political base.

Regarding the public, Berinsky notes "significant segments of the mass public possessed little knowledge of the most basic facts of these conflicts. Thus, there is little evidence that citizens had the information needed to make cost/benefit calculations when deciding whether to support or oppose military action... But when prominent political actors take divergent stands on the wisdom of intervention, the public divides as well."¹²³ Returning to the findings from Belknap and Campbell's research, this implies that if information is more readily available then the public will receive it and divide accordingly. It begs the question of who becomes a "high information" respondent – Berinsky's findings would indicate that anyone who is receptive to elite cues would likely qualify. As Berinsky summarizes, "The mass public is rational only to the extent that prominent political actors provide a rational lead."¹²⁴

Brooks and Manza account for the importance of prior beliefs and biases to the formation of policy attitudes. Their analysis of changes in policy attitudes in response to government action during a recession found that partisanship is the key factor in explaining changing attitudes, specifically among Republicans who moved even more quickly towards opposing government responsibility during the recession of 2009 than Democrats or Independents in moving towards their preferred responses.¹²⁵ They chart trends in partisanship, finding that partisan differences declined during the 1980s, rose during the 1990s, dropped again early in the George W. Bush administration, and increased sharply in 2008, reaching an all-time high in 2010. They write that "it is reasonable to see party-level polarization operating as the key background factor shaping voter-level reasoning about government."

Conversely, Bullock argues that public attitudes are affected as much by information as by cues from party elites. As he notes, "Party elites rarely take a position without trying to frame it in a way that will garner support for it."¹²⁶ Relevant for opinion formation among the U.S. public on issues related to Japan, he writes that "To the extent that party cues have large effects in nonexperimental settings, it may be because citizens often know nothing else about the policies and candidates that they are being asked to

¹²⁰ Shapiro and Bloch-Elkon, 2008.

¹²¹ Baum and Porter 2008.

¹²² Skogstad, Grace. "Policy Networks and Policy Communities: Conceptual Evolution and Governing Realities." In: Workshop on "Canada's Contribution to Comparative Theorizing." Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario. 2005.

¹²³ Berinsky, 2007.

¹²⁴ Ibid. 2007.

¹²⁵ Clem Brooks and Jeff Manza. "A Broken Public? Americans' Responses to the Great Recession". *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 78, No. 5 (October 2013), pp. 727-748.

¹²⁶ John G. Bullock. "Elite Influence on Public Opinion in an Informed Electorate". *American Political Science Review*. vol. 105, no. 3, 2011, pp. 496–515.

judge.” In other words, elite cues may matter more on issues where citizens are ill-informed. Boudreau and MacKenzie also explore the relationship between cues and information, writing that “policy information counteracts the effects of party cues...partisans shift their opinions away from their party’s positions when policy information provides a compelling reason for doing so.”¹²⁷

Zackary Albert, in a finding relevant for a partisan network model, argues that it is not so much whether cues are passed from elites to the public or vice versa, but that they are passed among common partisans, writing “the advocacy of particular ideas by trusted partisan groups should signal to members that the ideas fit with partisan goals and have intrinsic electoral value for those who advocate them.”¹²⁸

Regardless of the directionality of cue taking, several studies have shown that once the process begins it perpetuates itself, deepening and ultimately changing the ways in which citizens and elites process information and make decisions. Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus elucidated the consequences of elite polarization and suggest that it produces a feedback effect between elites and voters. They argue that polarization dramatically alters the way that citizens form opinions, effectively intensifying the impact of elite endorsements of ideas and decreasing the impact of substantive information which in turn increases confidence in less substantively-grounded opinions.¹²⁹ By utilizing partisan motivated reasoning theory, which suggests that partisans will view their party’s frame as more effective than a frame not sponsored by their party or a frame sponsored by an opposing party, their findings lead to the conclusion that “partisans in a polarized environment follow their party regardless of the type or strength of the argument the party makes.” This somewhat contradicts Bullock’s findings since they emphasize the role of prior polarization on partisans assessing new information. Their findings implicitly suggest a feedback loop, whereby stronger partisan identification leads to increased motivated reasoning and stronger party cue effects, or more bluntly, “elite polarization fundamentally changes the manner in which citizens make decisions.” (Bafumi and Shapiro came to a similar conclusion when they wrote “once the process of polarization begins, there are motivations that lead it to worsen¹³⁰). This impacts decision makers as well: DellaVigna found that “the framing of choices has a strong influence over decision making: decision makers prize the familiar, available, or salient”¹³¹ while Albert writes that members of Congress do not “seek out the most accurate information, but rather the most useful information in terms of furthering their individual and partisan goals.”¹³²

Crucially, partisan divisions in the United States are distinct from divisions on policy choices – or more simply, partisans are not divided over policy and the case study will show that policy preferences are not significantly linked to party. Hafner-Burton, Haggard, Lake, and Victor write that “individuals appear to be guided by dispositions rooted in emotion, social psychology, and even genetic differences.”¹³³ Koger,

¹²⁷ Cheryl Boudreau and Scott A. MacKenzie. “Informing the Electorate? How Party Cues and Policy Information Affect Public Opinion about Initiatives”. *American Journal of Political Science*. Volume 58, Issue 1 January 2014, pp. 48-62.

¹²⁸ Albert 2019.

¹²⁹ James N. Druckman, Erik Peterson, and Rune Slothuus. “How Elite Partisan Polarization Affects Public Opinion Formation”. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 107, No. 1 (February 2013), pp. 57-79.

¹³⁰ Bafumi and Shapiro, 2009.

¹³¹ Stefano DellaVigna. “Psychology and Economics: Evidence from the Field”. *Journal of Economic Literature* 2009, 47:2, 315–372.

¹³² Albert 2019.

¹³³ Hafner-Burton et al, 2017.

Maskt, and Noel go so far as to find that the distinct partisan networks revealed in their study “may not be far apart from each other in ideological space...but they are separated into two groups, despite their closeness ideologically.”¹³⁴ As they conclude, polarization is due to divergent political views rather than differing views on policy. Baldassarri and Bearman make the important argument that public polarization “is a perception,” arguing that polarization is overstated since policy attitudes often run parallel across partisans. As they write, “Collective attention to takeoff issues can distract from the larger number of issues in which attitudes remain parallel. Individuals thus perceive the macrostructure as polarized even though in the context of a population of issues, polarization is absent.”¹³⁵ However, they qualify this by pointing out that while there is no evidence of *popular* polarization, *partisan* polarization – that of political activists and those who affiliate with a party – is indeed deepening with the later holding more extreme views than the rest of the population. Their conclusion is somewhat buttressed by the findings of Koger et al who also find clearly discrete partisan networks in operation with little to no crossover between Democratic and Republican networks, but not such a great distance in ideological separation.¹³⁶ This fits with findings that the mass of voters hold moderate ideological views, but partisan activists and political organizations treat the public as two diametrically opposed opposites. This is one reason why the framing of policy choices is so important – not only do decision makers prize the familiar or available, but more importantly they prize where the framing is coming from.

Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes elaborate on the important distinction between social polarization and polarization along issue preferences, pointing out that partisan divisions do not, on their own, imply anything about divisions in policy preferences. Their research shows that partisan attachments are only inconsistently related to policy positions and connects more strongly to in-group/out-group social dynamics.¹³⁷ Mason confirms this point when she describes “the potential for Americans to grow increasingly politically rancorous and uncivil in their interactions, even in the presence of comparatively moderate issue positions.”¹³⁸ This explains how polarization can be deepening among the U.S. public even though they remain in broad agreement on most issues. As she writes, “Partisans thus do not need to hold wildly extreme issue positions in order to be biased against and angry at their opponents. They simply need to hold aligned partisan identities.” As she notes in the conclusion, political thought, behavior, and emotion are driven by political identities.¹³⁹ This may still have important implications for how preferences are formed: Gries et al find that ideology effectively fills in the blanks on issues, allowing Americans to form consistent attitudes towards an issue (in their case, China) even if they may not know very much about it.¹⁴⁰

Partisanship in Japan

Patterns of partisanship in Japan are distinct and need their own discussion, though 1994 is also a meaningful year in the history of Japanese political parties since it marks the passage of electoral reform

¹³⁴ Koger, Gregory, Masket, Seth, and Noel, Hans. “Partisan Webs: Information Exchange and Party Networks”. *British Journal of Political Science* vol 39, issue 3, 2009, pp. 633-653.

¹³⁵ Delia Baldassarri and Peter Bearman. “Dynamics of Political Polarization.” *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 72, No. 5 (Oct., 2007), pp. 784-811.

¹³⁶ Koger, Masket, and Noel 2009.

¹³⁷ Shanto Iyengar, Gaurav Sood, and Yphtach Lelkes. “Affect, Not Ideology: A Social Identity Perspective on Polarization.” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 76, No. 3, Fall 2012, pp. 405-431.

¹³⁸ Mason 2015

¹³⁹ Mason 2015

¹⁴⁰ Gries et al 2012.

which was, among other things, intended to lead towards a party system of two parties distinguished by ideology that alternated in power. While political parties in the United States have been analyzed through the lens of social cleavages or refractions of public sentiment, function as organizations of common principle, and serve as pragmatic organizations to advance personal ambition, in the Japan their form and function is somewhat different, often encapsulating these features but often not. Yet certain forms remain familiar even if the proximate issues are different – Miwa writes that “The contrast between conservative and progressive ideologies has been an important element of postwar Japanese politics. The two camps have clashed over whether Japan’s traditional prewar political systems should be preserved, whether defensive power should be increased, and whether Japan should form a defensive alliance with the United States.”¹⁴¹ In contrast with the United States, Richardson notes that media and issues play an unusually weak direct role in voting behavior in Japan, with the most important issues being long term such as revisionism, defense & security policy, and so on.¹⁴²

Kabashima and Takenaka find that the correlation of ideology to supported party is the lowest among Japanese voters in a study of ten countries, including the United States.¹⁴³ Endo and Jou even find that among young Japanese voters, the Japanese Communist Party is regarded as conservative and the Japan Restoration Party is considered progressive, completely contradicting expert and conventional classifications of these parties.¹⁴⁴ Ethan Scheiner notes that the Democratic Party Japan, frequently assumed to be liberal in contrast with its conservative LDP opponent, became the party of deregulation and economic liberalization during the beginning of the 2000s, contradicting its perceived image as a left/progressive party and, by implication, the LDP as a conservative party in the conventional sense of the term as it’s applied in the West.¹⁴⁵ Scheiner supports this with a telling quote from Michihiko Kano that the difference between the LDP and DPJ is that the former is the party of centralized bureaucratic power and the latter is the party of decentralization where power rests with the politicians as representatives of the people.¹⁴⁶ Yet Miwa finds that most informed respondents (which he argues account for just over half of Japanese voters) “locate the LDP and JRP on the right and the JCP and Social Democratic Party on the left as experts do” (Miwa blames the discrepancy on inadequate survey design).¹⁴⁷ Regardless, partisanship in Japan should be considered on its own terms in order to elucidate its unique features and relationship with public sentiment.

Historian Peter Duus traces the early history of Japan’s political parties in his history of Taisho democracy, noting that differences between Japan’s parties was initially marginal but social unrest such as the rice riots of 1918 and labor disputes led to increased differentiation between the parties.¹⁴⁸ Still, he notes that potential for cleavages were limited given the relative ethnic, religious, and regional homogeneity. Scheiner echoes this discussion somewhat and offers a useful description of the social divisions in

¹⁴¹ Hirofumi Miwa. “Voters’ Left–Right Perception of Parties in Contemporary Japan: Removing the Noise of Misunderstanding”. *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 2015 vol. 16 no. 1, pp. 114–137.

¹⁴² Richardson 1974

¹⁴³ Kabashima Ikuo and Takenaka Yoshihiko. *Ideology*. Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai 2012.

¹⁴⁴ Willy Jou and Masahisa Endo. “Presidentialization of Japanese Politics? Examining Political Leader Evaluations and Vote Choice”. *Japanese Journal of Political Science* vol 16 no 3 2015, 357–387.

¹⁴⁵ Ethan Scheiner. *Democracy without Competition in Japan: Opposition Failure in a One-Party State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

¹⁴⁶ Scheiner 2006

¹⁴⁷ Miwa 2015

¹⁴⁸ Peter Duus. *Party Rivalry and Political Change in Taisho Japan*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968.

modern Japan, or rather the lack thereof given that Japan does not have the same ethnic and religious cleavages that are often found in Western democracies.¹⁴⁹ But, as cleavages emerged from the transition from economic-based voting to value- and culture-based voting in the United States and Western Europe, as Japan developed economically after World War II, cleavages began to arise between “traditional” and “modern” values, or in a more interest-based sense, between fast-growing economic sectors and those that were becoming left behind. A cleavage also arose among those who opposed rearmament and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, usually younger and better educated, but the combination of economic growth and the LDP’s decision to minimize security issues in favor of becoming a “big tent” party tamped this cleavage from becoming a defining division.

Joji Watanuki describes that the political cleavage in the first ten years of the Diet after its establishment following the Meiji Revolution was between government bureaucracy and agrarian-based local notables, continuing the earlier cleavages described by Duus.¹⁵⁰ Otherwise potential cleavages were avoided through the creation of two “catch all” parties which, as Watanuki describes, “aggregated and accommodated interests of agriculture, business, and bureaucrats.”¹⁵¹ Meanwhile socialist parties never took more than 10 percent of the vote, having been hemmed in by a combination of the influence of urban notables and anticommunist suppression.¹⁵² Though the socialists increased in popularity during the 1950s as guardians of the postwar “peace and democracy system,” a new cleavage emerged between prewar values and modern values and was represented by different age cohorts and levels of education.¹⁵³ But even this cleavage proved to be tenuous as the status quo set by the Yoshida Doctrine became popular and the debates over the U.S.-Japan security treaty lost their salience, resulting with Japan’s parties competing for the same voters and leading to the ossification of LDP rule.¹⁵⁴

Inglehardt suggests that such weak party identification may have implications for partisan polarization, when he concludes that “We would expect the extent to which partisan repolarization actually takes place to be limited by the relative strength of existing political party identification in given countries.”¹⁵⁵ In other words, initially weak partisan identification seems to have an influence on repolarization, a finding somewhat confirmed by Lee, who writes that “in the Japanese context...it makes more sense to regard the strength of party identification as an indicator of intensity of psychological involvement in politics rather than as an indicator or an involvement in a politically mobilizing organization.”¹⁵⁶ This may be relevant for Japan given the weak partisan identities of many voters, as well as the underlying economic growth analogous that in Europe which is the backdrop of Inglehart’s study, but Japan has yet to show similar repolarization or strong value-based voting. In keeping with Inglehardt’s work, early research on Japan thought that this system would be temporary and would pass as economic development and increased wealth would bring the development of economic cleavages that would lead to competitive parties that alternate in government like most post-World War II democracies in Western Europe. Writing in 1980, Scott Flanagan wrote that “barring major economic disruptions that would reassert the undisputed

¹⁴⁹ Scheiner 2006.

¹⁵⁰ Scott Flanagan et al. *The Japanese Voter*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1991.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, 51.

¹⁵² *Ibid* 52-52

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 60.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid* 65-66.

¹⁵⁵ Inglehardt 1971

¹⁵⁶ Lee, Aie-Rie. “Social Network Model of Political Participation in Japan”. *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, vol. 17 no. 1, 2015, pp. 44-62.

predominance of economics... [we should] expect some continuing long-term decline in conservative forces.”¹⁵⁷

Yet it is not out of ambivalence or a lack of information that Japanese voters so weakly identify with their political parties. Voters in Japan still appear to perceive structured cleavages as much as voters in other established democracies. Writing in 2011, Willy Jou, in a survey of major political cleavages in East Asian democracies, finds that the positions of Japanese votes are “more clearly structured and by well-defined cleavages, such as socio-economic issues and post-materialism, and that parties in [Japan] compete on the basis of clearer ideological profiles.”¹⁵⁸ In relating the trend among Western democracies to recalibrate from class and economic issues to post-materialist issues like values, he writes that “social cleavages that underlie political competition in advanced western democracies seem to exert relatively little impact in structuring political competition in East Asia.” However, he also cites Lee (2007) who finds that only in Japan among East Asian democracies do value cleavages have a direct effect on partisanship, concluding that the impact of cleavages and party choice is positively correlated with a society’s level of modernization and political development.¹⁵⁹ Jou’s findings indicate that demographic variables (such as age) and organizational affiliations (such as religion) are less important in determining partisan preferences than views on socioeconomic issues and “new politics” issues and suggests a lower salience of class cleavage in shaping left-right orientations.

Miwa also finds that Japanese voters have coherent views of ideology and perceive political parties’ ideological alignment similarly to experts. He finds that such voters account for “a little over half of all Japanese voters”¹⁶⁰ (writing in 2011, Jou finds that 75.6 percent of Japanese voters are able to place themselves along the left-right spectrum). Both Jou and Miwa conclude that their findings reflect both well-structured cleavages and competition between governing alternatives with clear ideological profiles.

But cleavages still persist and have been one of the mechanisms that researchers have used to attempt to explain Japan’s 1.5 party system; or in other words the dominance of the LDP since 1955 and the inability of the opposition to mount any serious, sustained competitive challenge. Going back to the delineation of economic cleavages and social cleavages that Flanagan offered, the necessary cleavages between haves and have-nots and old values and new would seem to suggest that conditions exist for a competitive party system that could follow this template and was one of the ambitions of the 1994 electoral reforms. Indeed, writing in 1959, Mendel follows an interest-based model when he notes that “businessmen and farmers, heavily conservative in their voting habits, supported a pro-American policy while office workers and factory labor tended to prefer the neutralism indicated by their Socialist votes...rural respondents of both parties were more pro-American than their urban compatriots.”¹⁶¹ Totten and Kawakami look towards geographic factors when they write that “one great dichotomy can be mentioned as reflected in factional representation – the rural-urban cleavage exacerbated by the rates of modernization between the two

¹⁵⁷ Flanagan 1980.

¹⁵⁸ Jou, Willy. “How do Citizens in East Asian Democracies Understand Left and Right?” *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 2011 vol. 12 no. 1 pp. 33-55.

¹⁵⁹ Lee, Aie-Rie. “Value Cleavages, Issues, and Partisanship in East Asia”. *Journal of East Asian Studies*, 2007 vol. 7: 251–74.

¹⁶⁰ Miwa 2015

¹⁶¹ Mendel, Jr., Douglas H. “Japanese Views of the American Alliance”. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Autumn, 1959), pp. 326-342.

sectors.”¹⁶² Flanagan looks at social factors when he writes that linkages exist between occupational groupings and certain parties, with the LDP supported by business and agriculture and the opposition supported by blue- and white-collar workers¹⁶³ (though discussed in greater detail below, LDP factions and their leadership in the late 1950s often drew support from specific economic sectors).

The role of political patronage has also been cited as a key reason for the LDP’s persistence, forming the main argument of Scheiner’s work while Totten and Kawakami write that “the LDP does function as a brokerage party, though not so much in the sense of mediating between labor and management as in that of between segments of the big business community. To the extent that the LDP has an ideology, it might be summed up as ‘what is good for business is good for Japan.’”¹⁶⁴

Lee explores the reasons for the low correlation between socio-economic resource level and political participation in Japan, using a social networking model to explain that the low linkage is due to the impact of group-based processes specific to the Japanese style of network involvement.¹⁶⁵ Generally, individuals with higher levels of income and education will have more resources to participate in political processes and more of a stake in political outcomes. Yet the Japanese case reveals the lowest correlations of this pattern, displaying no significant correlations for voting. Lee finds that sex, urbanization, and age combine to depress the correlations in Japan while more non-politicized, organic local associations and informal social networks have an equalizing impact on political participation

Foreign policy may be one of the most significant sources of cleavage between Japan’s parties. Totten and Kawakami write that the LDP and Socialists were “deeply divided” on foreign policy issues despite being aligned on many domestic issues. They write later that “Where the [Japan Socialist Party] has split...it was over questions of foreign policy, specifically on what kind of relationship Japan should have with the United States.”¹⁶⁶ In 1957, the LDP’s “three principles of foreign policy” were “devotion to the United Nations, alignment with the free world, and proper attention to Japan’s role as a member of the Asian community.” Douglas Mendel writes that it was “the second of these principles...which the governing party spokesmen stress to Americans and which the Liberal-Democrats are held almost criminally guilty by the opposition Socialists.”¹⁶⁷ Mendel notes that “the Kishi administration’s pro-Western course enjoys relatively more favor among its partisans and the opposition rank and file than does the Japanese Socialist advocacy of neutralism.”¹⁶⁸ Polling from 1950-1953 provided by Mendel showed that Cold War neutralism was most popular among young males, white-collar workers, and the better-educated.¹⁶⁹ Writing in 1969, Daniel Willick found that “in Japan, one finds a major party using the rhetoric of class conflict, but only minor cleavage expressed in party choice over the Cold War.”¹⁷⁰ He later notes that there is a cleavage between neutralist parties and pro-American factions (and supplies survey data to that end) but only minor social cleavage expressed in party choice. He argues that disputes

¹⁶² Totten and Kawakami, 1965.

¹⁶³ Flanagan 1980.

¹⁶⁴ Totten and Kawakami 1965.

¹⁶⁵ Lee 2015.

¹⁶⁶ Totten and Kawakami 1965

¹⁶⁷ Mendel 1959

¹⁶⁸ Mendel 1959

¹⁶⁹ Mendel, Jr., Douglas H. “Revisionist Opinion in Post-Treaty Japan”. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (Sep., 1954), pp. 766-774.

¹⁷⁰ Willick, 1970.

over the U.S.-Japan relationship, and specifically the Security Treaty were the cause for the split between the Socialist and Democratic Socialist opposition parties.¹⁷¹ Yet even with these divisions, Risse-Kappen, in comparing attitudes of Japanese public opinion with that in France, Germany, and the United States, finds that “Japan...enjoys the most stable public foreign policy consensus.”¹⁷² He concludes that “in the Japanese case, the issue salience of foreign policy was comparatively low; decision makers nevertheless felt the pressure of mass public opinion.”¹⁷³

Additionally, Risse-Kappen offers that “the LDP’s conservative leaders did not share the general public’s outlook on Japan’s role in the world and moreover felt under constant U.S. pressure to build up the military...if one indeed accepts the notion that the Japanese governments indeed felt vulnerable to public opinion, the strange coincidence of low-key rhetoric...and considerably more active security policies becomes explicable. Thus, in the 1980s Japanese public opinion placed broad, but nevertheless effective, constraints on the actions of policymakers.”¹⁷⁴

The lack of strong ideological motivations continued after the end of World War II. One aspect of the Occupation policy of purging prewar leaders that Totten and Kawakami note was that it opened up opportunities for younger individuals and those who had escaped the purge, like Yoshida.¹⁷⁵ But as they continue, “In time, the differences between the purgees and non-purgees and even between those who were purely bureaucrats and those who were purely politicians in prewar days have become less crucial in the makeup of factions. In fact, ideological or philosophical fissures among them have always been almost totally absent.”¹⁷⁶

To use an illustrative example of the role of Japanese public opinion, Risse-Kappen notes that Gorbachev’s softening of Soviet behavior did not have a significant impact on Japanese public opinion, as Japanese opinion reflected not just a comparatively high sense of threat from the Soviet Union but only 34 percent of Japanese thought that the Soviet Union was becoming more trustworthy as a result of Gorbachev’s reforms – significantly lower than publics in France (54 percent), Germany (73 percent), and the United States (55 percent). Yet he also found that the vast majority of Japanese still preferred peaceful diplomatic relations between the two countries despite the perception of threat, with only 21 percent wanting Japan to strengthen militarily. He summarizes these findings with “the public consensus in Japan on basic foreign policy problems emphasizing economic strength as well as peaceful diplomacy remained largely intact throughout the 1980s.” This parallels public opinion in the United States, where “negative feelings toward the Soviet Union did not determine the preferences for specific security policies; rather, the fear of war and of the arms race in general as well as the perception of U.S. policies were of at least equal significance.” He summarizes this succinctly when he writes “almost every analysis of Japanese postwar defense policy points to the constraining forces of public opinion on the margins of maneuver of the policymakers.”¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ Willick 1970.

¹⁷² Risse-Kappen 1991.

¹⁷³ Ibid 1991.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid 1991.

¹⁷⁵ Totten and Kawakami 1965

¹⁷⁶ Totten and Kawakami 1965

¹⁷⁷ Risse-Kappen 1991.

James Babb offers an attempt to reconcile structural explanations, in this case the decline of factionalism, with what he considers to be the increase in conservative ideologues within the LDP.¹⁷⁸ He argues that factionalism led politicians prioritize pragmatism over ideology but as factions declined in importance following the 1994 electoral reform, ideology appeared to supplant pragmatism in importance, finding that LDP members who retained their seats in the 2009 defeat to the DPJ were “significantly more likely” to be affiliated to an ideological group than those affiliated to an economic interest group or independent (though his definition of what makes a group ideological is vague).¹⁷⁹

In contrast with the United States, elite cues may not serve as an effective signal of where voters should position themselves. Kobayashi and Yokoyama offer a particularly relevant finding for partisanship in Japan in the context of research into party cues in much of the current political science literature.¹⁸⁰ While there growing consensus that party cues, described as “pieces of information that enable inferences without detailed knowledge and effortful cognitive processing,” are relevant for understanding how voters receive and process information on policy questions, Kobayashi and Yokoyama find that party (and press) cues are muted in Japan and consequentially “do not serve as effective shortcuts in determining policy preferences.”¹⁸¹ While they do not dispute the basic conclusions of research on cues, their study suggests the effects are not generalizable outside of the United States.

Social network theory has also been seen to apply to Japan. Cox, Rosenbluth, and Thies found that turnout in Japanese elections varies with the “social density of the electoral district.”¹⁸² They cite the example of *koenkai*, or local electoral support groups that are crucial for driving turnout, as well as other organizations like agricultural cooperatives, small businessmen’s associations, and neighborhood associations.

While Kobayashi and Yokoyama speculate that issue voting based on parties cues is difficult under a constantly fluctuating party system, describing the Japanese party system as ideologically indistinct, their findings beg more than a few questions about the relationship between parties and the public in Japan, not least of all why exactly are Japanese voters apparently immune to cues when they seem to have such an impact on other democracies and whether there are specific subgroups of voters, such as members of *koenkai* or regular voters, who are particularly susceptible to party cues. It may also imply that elite polarization, to the extent that it may exist in Japan, does not “trickle down” to Japanese voters.

Researchers have frequently applied cultural explanations for understanding Japanese politics, a method that sometimes insightful and often frustrating since such explanations are rarely applied to the United States or other democracies – and even though the United States, with the common acknowledgment that its parties are unusually embedded in its governance, is frequently treated or assumed to be the standard for partisan behavior. While cultural explanations may be appropriate and even useful, such arguments

¹⁷⁸ Babb, James. “The New Generation of Conservative Politicians in Japan.” *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2013, pp. 355-378.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid 2013.

¹⁸⁰ Kobayashi, Tetsuro, Yokoyama, Tomoya. “Missing Effect of Party Cues in Japan: Evidence from a Survey Experiment.” *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2018, pp. 61-79.

¹⁸¹ Ibid 2018.

¹⁸² Cox, Gary W., McCall Rosenbluth, Francis, Thies, Michael F. “Mobilization, Social Networks, and Turnout: Evidence from Japan.” *World Politics*, vol. 50, no. 3, April 1998, pp. 447-474.

need more caveats and vetting than most explanations to avoid pitfalls of essentialism or cultural determinism.

Such explanations have often turned up in considerations of Japanese politics. Totten and Kawakami go so far as to say that “the Japanese have entertained neither the British respect for the ‘loyal opposition’ nor the American concept of ‘limited government.’”¹⁸³ Hattie Kawahara Colton acknowledges a similar point, but offers the important caveat that “many problems in the Japanese Diet are no different from those in legislative bodies in Western democracies, which during the twentieth century have been on the defensive against executive-administrative dominance.”¹⁸⁴ Richardson observes that Japanese voters are relatively more distrustful and critical of politics and less emotionally engaged than voters in other countries, leading to the interesting idea that partisanship in Japan is better thought of as “a set of images that guide voting behavior...when the environment communicates alternative party cues, partisan change does not require the breaking down of an internalized affective bond but rather the reshaping of images and evaluations of political objects that, for most citizens, are rather remote and disconnected with their daily life.”¹⁸⁵ In this sense, partisanship in Japan may be inherently thin-centered and lacking in the bonds to individual and social identity that have become so significant in U.S. politics. Huckfeldt, Ikeda, and Urban-Pappi, in their comparative study of patterns of disagreement, find that Japanese are much less likely to perceive disagreement and are also much more likely to hold uncertain views about specific issues, speculating that “the informal rules of social exchange discourage the confrontation of political disagreement among Japanese citizens.”¹⁸⁶

Comparing the United States and Japan

What follows will compare academic approaches to understanding partisanship in the United States and Japan and illuminate the comparisons and contrasts in structural and institutional features in each that will be meaningful for the argument at hand. The following discussion is not intended to settle any conversation on comparing partisan politics in the United States and Japan, but to tease out differences and trends that could be relevant for how each country’s domestic politics influences its foreign policy.

It might be worth noting Richardson’s observation that party loyalties are more common than in the United Kingdom and United States than elsewhere around the world,¹⁸⁷ an observation that Joji Watanuki supports when he writes “Neither the British-style causal chain from occupational prestige via class identification to partisan voting, nor the American-style differentiation of partisan voting by economic status exists in Japan.”¹⁸⁸,¹⁸⁹ Lee notes that “few voters are members of parties or involved with party organizations in any meaningful sense.”¹⁹⁰ As Jonathan Mercer writes, “It is only because people invest groups with emotional significance that they care about them; if people do not care, they neither

¹⁸³ Totten and Kawakami 1965.

¹⁸⁴ Kawahara Colton, Hattie. “The Working of the Japanese Diet.” *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 28, no. 4, December, 1955, pp. 363-372.

¹⁸⁵ Richardson, Bradley M. *The Political Culture of Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

¹⁸⁶ Huckfeldt, Ikeda, and Urban-Pappi 2005.

¹⁸⁷ Richardson 1974.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid* 1974.

¹⁸⁹ Flanagan 1991.

¹⁹⁰ Lee, Aie-Rie. “Social Network Model of Political Participation in Japan”. *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 2015 vol. 17 no. 1 pp. 44-62.

cooperate nor compete.”¹⁹¹ An important difference to remember between party systems in Japan and the United States is that U.S. parties were historically formed around social and economic cleavages while Japanese parties tended to be catch-all groups that prevented cleavages from emerging, even going back to the pre-war era as Watanuki has noted and the formation of two ideologically distinct parties would effectively be contrary to Japan’s political history.¹⁹² Ideologies and parties often do not track in the same ways that they do in Western democracies.

Still, care must be taken that cultural factors are not understood deterministically with the recognition that values can change. Flanagan finds “that values change, both in terms of changes to the basic value preferences and changes in the priorities attached to value issues.”¹⁹³ Interestingly, he raises the question of who perceives cleavages when he finds that the association between values and voting patterns is most pronounced among those with the lowest incomes, those who do not identify with a specific economic class, those who do not perceive society in terms of a class struggle, and those who do not perceive politics in a left-right dichotomy.

Domestic political differences have mattered for U.S.-Japan relations. Scholar Sheila Smith has noted that U.S. policymakers have been puzzled by the complex and inconsistent views on security policy held by their LDP counterparts.¹⁹⁴ Though regarding the discussions over Okinawa’s reversion to Japan in the 1960s, John Welfield notes that bureaucrats in Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs were consciously dismissive of public opinion.¹⁹⁵

Miwa’s and Jou’s findings raise an interesting question in relation to Belknap and Campbell’s findings of a relationship between high information and adherence to party positions, writing that “well-informed people...are simply better able to follow [the party’s] ‘line’ because they have a clearer sense of what its ‘line’ is.”¹⁹⁶ This would suggest a correlation between high levels of information or clear party cues with higher levels of partisanship but this would not seem to be the case in Japan where voters appear to be able to identify party positions yet do not possess the same depths of partisan identification seen in the United States or elsewhere.

Miwa’s findings fit the second of Layman and Carsey’s factors which determine citizen attitudes towards polarized elites: the degree to which they are aware of the polarization of parties on multiple issue agendas. Given that the first factor is the strength of individuals’ party affiliations, this may be the source of Japan’s relatively lower degree of partisan polarization compared to the United States.

Just as Albert finds evidence that partisan networks are crucial for conducting the flow of information across the network towards decision makers in the United States,¹⁹⁷ Cox et al found the effect of issues on turnout in Japanese elections is mediated by local vote brokers, strongly alluding to the influence of

¹⁹¹ Mercer 2005.

¹⁹² Flanagan et al 1991.

¹⁹³ Flanagan 1980.

¹⁹⁴ Smith, Sheila. *Japan Rearmed*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 2019. pp 53.

¹⁹⁵ Welfield, John. *An Empire in Eclipse: Japan in the Post-war American Alliance System: A Study in the Interaction of Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 1988.

¹⁹⁶ Belknap, George and Campbell, Angus. “Political Party Identification and Attitudes Toward Foreign Policy.” *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 15, no. 4, Winter 1951-1952, pp. 601-623.

¹⁹⁷ Albert 2019.

partisan networks in Japan well before the literature began to take hold in a U.S. context.¹⁹⁸ Their concluding observation that “elite efforts are likely to yield more votes in districts with higher levels of social capital”¹⁹⁹ has interesting implications for the study for the political meaning of social networks (though exploring this question is beyond the scope of this study).

A possible caveat to their findings is that the effect seems to be primarily driven at the constituency-level, with networks functioning in support of specific members rather than the party writ large. As McElwain and Umeda show, the 1994 electoral reform markedly increased the salience of party identification along with producing a surge of independent voters²⁰⁰. As they argue, the outcome has been the inverse of what has happened in the United States, resulting in a mass of voters with ideological convictions but no partisan affiliation in contrast to the U.S. partisans with deep party identification but thin ideological convictions.

Work on polarization and the role of partisan affect is much more rare in the Japanese case, almost certainly for the simple reason that polarization has not impacted partisanship in Japan the way that it has in the United States. There are a few reasons for this. One is that the kaleidoscope of parties beyond the LDP has made it difficult for supporters of these parties to establish affective ties to any of them.²⁰¹ Lee’s (2015) earlier observation of using the strength of party identification as an indicator of intensity of psychological involvement could imply that it is more challenging to make inferences about affective politics in Japan and that possible measures of such phenomenon in the Japanese case – in Lee’s suggestion, strength of party identification – are much more limited relative to those that have been used in the United States.²⁰² This begs the question of whether opposition to LDP rule assumes the affective role that partisan attachment takes in the United States.

It may be possible to infer that partisanship in the United States and Japan works in contrasting ways – in the United States, its thick-centered partisanship cuts across issues and animates elites and activists in a self-reinforcing relationship that progressively deepens partisan identities. Japan’s thin-centered partisanship has mostly detached parties and elites from public pressures, though the public still meaningfully circumscribes the realm of potential action once certain “red lines” are triggered, usually relating to Japan’s postwar pacifist order. In the United States, political incentives lead candidates to play to partisan activists; in Japan, incentives lead candidates to play to their campaign networks. The differences are important – in the United States, activists are more often animated by abstract attachment to their party or the sense of belonging to a movement; in Japan, campaign networks are motivated by their proximity to a specific candidate who could provide clientelist benefits. The former is driven by partisanship’s social affective motors while the latter is driven by partisanship’s self-interested incentive structure. Discerning why this came about and how this works is complicated – one possibly useful observation is that while U.S. political parties formed along the lines of certain social cleavages, Japan’s

¹⁹⁸ Cox, McCall Rosenbluth, and Thies 1998.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid 1998.

²⁰⁰ McElwain, Kenneth Mori and Ueda, Michio. “Japan’s Abandoned Partisans: Realignment After Electoral Reform.” Earlier Version: “The Partisanship of Independent Voters in Japan”, APSA 2012 Annual Meeting Paper. August 11, 2014.

²⁰¹ Iida, Takeshi. “The Roots of Partisan Effect: Party Support and Cabinet Support under the Coalition Governments in Japan in the 1990s.” Doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin. December 2007.

²⁰² Lee 2015.

parties were, from their very beginnings in the Meiji Era, “catch-all” parties that tried to bridge social cleavages and prevent fissures from opening too greatly.

Institutionally, the result is a strange situation where the U.S. legislative institutions that were designed to facilitate compromise have been subjected to increasingly intractable partisan differences while the Japanese system which was based on the oppositional format of many European parliaments finds its parties detached from societal pressures and divides.

Conclusion

By now it should be clear that there is more to partisanship than the conflicts of political parties and their supporters. Environments of high partisan polarization may be expected to be especially consequential. In such environments, partisanship becomes an intrinsic condition, rather than endogenous one, which will still have meaning beyond the immediate context of the domestic political arena. The understanding that decision makers most often pursue choices out of a genuine belief instead of material interest may be less validating for those looking for elite-driven or class-based explanations but is closer to practical reality. It may even be more unsettling to realize that decision makers do not have a deliberate rational agenda or that rationality was relative, that they are following their instincts and biases more than we may want to realize. This is not necessarily meant to be reassuring – interests can be negotiated or met, but biases are more stubborn and harder to bargain with. Interests may change with circumstance, but biases are innate.

Understanding biases and what they mean for policy means understanding discourse, narratives, and perceptions since these are the expressions of biases. To that end, understanding political narratives and especially the dynamics of political parties as central to foreign policy decision making is essential. It is not that parties have their own foreign policies, nor only that their beliefs and understandings of the world lead them towards certain preferences, but that the competition between parties and the need to create and exploit cleavages drives parties to harness different approaches to foreign policy at different moments – even as circumstances or geopolitical demands may force them to select new approaches once they find themselves in power. The more intense domestic polarization becomes the farther interests leave the scene and distinction creates difference, so parties and partisan actors will often take positions for no other reason than to distinguish themselves from their competitors. Not only does this signal divisions to voters and intensify trends for partisans to coalesce around such positions, but it often forces actors into a corner once they become decision makers from which they cannot easily free themselves.

An important point to keep in mind is that foreign policy networks have preferences that are more diverse than the binary separations that dictate polarization but must still operate within the binary framework of partisan political systems. This may give the appearance that foreign policy preferences are themselves dichotomous but looking not far below the surface and over enough time reveals that preferences are diverse, evolving, and behave mostly independently of political parties. One of the inferences from the findings of Koger et al is that partisan networks, whose actors are cooperating but autonomous with no single actor in charge, may allow certain groups or interest clusters to take over, referring back to Risse-Kappen’s discussion of the role of institutional structures, where he argues that open structures inhibit the ability of a particular group to exert much influence over elites leads to a volatile and unpredictable foreign policy.²⁰³ Within the context of partisanship, there are loose groups of actors, referred to in this

²⁰³ Risse-Kappen 1991.

study as foreign policy networks, that organize around common interests or preferences and often act collectively to bring their influence to bear. This helps explain how the U.S. public can have a set of essentially liberal internationalist preferences, but political actors frequently choose different courses. This will be illustrated more completely in the later chapter which explains the relationship between networks and political parties.

Chapter 3

Explaining Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will explain the research question that the study seeks to answer, which is how a state's domestic partisan politics influences the choices of its foreign policy decision makers. It will begin by revisiting the discussions in the previous sections to summarize the lessons necessary for moving forward in the study. It will then discuss and justify the case study selection of Japanese and U.S. perceptions of China since 1994 as a mechanism for understanding the relationship between partisanship and foreign policy choices and will explain the necessity of qualitative methodology for answering the research question. The chapter will finally describe the research question more completely and explain the independent variable (foreign policy camps) and the dependent variable (foreign policy choices).

Having first considered the existing literature on foreign-domestic linkages and explaining the gaps in understanding the role of domestic politics in foreign policy decision making, the study then discussed domestic political partisanship, considering its instrumental, ideological, and social purposes, with specific consideration of the ways in which partisanship can fill in the gaps in explaining preference formation. This chapter also described specific dynamics of partisanship in the United States and Japan to compare what partisanship means and how it works in both countries. The idea of the preceding sections is not to generalize behavior, but to create a generalizable lens for understanding behavior in different cases. This is why using two similar but different cases is important for the study – by understanding how partisanship influences perceptions and then behavior in two such situations, it will become easier to understand how partisanship influences those same patterns in other cases.

The selection of case study of Japanese and U.S. perceptions of China from 1994-2016 is meant to be a strategic, exploratory comparison of how partisanship influences foreign policy decision makers in countries with similar political systems whose party systems were meaningfully changed in 1994. The idea is not to create a set of generalized principles that a large-n study would produce, but instead to better understand processes which can be revealed through a more thorough historical analysis. Focusing exclusively on the United States, whose politics have become so polarized and where partisanship is so often used to explain everything, would overstate partisanship's influence. Though the United States is often treated as a baseline for how democracy and political parties work, in a broader and more comparative perspective, the way it works is frankly strange or at least not representative of the whole of liberal democracies. Because the point is not to identify how domestic partisanship influences the state behavior of the United States, but to broadly understand how partisanship influences state behavior, an additional case is necessary, as will be explained below.

The study will investigate the relationship between political parties and foreign policy decision making using a qualitative analysis that will evaluate how significantly the interests of foreign policy networks were preferred over those of other networks, prior administrations, and other stakeholders against the geopolitical context of both countries' relationships with China. Qualitative analysis and historical research will help understand the processes by which foreign policy networks and their perceptions became ascendant. As Charles Tilly described, the task is to get the history right before generalizing, elaborating that "With small numbers, the student of a structure or process has little choice but to pay attention to the historical circumstances and particular characteristics of the cases at hand and thus work

harder at meeting the commonsense conditions for effective comparison. With large numbers, critical defenses and familiarity with context decline.”²⁰⁴

Case Study Selection: Japanese and U.S. Perceptions of China since 1994

The simple reason for selecting Japan and the United States as the cases for comparison is that the author has spent years working in the national legislatures of both countries, worked on election campaigns in both countries, worked on foreign policy and trade policymaking in both countries, interacted extensively with decision makers in each, responded to constituent comments in both, met with policy stakeholders, and witnessed first-hand the domestic pressures that are brought to bear on decision makers in Japan and the United States and how they form their perceptions of the world around them. In short, the author’s professional experience has already, if only anecdotally, confirmed the hypotheses of the research and the task at hand is to demonstrate these observations on a more solid academic footing and to learn why decision makers acted and thought the way that they did about international questions.

Most any student of Japanese politics will understand that politicians’ *koenkai*, or supporters’ groups, are a foundation of their electoral strength; less known is the suspicion when *koenkai* leaders talk about Japan’s Communist Party, describing them as if we were in the midst of the Soviet invasion in Budapest 1956. With that in mind, it becomes easier to understand why LDP campaign stump speeches lean so heavily on North Korean missiles – justified or not, their appearance is strategic: the fear of North Korean belligerence is an important motivator for the voters that make up an important part of the LDP’s support base.

But not everything is strategic or cynical. Conversations with most any staffers and decision makers will reveal that they often deeply believe in the policies they or their bosses are advocating. If their statements are only a cover for a cynical agenda, it is a cover that does not slip even after several beers. This is an observation that many academics have a difficult time coming to grips with – that certain views may be apparently irrational or contrary to an idealized national interest, that they are not a cover for a self-interested agenda, that such views are deeply and genuinely held. The refusal to accept that decision makers may genuinely believe in the things they pursue has led too many researchers down too many dead ends and occupied too much space in the world’s academic journals.

Most people who interact with decision makers will understand this well from a practical perspective. Diplomats from a given country have a genuine unease with meeting with members of a given party from a counterpart country because of concerns that they will be confronted with controversial issues while meetings with the other party are mostly relaxed and jovial. Any competent legislative staffer will understand that there are certain offices that should not even be approached on a certain issue given the legislator’s existing position.

Therefore, any foreign policy decision making actor will need to be subject to domestic political pressures in order to be exposed to the influence of partisan networks. Research has already suggested that these decision makers are not as hermetically sealed in the bureaucracy or executive branch as may be assumed – Clinton et al have found that in the United States the preferences of civil servants and political

²⁰⁴ Tilly, Charles. Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons. New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1984.

appointees have increasingly diverged in the United States in keeping with broader polarization trends.²⁰⁵ This not only indicates that bureaucracies are being subjected to domestic political pressures more significantly than before, but also implies that executives feel more subjected to domestic political forces, either due to perceptions of partisan pressure from Congress or from their own polarizing beliefs.

This does not, however, mean that all decisions or perceptions may be divided between those that are strategic and those which are cynical. But given that this study hopes to understand how choices are made, it will be necessary to discern what is believed and what is opportunistic.

There are other reasons for selecting Japan and the United States: Both are liberal democracies with entrenched political habits and institutions, well established electoral procedures, established and ideologically distinct political parties. Yet their distinctness in several important ways – degrees of voter engagement, turnover of the party in power, the role of the bureaucracy in policymaking – will allow the study to investigate variations of patterns. 1994 is an especially relevant year for party politics in both countries: Japan passed landmark electoral reform designed to undermine the dominance of the LDP and create a path for a system of two ideologically distinct parties alternating in power while the United States saw the Republican Revolution that swept into power a new generation of Republican politicians more incentivized towards polarization and marking the deepening of partisan identities. In both cases, the two-party system in each country definitively broke from its Cold War model and began reforming just as a new challenge to the international system was emerging.

The research will explore the history of U.S. and Japanese relations with China through qualitative analysis of primary and secondary sources as well as interviews. This should provide what Hugo Meijer has called “a sociology of decision making”²⁰⁶ by examining who occupies key positions in the relevant offices and can, following the methodology of John Padgett in his research on social networks of credit finance in Renaissance Florence, can demonstrate the “*mentelite*” or *zeitgeist* through which the statistical effects were produced.²⁰⁷ As Padgett writes elsewhere (Fowler et al 2011), “To explain something in a system is to explain the process that generated it.”²⁰⁸

The case of China is useful in this regard, since it touches on aspects that are essential to almost every political actor in the United States and Japan – economic, security, normative, and more. There are a few other states our issues with as much or as profound cross-issue significance over a long period of time, making China an ideal case to see which groups respond to which issues and when. China occupies different space in the imagination of each country: for Japan, Chinese influence is long and broadly encompassing – the expression of “same characters, different lands” referring to Japan’s use of Chinese characters hints at the deep relationship between the two states. Appreciation of Chinese culture and history is deep and Sinophiles, like Yoshida Shigeru, are not unusual in Japan’s political history, while

²⁰⁵ Clinton, Joshua D., Bertelli, Anthony, Grose, Christian R., Lewis, David E., Nixon, David C. “Separated Powers in the United States: The Ideology of Agencies, Presidents, and Congress.” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 56, no. 2, April 2012, pp. 341-354.

²⁰⁶ Meijer 2015.

²⁰⁷ Padgett, James and McLean, Paul D. “Economic Credit in Renaissance Florence.” *Working Papers*. Paper 9. 2009.

²⁰⁸ Padgett, John F. “Triangulating on Causal Process.” In Fowler, James H., Heaney, Michael T., Nickerson, David W., Padgett, John F., and Sinclair, Betsy. “Causality in Political Networks.” *American Politics Research*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2011, pp. 437-480.

China's economic importance as an export market and source of raw materials exerted a powerful force on Japan's decision makers. Glen Hook points out that since the end of World War II, Japan has had powerful motives – economic, Asianist, and developmental – to circumvent the structural barriers that the United States placed on Japan's relationship with communist China.²⁰⁹ Such interest was not only opportunistic, as pro-China elements in Japan's political parties, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the business community believed that economic engagement would produce political reform and with it stability. But instead of stability, China's economic growth and concurrently growing military strength, punctuated by high-profile disputes over the Senkaku Islands and an embargo on rare earths, has created unease and even alarm, much like Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's line to the U.S. Congress that Canada's position next to the United States was like sleeping next to an elephant: "no matter how calm and docile the beast, one is effected by every twitch and grunt."

Only recently has China begun to be similarly profound for the United States, who is now attempting to understand what China's rise means for the U.S. self-image as a global hegemon and how much and how far China's behavior can be shaped, but without any of the cultural Sinophilic affinities seen in Japan. Its appeal as an economic market has been a key motivation for engagement between the two countries, while Mead has described how U.S. missionaries and democracy advocates were drawn to China's potential "salvation." As will be seen, after the Cold War there was a tension among U.S. decision makers between whether China's future could be shaped or whether its nature as an authoritarian communist state made it an essential threat to the United States and its allies & partners in the region. This tension was reflected U.S. policy towards China, sometimes emphasizing engagement and sometimes emphasizing the need to balance the potential threat from China. While this tension could be successfully balanced into a coherent policy, more often it led to conflicting and contrary approaches with different agencies and stakeholders vying for influence and all motivated by different perceptions of what China could become, with the stakes becoming greater as China's economy and military grew and as its behavior became more assertive.

Thinking about foreign policy decision making against the backdrop of political polarization and partisanship will enable what is hopefully a more historically valid framework for understanding how domestic political forces and foreign policymaking interact. This approach is also grounded in existing research – Ole Holsti and James Rosenau found that political affiliation and ideology are the strongest correlates for the dimensionality of elite perspectives on foreign policy.²¹⁰ Because China is such an encompassing force on the minds of decision makers in Japan and the United States, it is useful for extracting observations across a broader set of decision making actors than most other cases would allow. Because Japan and the United States are both liberal democracies whose political activities are organized around independent, ideologically distinct political parties, the case of China will enable a reading of perceptions from the broadest possible set of ideational cohorts in both Japan and the United States.

By comparing liberal democracies with very different political party systems, it will be possible to generalize about the influence of partisanship on foreign policy. As the chapter on partisanship has shown, partisan politics in the United States and Japan works in ways that are parallel but also very

²⁰⁹ Hook, Glenn D., ed. *Japan's International Relations: Politics, Economics, and Security*. London; New York: Routledge, 2001.

²¹⁰ Holsti, Ole R., Rosenau, James N., "The Structure of Foreign Policy Attitudes among American Leaders." *Journal of Politics*, vol. 52, no. 1, February 1990, pp. 94-125.

different. In short, partisan identifications are much more of an affective, emotionally-charged condition in the United States than in Japan. Japanese voters understand the ideological orientations of their political parties and voting turnout is strong, indicating that Japanese voters place value on political participation, but patterns of activism and partisan identification are not nearly as strong in Japan as they are in the United States. It may be that the practical impact of this difference will be that elite stakeholders within Japan's partisan networks will have a more consequential role in shaping the decisions of Japan's decision makers, while stakeholders in the United States will be more subject to pressure from partisan activists in addition to elite stakeholders. In attempting to answer this question, this study hopes to clarify how different dynamics of partisanship between the two countries influences decision maker perceptions in different ways.

Understanding perceptions also means controlling for the international situations of both countries which are of course quite different. The United States is a global economic and military hegemon with the ambition to act globally with relatively high freedom of action. Japan is a large economy and a global diplomatic actor but with a tightly circumscribed military policy which significantly limits its freedom of action abroad and even, some might say, undermines its own self-defense. Japan must rely on the United States for its defense and deterrence just as the United States must be willing to credibly underwrite it. For the United States, China is a threat to its global status; for Japan, China is a threat to its territory.

And then there is the role of self-perception. The United States is globally ambitious, almost as an intrinsic part of its national character. Though its geography has afforded it the possibility of more isolationism than most global actors, it has always, to varying degrees, considered itself to be entitled to be an international actor. Even more important is the normative role that comes with this, not being contented simply to secure its interests and affect outcomes abroad, but also reshape the entire nature of governance and behavior. Notably, it has only been slightly chastised by its frustrations in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, and these defeats are seen more as a judgement upon the specific decision makers who executed these wars, and only rarely as a signal for a chastened place among the world's middle powers and average states. The differences could go on but suffice to say that the United States and Japan occupy very different global roles and possess very different perceptions of their role on the global stage.

Most readers will have been able to make caveats and find holes in the above discussion – the United States had a strong realist element that looked down on democracy-making endeavors, Japan doesn't completely see China as a threat, the failed wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have led to some very high-profile calls for American retrenchment, Abe Shinzo and other Japanese conservative nationalists see Japan as a "normal state," and so on. These caveats do not undermine the point of this research but illustrate the point that this study hopes to demonstrate – states behave unevenly and inconsistently, that certain preferences and choices take the fore at certain times, that there is no single national foreign policy but different interests and ideas which are constantly vying for ascendance, and that partisan networks are the best means of explaining recurrent patterns in these variations.

The point is also not to compare Japan and the United States against each other, but to use each individual case to illuminate different aspects of partisan influence on foreign policy. The hope is to use the experience of one country as a reversing mirror for that in the other country to examine traits more carefully. In that sense, it is not so important whether and how much Japan and the United States are

similar or not but how well each country can serve as an example of partisan political influence on each country's foreign policy decision making. And both countries are well-suited for that purpose, similar enough as liberal democracies but sufficiently distinct in key details to reveal features that a simple comparison would obfuscate by spending too much time on constructing an apples-to-apples comparison that can only explain a limited amount. The study hopes to demonstrate that despite the differences between each country's policymaking structures, the influence of partisanship best explains variation in their foreign policies over time.

Hypothesis: The Interaction of Choices, Parties, and Networks

The case study rests on the hypothesis that domestic partisan politics is responsible for determining the choices available to foreign policy decision makers by setting the political space for foreign policy networks to attempt to assert their preferences. The goal is to demonstrate how political space and policy choices available for decision makers are influenced by the dynamics of partisan politics, especially during periods of polarization when political actors prioritize distinction from and conflict with their opponents. Rather than seeing parties adopt their own foreign policies except in the broadest, most abstract sense, partisanship determines the range of what is possible either through the potential coalitions of foreign policy or political networks available in the policy process or through its impact on the discourse surrounding politically relevant issues. In this way, partisanship creates space for different foreign policy networks and incentivizes political parties to take conflicting positions or emphasize difference particularly in periods of polarization. Though the international context, China's behavior, and leaders' interests and preferences are the primary drivers of decision making, as the literature has identified, this study will instead argue that both the choices that are available to decision makers and the political prices paid are governed by partisan polarization. As a result, partisanship creates an indirect but profound influence have shaped their strategies towards China and deserves consideration in understanding foreign policy choices along with interests and the geopolitical context.

The fact that politics takes place over time means that research which focuses on specific negotiations or decisions misses much of what makes politics matter. While two-level games theory considers how leaders balance international and domestic interests, this study seeks to contextualize the decisions leaders make in those interactions, arguing that the set of desired outcomes is influenced by perceptions and worldviews which determine the range of desired outcomes independent of rational choice. As Hafner-Burton, Haggard, Lake, and Victor write, "What appear to be slow, dysfunctional, and contentious procedures from a rationalist perspective may be quite effective and appropriate if we begin with the assumption that individuals working within complex organizations are vulnerable to cognitive biases, misperception, mistaken beliefs, and outright error."²¹¹ Environments, like the domestic contexts which cultivate and nurture decision makers, affect the behavior, properties (identities, interests, and capabilities), and even existence of actors.²¹²

As the chapter on domestic-foreign linkages discussed, connecting domestic factors with state behavior is not new and there have been plenty of attempts to identify the domestic sources of international conduct. As discussed before, these approaches have fallen short in that they focus on specific situations rather than long-term shifts in foreign policy. The goal in this case is to take a cyclical approach to

²¹¹ Hafner-Burton et al, 2017.

²¹² Katzenstein, Peter and Seybert, Lucia A. Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

understanding alternations in foreign policy, using domestic political partisanship as the explanatory variable. Doing so will require tracking shifts in foreign policy against shifts in partisan politics, chiefly the influence of polarized political parties.

Rather than considering partisan politics in terms of alternating political parties at the helm of the state, this study sees political parties as mediating the preferences of sets of actors, often referred to as “partisan networks” in political science literature. When considering liberal democracies, as is the case in this study, political parties are the chief vehicles of ambition and arbitrators of who occupies policymaking posts, but also exhibit social group dynamics that explain political behavior better than explanations that rely on rational self-interest. The argument is that domestic political partisan dynamics influence which of these networks is ascendant in foreign policy making at a given moment and explaining long-term trends in foreign policy beyond alternations between extroversion and introversion. This is a long way of saying that decision makers are guided by what they believe in, and what they believe in is shaped by their political environment.

Hugo Meijer’s research demonstrating the two groups which were in competition for influence over U.S. defense export control policy toward China offers a template for how competing domestic stakeholders seek to exert influence over the policy process and what motivates them.²¹³ Importantly, Meijer’s work shows that the policy preferences of the actors depended entirely on how their perceptions of China – those who believed in open economic competition favored looser export restrictions while those who saw China as an emerging threat favored tighter controls. The fact that actors from both camps were scattered, though often clustered, across different agencies and groups speaks to the point that institutional explanations are limited in understanding the preferences of these groups and implies that perceptions and worldviews were the meaningful factors which drove policy preferences. This study will attempt to demonstrate that these camps extend across and through policy towards China over a range of policies towards the country.

Independent Variable: Foreign Policy Networks

Networks are a conceptual tool designed to illuminate the congruence of social, political, and intellectual worlds and each component is necessary to understand the whole. There is already extensive work underway to look at the role of networks, sometimes referred to as “camps,” “schools,” or “tribes” to refer to loosely formed units of actors connected by common outlook or interests, in driving voter turnout in Japan²¹⁴, credit finance in Renaissance Florence²¹⁵, congressional caucuses²¹⁶, how political polarization is transferred from the U.S. House of Representatives to the U.S. Senate²¹⁷, political learning²¹⁸, the shaping of political narratives²¹⁹, determining U.S. export controls to China²²⁰, and more. Networks and

²¹³ Meijer, Hugo. Trading with the enemy : the making of US export control policy toward the People’s Republic of China. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

²¹⁴ Cox, McCall Rosenbluth, and Thies 1998.

²¹⁵ Padgett and McLean 2009.

²¹⁶ Victor, Jennifer Nicoll and Ringe, Nils. “The Social Utility of Informal Institutions: Caucuses as Networks in the 110th U.S. House of Representatives.” *American Politics Research*. vol. 37, no. 5, 2009, pp. 742-766.

²¹⁷ Theriault and Rhode 2011.

²¹⁸ Ragusa 2016.

²¹⁹ Albert 2019.

²²⁰ Meijer, 2015.

their effects have been identified both qualitatively and quantitatively, but their existence and ability to influence processes is commonly accepted.

Networks help explain the diffusion of policy ideas because they facilitate communication among a group and provide signaling mechanisms for group members to understand the world. Fuchs advanced the idea that networks help construct the world around us,²²¹ serving as (in the words of Harrison White) “a network of meanings.”²²² Zachary Albert summarizes this when he writes “partisan dynamics should condition both the development and acceptance of policy ideas.”²²³ His 2019 study offers a practical example in his study on cap-and-trade regulations, finding that prominent organizations develop ideas and talking points which are then adopted by members of Congress which are used to justify their positions to constituents, with the ultimate outcome being the formation of two distinct partisan communities advancing their distinct narratives. He uses a data set of published statements about cap-and-trade between 2001-2011, tracing the flow of statements across groups and party members to create a “policy idea diffusion network with influence ties.” Alluding to the social network theory’s implications for policy, he writes that “Policy ideas are operationalized as group discourse, with the belief that actors reveal their preferences and connections to other actors through their use of common rhetoric and talking points.”²²⁴ He concludes that partisan networks play a key role in structuring the flow of coherent narratives on policy discourses. This connects to Jervis’s observation that people do not only revise their prior beliefs based on new information but use their prior beliefs to understand new information.²²⁵ Partisanship works not only as a conduit for transmitting information, but as a framework for understanding information.

It should be made clear that a network-driven analysis is not the same as elite-driven analysis. Elite-driven explanations of state behavior are neither new nor unique and have a companion in much of elite cue literature which effectively places responsibility for partisan polarization with party and social elites. Elite-driven explanations such as those above (and others) instead take a reductionist approach that makes the argument for homogeneity across actors, arguing that preferences and interests are essentially static over time. For example, De Graaf and Van Apeldoorn take an elite-driven approach to network theory and foreign policy, writing that “the close nexus of this corporate elite, and its predominantly globalist outlook, with the foreign policy-making establishment, helps to account for America’s overall foreign policy of the past decades, and will remain an important variable in determining future U.S. strategy *vis-à-vis* China.”²²⁶ They later elaborate, “America’s post-Cold War foreign policy-making elite is strongly embedded in the world of think-tanks and policy-planning bodies, which are in turn to a large extent funded by big business and directed by members of the country’s corporate elite...[this is why it has] pursued a foreign policy strategy aimed at preserving a world order based on open markets, free trade, and liberal institutions, which has above all favored the interests of U.S. transnational capital and the corporate elite associated with it.”²²⁷ Patrick Porter outlines the process in which this takes place, arguing

²²¹ Fuchs, Stephan. “Beyond Agency.” *Sociological Theory*, vol. 19, no. 1, March 2001, pp. 24-40.

²²² White, Harrison C. *Identity and Control: A Structural Theory of Social Action*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

²²³ Albert 2019.

²²⁴ *Ibid* 2019.

²²⁵ Jervis, Robert. “Signaling and perception: Drawing inferences and projecting images.” In *Political Psychology*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2002.

²²⁶ de Graaff et al, 2018.

²²⁷ *Ibid* 2018.

that elites first develop and understanding of what a successful grand strategy should look like, then socialize personnel into their worldview and incentivizing conformity by restricting professional access to those who share the elite worldview.²²⁸

One of the biggest issues with elite-driven explanations, like those above, is that it fails to account for the heterogeneity of preferences, beliefs, and decision making processes of actors – as Hafner-Burton et al describe, empirical research related to what they call the behavioral revolution in international relations has focused on the “causes and consequences of heterogeneity across relevant actors...including the extent to which behavioral traits converge or diverge from rationalist expectations.”²²⁹ These approaches may be helpful for understanding the persistence of certain international regimes, like the liberal order, but are much less useful for understanding dynamics *within* those regimes, such as the Nixon financial shock or the negotiation of the World Trade Organization, which had very different impacts for the supposedly homogenous liberal order. Hafner-Burton et al outline a few possible sources of heterogeneity: differences in resolve and attitudes towards power, the way publics absorb and use information, elite personal experiences, and social preferences such as the nature of in-group/out-group dynamics and there is extensive research which explores each of these sources.²³⁰ Making the argument that elite preferences are both manipulative and homogenous misses the incredible variation in style and approach within regimes.

It also underestimates the heuristic biases at work among decision makers who prioritize the familiar or available, leading to a status quo bias not out of self-interest but out of, for lack of a better word, comfort. In short, elite-driven explanations dehumanize theory right at a time when research on affective politics and behavioral international relations is rehumanizing scholarship in these fields. Research which focuses on elites turns actors into amalgamations of disembodied interests with no animating force besides need fulfilment. Explanations which take the human element out of consideration can only explain so much, and far less than what such explanations seem to think that they are capable of. This study is elite-driven in the sense that foreign policy elites are the units of analysis, but does not make the assumption that their influence is manipulative or limited to pursuit of self-interest.

This study will rely on qualitative discussions of networks or schools of preferences that have already been established in the literature. These networks vie for influence under the umbrella of formal political parties because parties offer institutional advantages that solve collective action problems. But even under a formal umbrella, these networks continue to maintain differentiated worldviews because of the perceptions and interests of the stakeholders within each network. Institutions mediate whose perceptions may win, but they only slightly dictate the shape of those perceptions. The qualitative approach of this study aligns with social choice analysis, which Morrow describes as focusing on “the interaction of preferences over possible outcomes, strategies (or actions) taken to achieve desired outcomes, and a mechanism that combines the strategies to determine the outcome.”²³¹

²²⁸ Porter, Patrick. “Why America’s Grand Strategy Has Not Changed: Power, Habit, and the U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment.” *International Security*, vol. 42, no. 4, Spring 2018, pp. 9-46.

²²⁹ Hafner-Burton et al 2017.

²³⁰ Ibid 2017.

²³¹ Morrow, James D. “Social Choice and System Structure in World Politics.” *World Politics*, vol. 41, no. 1, October 1988, pp. 75-97.

There are several advantages to this: for one, and most importantly, there is enough congruence between the networks described by writers and through the author's own research to assume that these schools are something identifiable and can form the basis of a discussion. Next, these schools have been identified over time which is a crucial factor since quantitative network analysis frequently does not consider time or change among networks. This will be vital for this research because it is concerned with explaining the relative influence of networks over time. An investigation of the actors and historical context will provide greater explicative detail to the shifts and anomalies presented in the quantitative study. This section will assume that decision makers act within networks, as explained in the previous chapter, which shape their worldviews and preferences.

Hugo Meijer's work on the role of elite networks in the making of U.S. defense export control policy toward China offers one possible roadmap for designing the qualitative portion of this study. He begins by identifying who occupies the key positions in the executive and legislative branches, then uses the reputational method (identifying through multiple interviews) the specific actors who were highly influential.²³² The time period in question is then divided into several "subperiods" according to the critical moments and key decisions in the evolution of a policy, and finally uses an empirical analysis based on a large set of primary sources to understand how and why the policy changes took place. The appendix at the end of this chapter will suggest possible sources for qualitative research.

As the next chapters will demonstrate, policy towards China in both Japan and the United States has been dictated by different networks with distinct preferences based on each network's distinct perception of China. The histories mentioned above that will form the benchmarks for understanding language analyzed under textual analysis will also help identify the stakeholders that form the broader networks under analysis, such as unions, corporations, professional groups, and so on, and thus form the basis from which to qualitatively understand who forms which networks.

Documents like political party platforms and speeches are important expressions of such behavior since their formation requires the cooperative input of a given administration's foreign policy decision makers and serves as a vital signal of the preferences and interests of those decision makers to the broader community. This is not to say that the entirety of the network is involved in drafting these documents – Hafner-Burton and Montgomery point to the hierarchical structure of networks and how they "influence the behaviors of their members by endowing some with greater social power and by shaping common beliefs about behavior. These, in turn, make certain strategies of action more rational than others."²³³ This approach makes sense for politics – as Koger et al, in their 2010 paper, describe regarding party politics, party leaders who act as mediators by striving to make a given dimension (economics, religion, region, class, etc) the primary basis for party differentiation but are forced to suppress intraparty divisions on other issues are assisted by parties which are organized as networks since they can accommodate such diversity.²³⁴ In other words, the fact that decisions, like the drafting of national security documents, is a process which is mediated by certain key nodes within the network (in this case, the executive in the administration) does not, on its own, undermine the explicative power of networks, but fits well within current understandings of network dynamics in political settings.

²³² Meijer 2015.

²³³ Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2006.

²³⁴ Koger, Masket, and Noel 2010.

Networks also serve a more abstract function beyond the tangible effects of policy creation. As the discussion on partisanship has demonstrated, political discourses are embedded in social networks just as social networks are embedded in political discourses. Crawford emphasizes that the situation in which emotions become political are connected to specific historical, political, and cultural circumstances.²³⁵ Lebow argues that state behavior is fundamentally connected to its decision makers' prior interests and identity, which themselves are connected to a range of emotional factors.²³⁶ Over time, the aspect of mentoring, habits, and respect for tradition also come into play. It is then not much of a leap to connect the affective and social dynamics of domestic political partisanship, the biases and preferences that are wrapped up with decision makers' intertwining in domestic partisan networks, with understanding how these factors directly influence state behavior.

This is not to discount the role of institutions or individual leadership, but to introduce a variable (partisanship) which needs more attention in international relations research. As Morrow excellently describes it, "structure does not produce outcomes without preferences: actors chose strategies to achieve their preferences by considering how structural mechanisms will produce outcomes." Though institutions like bureaucracies help ensure a degree of policy continuity and help states maintain their international commitments²³⁷, variation between administrations still needs to be explained, and this study will make the argument that partisanship, through networks of actors, explains much of that variation under certain circumstances. As Charles Tilly writes, "Social behavior does not result from the impact of society on individual minds, but from relationships among individuals and groups."²³⁸ Or as Padgett and Paul D. McLean describe when discussing social networks in Renaissance Florence, family and neighborhood provided the foundations and institutions provided the scaffolding. It is similar when thinking about partisanship – institutions (legislative and governance institutions, electoral rules, and so on) provide the scaffolding while partisan networks provide the foundation.²³⁹ Jordan Ragusa provides an example of this effect when he writes that "political institutions (elections, chambers, parties) structure the behavioral norms, routines, and strategies lawmakers internalize from one Congress to the next."²⁴⁰

Dependent Variable: Choices of Foreign Policy Decision Makers

Choice is a result of perception which itself is both interest and the context of interest.²⁴¹ Looking at perceptions is more than an abstract academic exercise – as Katzenstein & Seybert write, "It is not the information but the worldview that drives actors toward war or peace."²⁴² Hafner-Burton, Haggard, Lake, and Victor summarize it well when they write "Decision making entails evaluating the environment and

²³⁵ Crawford, Neta C. "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships." *International Security*, vol. 24, no. 4, Spring 2000, pp. 116-156.

²³⁶ Lebow, Richard Ned. "Tragedy, Politics and Political Science." *International Relations*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2005, pp. 329-336.

²³⁷ Gaubatz, Kurt Taylor. "Democratic states and commitment in international relations." *International Organization*. vol. 50, issue 1, 1996, 109-139.

²³⁸ Tilly 1984.

²³⁹ Padgett and McLean 2009.

²⁴⁰ Ragusa 2016.

²⁴¹ Suzuki, Takafumi. "Investigating Japanese government's perceptions of the postwar world as revealed in prime ministers' Diet addresses: focusing on East-West and North-South issues." *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, vol. 9, 2009, 317-338.

²⁴² Katzenstein, P., & Seybert, L, eds. Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics (Cambridge Studies in International Relations). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

ordering possible outcomes in light of preferences and beliefs about the state of the world.”²⁴³ Chaudoin acknowledge, “In the study of international politics, beliefs often describe agents’ assessments of what action is best, from an ethical or utilitarian perspective.”²⁴⁴ Peter Gries, H. Michael Crowson, and Huajian Cai, in their paper on U.S. perceptions towards China, describe the role of perceptions for foreign policy decision makers when they write “[e]lite U.S. foreign policy decision makers, whether in the executive or legislative branches, do not simply respond to policy inputs; their own ideologies directly impact the ways that they understand China, framing and constraining their decision making process.”²⁴⁵ Describing a concrete case, Hafner-Burton, Haggard, Lake, and Victor acknowledge the role of belief and perceptions in explaining the cause of the Iraq War, writing that “The causes of the Iraq War and the disastrous consequences of its aftermath appear to lie as much in the realm of beliefs and decision making as in standard theories of bargaining.”²⁴⁶

The fact that networks transmit both information and preferences makes them vital for understanding the biases of decision makers and helps explain decisions in ways that other explanations may not. Hafner-Burton, Haggard, Lake, and Victor note that “Individuals with more intense national attachments are more likely to attribute malign intentions to countries that are disliked and benign intentions to those that are liked, even when these states are portrayed as engaging in exactly the same behavior.”²⁴⁷ Gries and his coauthors uncover such findings in their research on how ideology impacts American attitudes and policy preferences toward China.²⁴⁸

Focusing on preferences and perception does not mean disputing institutional or structural factors since they also help shape the context in which decisions are made. In the case of this study, it will be the context specifically created by domestic political polarization that will be analyzed to see how it influenced the perceptions of relevant foreign policy decision makers during the period in question. There is considerable research which indicates that general worldviews can indicate more specific attitudes towards foreign policy questions, such as elite value complementarity,²⁴⁹ Miriam Steiner’s attempts to make inferences about historical decision makers using the Meyers-Briggs framework,²⁵⁰ the ways in which cultural discourse mediate between microlevel and macrolevel structures,²⁵¹ how political, ideological, and demographic predispositions correlate to attitudes towards antiterrorism,²⁵² how attitudes towards domestic political questions can predict attitudes towards foreign policy questions,²⁵³ the

²⁴³ Hafner-Burton et al 2017.

²⁴⁴ Chaudoin et al. 2014.

²⁴⁵ Gries et al 2012.

²⁴⁶ Hafner-Burton et al 2017.

²⁴⁷ Hafner-Burton et al. 2017.

²⁴⁸ Gries et al. 2012.

²⁴⁹ Nye, Joseph S. “Comparing Common Markets: A Revised Neo-Functionalist Model.” *International Organization*, vol. 24, no. 4: Regional Integration: Theory and Research, Autumn, 1970, pp. 796-835.

²⁵⁰ Steiner, Miriam. “The Search for Order in a Disorderly World: Worldviews and Prescriptive Decision Paradigms.” *International Organization*. vol. 37, no. 3, Summer 1983, pp. 373-413.

²⁵¹ Pachucki and Breiger 2010.

²⁵² Malhotra, Neil and Popp, Elizabeth. “Bridging Partisan Divisions over Antiterrorism Policies: The Role of Threat Perceptions.” *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 65, no. 1, 2012, pp. 34-47.

²⁵³ Gries, Peter Hayes, Zhang, Qingmin, Masui, Yasuki, and Lee, Yong Wook. Historical beliefs and the perception of threat in Northeast Asia: colonialism, the tributary system, and China–Japan–Korea relations in the twenty-first century.” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, vol. 9, 2009, 245-265.

alignment between certain personality types and preferences to cooperate (Hafner-Burton et al 2014),²⁵⁴ and more. Importantly, each study has demonstrated that networks are not only observable, but that they are also politically consequential.

²⁵⁴ Hafner-Burton, Emilie M., LeVeck, Brad L., Victor, David G., and Fowler, James H. "Decision Maker Preferences for International Legal Cooperation." *International Organization*, vol. 68, no. 4, Fall 2014, pp. 845-876.

Chapter 4

The Relationship between Foreign Policy Networks and Political Parties in Japan & the U.S.

Introduction

This chapter will attempt to establish a baseline for the preferences that inform policy choices in Japan and the United States by identifying and describing sets of foreign policy “networks” or “camps” among stakeholders that express different preferences or beliefs about how the state should act in the world and what it should achieve. While specific preferences between Japan and the United States are naturally different, there are broader more abstract patterns in their preferences that help make comparisons useful. Because preferences are multidimensional but operate in two-dimensional political systems, it may appear that preferences themselves are two-dimensional, so rather than try to force a multidimensional map of preferences onto a two-dimensional political system, it is more important to understand the relationships between political parties and preference networks to understand how certain networks may be ascendent at certain points.

The point that there are more networks than parties is an important one. This is not a revelation on its own – consider the modern conversations about “democratic socialists” in the Democrats or “Tea Party Republicans” in the GOP or the myriad factions across Japan’s LDP or how DPJ rule was fraught with disputes between progressives and pragmatists. Indeed, one of the starting points of Robert Putnam’s two-level games theory is the recognition that decision making elites are not unified. Academic and historical research has also consistently identified this phenomenon and most followers of politics in most any country will understand that political parties do not have a single foreign policy but several. Understanding the conditions of when and how each strand or cohort or group becomes ascendant will be one of the questions that this study hopes to answer.

Mead, who is maybe the most well-known author to divide foreign policy into distinct schools, defines the different conceptual strands in the history of U.S. foreign policy as: “A set of deeply rooted approaches to foreign policy that informs the democratic process and ensures that most of the time the country ends up adopting policies that advance its basic interests...[reflecting] deep-seated regional, economic, social, and class interests; they embody visions for domestic as well as foreign policy; they express moral and political values as well as socioeconomic and political interests”²⁵⁵ Such strands are identifiable in both Japan and the United States and reveal both congruity and diversity between the two countries that reflects their political history, strategic geography, and historical attitudes.

Japan

“Left” and “right” and “liberal” and “conservative” explain very little about Japanese politics and predicting policy positions from such labels is unnecessarily difficult. Though journalists frequently rely on “conservatives versus liberals,” and sometimes with justification, Japan is where a top conservative can say without irony that his party is the world’s most successful socialist party, or a member of the ostensibly left-of-center opposition can describe her party as a small-government party opposed to regulation and make perfect sense even if her talking points sound more like Margaret Thatcher than Olaf

²⁵⁵ Mead 2001, pp. 86-87.

Palme. There are historical reasons for this – being at the helm of government for almost seventy years will make even ardent conservatives inclined to large government, just as being out of power for just as long will turn progressives against government spending – but the fact that these conditions are seen as obvious or even natural for governance in Japan suggest that more is going on beyond the alignments being off kilter. After all, it is not as if Japan’s conservatives are simply social democrats in conservative clothing and many of the staunchest advocates for Japan’s social spending often hold extremely unprogressive views about the role of women and of Japan’s minorities. It is also not simply an issue of historical circumstance either given that many of the intellectual founders of Japanese conservatives believed in strong state influence in the economy. The section that follows suggests that dividing Japanese politics into pragmatists versus idealists and Asianists versus Globalists versus nationalists provides a much more realistic understanding of the conceptual mapping of Japan’s politics.

Political scientist Inoguchi Takashi summarized Japan’s position on its global standing nicely when he wrote “Japan’s location is often divided between those arguing that Japan is inside Asia and those arguing it is outside.”²⁵⁶ This question has been one of the defining issues of how Japan understands its role in the world going back to the Meiji Era (1868-1912) and framing the most consequential geopolitical debates in Japan’s modern history. Historian John Wellfield divided the early Asianists into two groups based on Japan’s centrality in their pan-Asian ambitions: the first were those who believed that Asian unity should be imposed from above by a Japanese empire and the second who believed the goal of pan-Asianism should be to expel the foreign occupiers through the promotion of popular sovereignty and resistance to tyranny. The final group were those who viewed Japan as a bridge between Asia and the West, with either a pacifist mission or with a more militant approach whereby Japan would be responsible for creating a new world order after an inevitable conflict for global supremacy between East and West.²⁵⁷ One of the original motivations for pan-Asianism was opposition to Western colonialism and self-determination (though perhaps under the direction of the Japanese).

These debates evolved through the postwar period as well. Wellfield divides the incipient LDP into two groups on the question of Asia: First was the Asia Problems Study Association that was joined by factions such as those belonging to Sato Eisaku and Kishi Nobusuke that encouraged active U.S. presence and intervention in Asia as well as staunch anticommunism marked by their policies of nonrecognition of the Beijing government, support of the Vietnam War, and close relations with South Korea’s Park Chung-hee.²⁵⁸ The other was the Afro-Asian Problems Study Association which included factions controlled by Miki Takeo and Kono Ichiro and were opposed to uncritical endorsement of U.S. policies, fearing possible entrapment.²⁵⁹ The debate on China in the 1960s pitted pro-China Asianists against pro-U.S. (and anti-China) Westernizers.²⁶⁰ Wellfield notes how U.S.-oriented conservatives on the LDP’s Foreign Affairs Research Council thought China was undesirable because of its apparent “Asianness” and economic and military weakness, not because it was too powerful.²⁶¹ American public opinion researcher Douglas Mendel summarized well the outlook of Japan’s conservatives on the eve of the vote on the

²⁵⁶ Inoguchi Takashi. “Japanese Ideas of Asian Regionalism.” *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, Volume 1, Issue 2, August 2011, pp. 233 – 249.

²⁵⁷ Wellfield 1988, pp 9-10.

²⁵⁸ Wellfield 211.

²⁵⁹ Wellfield 212.

²⁶⁰ Wellfield 181.

²⁶¹ Wellfield 177.

revised Security Treaty: “Certainly, such conservative groups as the majority leadership, big businessmen, and especially the ex-officer veterans of the old imperial army forces express much stronger pro-American views than rank-and-file conservatives. But even some Liberal-Democratic politicians and interest group supporters wish Japan could follow a more independent course in foreign policy to maximize trade possibilities and minimize the adverse effects on domestic voters and neutralist Asian states of a slavish adherence to American policy lines.”²⁶² This division was expressed practically in the debate over the Vietnam War, with most conservatives seeing the conflict as a proxy for that between China and United States and Asianists who tried to distance themselves from the war.²⁶³ Many former imperialists turned their attentions south to advance Japan’s policy relations with countries like Indonesia, building connections with anticommunist Indonesian officers opposed to Sukarno as well as ultranationalists in the business community.²⁶⁴

Inoguchi identifies four more recent Japanese strands of Asian regionalism as a fraternity-based East Asian community (closest to Hatoyama’s later vision to rebalance Japan’s diplomacy away from overreliance on the United States in favor of developing more neighborly relations with Korea and China, which Inoguchi argues he inherited from his grandfather Hatoyama Ichiro), the flying geese model of economic development, the security-driven Arc of Freedom and Prosperity, and the Asia-Pacific Community. Buttressing these strands, he suggests six bureaucratically-centered models of regional order: the alliance model, free trade, financial coordination, defense integration, environmental policy, and subnational linkages.

The theme is picked up by academic Tsuruoka Michito who divides Japan’s international engagement into the “Japan first” and “global Japan” schools, with the former emphasizing territorial defense and the latter emphasizing global engagement.²⁶⁵ “Japan first” in this sense is not necessarily nationalist or even isolationist, but reflecting the recognition that Japan has limited material resources to protect its national security and must instead focus on territorial defense or similarly frank recognitions of core national interests.²⁶⁶ Meanwhile, advocates of “global Japan” do not set goals of global domination but instead seek to “build a global network of partners” to support Japan against threats from China and North Korea, though also from a desire to play a global role consummate to Japan’s size.²⁶⁷ Practically speaking, “global Japan” adherents support naval development and recognize the defense of Japan’s sea lines of communication as a core interest while “Japan first” adherents prefer to focus on the East China Sea since it is more immediate to Japan’s territory.²⁶⁸ Yet both schools believe in deepening the Japan-U.S. alliance, though their goals are different, with “global Japan” hoping to increase Japan’s engagement and burden-sharing beyond the Indo-Pacific and “Japan first” emphasizing the defense of Japan’s territories, including the Senkaku Islands and against “grey zone” incursions.²⁶⁹

²⁶² Mendel 1959.

²⁶³ Welfield 211.

²⁶⁴ Welfield 221.

²⁶⁵ Tsuruoka Michito. “Competing Visions of Japan’s International Engagement: Japan First vs Global Japan.” *The International Spectator*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 34-47. 2020.

²⁶⁶ Ibid 2020.

²⁶⁷ Ibid 2020.

²⁶⁸ Ibid 2020.

²⁶⁹ Ibid 2020.

These discussions among decision makers were rarely values-driven nor had an overtly ideological tone and instead served as a backdrop or framing device for understanding Japan's geopolitical ambitions. In describing Japan's postwar regional policy, political scientist Mike Mochizuki writes that Japan was ambivalent or even in opposition to ideologically motivated schemes for Asian regional cooperation. Tsuruoka, deliberately or not, buries the idea of a role for ideology in Japanese foreign policy debates by closing the door on Japanese liberalism and instead arguing that the "most important dividing line" is between those who regard the existence of the SDF as constitutional or unconstitutional.²⁷⁰ Inoguchi notes that Japan's regionalism has been focused on "functionalist ideas" such as trade and economics rather than normative ideas such as those that guided European integration since such ideas invite pushback from China and Korea as two states which suffered most acutely under Japan's first attempts at normative Asianism.

The one consistent thread throughout Japan's foreign policy choices, both before World War II and after, was its pragmatism, often represented by Yoshida Shigeru who served as prime minister from 1948-1954 and known for his "Yoshida Doctrine" which deferred to the United States for Japan's security and allowed the country to focus on its postwar recovery and economic development believing that it was the most practical course to Japan's return to status as a great power. This approach has come to be associated with Japan's pragmatist bent because of its willingness to abjure military force and adopt a deferential posture to its own security, a situation almost unique among Westphalian nation states where national defense is thought to be sacrosanct. Welfield further elaborates on Japan's historical pragmatism when he writes, Japan "drifted toward association with Nazi Germany for the same reasons as their Meiji predecessors had moved towards alliance with the British Empire," continuing "Yoshida admired the Anglo-Saxons for their power not for their virtues."²⁷¹ In the postwar order, Japan and Yoshida willingly and pragmatically accepted a subservient role for Japan in its relations with the United States. Like Truman in the United States, Yoshida successfully identified liberal internationalism with anticommunism, making it politically difficult to attack from the left. His economically-driven approach was motivated by the belief that economic growth was the best counter to socialists and communist movements in Japan.²⁷²

Ikeda Hayato and Sato Eisaku who succeeded Kishi Nobusuke (who was more ideological than Yoshida and discussed in more detail below) in office were like Kishi in terms of their anti-communism and attachment to Japan's traditional values but were closer to Yoshida in their pragmatic approach to Japan's role. Both were supported by bankers and financiers and, like Yoshida, prioritized economic reconstruction.²⁷³ Welfield describes them as neither liberals nor ultranationalists: while Kishi believed that Japan should stand on more equal footing with the United States, Welfield writes that Sato's experience with U.S. bombing during the war made him prioritize strong, positive relations with the United States without Kishi's emphasis on parity. Japan's Cold Warriors in the 1970s and 1980s differed from their 1950s predecessors that were driven by ideology and anticommunism and instead believed in rearmament more out of a conviction in achieving a balance of power than as a virtuous aim in its own

²⁷⁰ Ibid 2020.

²⁷¹ Welfield 40.

²⁷² Mochizuki, Mike M. "U.S.-Japan relations in the Asia-Pacific region," pp 15. In Partnership: the United States and Japan, 1951-2001. Akira Iriye and Robert A. Wampler, eds. Tokyo, Kodansha International, 2001.

²⁷³ Welfield 127.

right.²⁷⁴ While they supported Japan's participation in the U.S.-led Cold War, they opposed an unnecessary confrontation with the USSR or communist China.²⁷⁵

Pragmatism was not exclusively the purview of Japan's conservatives – Japan's opposition could also be distinguished by its own pragmatic and idealist threads. The DPJ became a party of deregulation and liberalization in the late 1990s and early 2000s.²⁷⁶ Political scientist Ethan Scheiner offers the illuminating example of DPJ official Michiko Kano explaining that the difference between her (ostensibly liberal) party and the (ostensibly conservative) LDP is that the latter is the party of centralized bureaucratic power while her party is that of decentralization.²⁷⁷ Still, idealism is far more associated with Japan's left. Japan's postwar Left was (and continues to be) defined by its determination to preserve Japan's postwar constitution. American historian Hyman Kublin describes the deep influence that American Christian socialism and its "humanitarian idealism" – more than Karl Marx – had on early Japanese socialists.²⁷⁸

In the late 1950s, Japan's Socialists advocated neutralism, the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Japan and Okinawa, dismantling of the Self-Defense Forces, and the achievement of a Four-Power Non-Aggression Pact between Japan, the People's Republic of China, the United States, and the USSR.²⁷⁹ No more than 1 or 2 percent of the electorate since 1949 ever supported alignment with the Soviet Union or a communist orientation.²⁸⁰ In the 1960s, Japan's idealist Left opposed rearmament, advocated peaceful coexistence, neutrality, and opposed Japan's participation in the U.S.-led Cold War effort.²⁸¹

Liberal hawks or humanitarian interventionists are almost unheard of in Japan, especially compared to the United States.²⁸² The obvious reason is that Japan is constitutionally constrained from using its forces overseas in such a way, with even incremental steps like participation in UN peacekeeping missions or logistical support for humanitarian missions have faced acute restrictions on their missions, never mind the political controversy related to even the barest abrogation of Article 9. Given the centrality of the peace clause to the identity of Japan's left, the activism that humanitarian interventionism would require has always come from Japan's conservatives, rather than its left.²⁸³

Still, the DPJ government successfully negotiated with its SDP coalition partners to allow the SDF to deploy to Haiti for a humanitarian relief mission in response to the January 2010 earthquake, though Tsuruoka describes this as a "hastily arranged" reactionary decision rather than a deliberate strategic move that might have marked a new thread of liberal internationalism in Japanese foreign policy.²⁸⁴ He even goes so far as to say that the liberal school of thought in Japan's foreign and security policy "all but

²⁷⁴ Welfield 196.

²⁷⁵²⁷⁵ Welfield 196.

²⁷⁶ Scheiner, Ethan. Democracy without Competition in Japan: Opposition Failure in a One-Party State. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. pp 170.

²⁷⁷ Ibid 170.

²⁷⁸ Kublin, Hyman. "The Origins of Japanese Socialist Tradition." *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (May, 1952), pp. 257-280.

²⁷⁹ Mendel 1959.

²⁸⁰ Ibid 1959.

²⁸¹ Welfield 181.

²⁸² Tsuruoka 2020.

²⁸³ Ibid 2020.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

disappeared” with the collapse of the DPJ government in 2012.²⁸⁵ Conservative idealists have also had a strong influence on Japan’s postwar foreign policy. Kishi Nobusuke was a product of the insurgent Choshu-han that helped overthrow the Tokugawa Shogunate in the 1868 Meiji Restoration and possessed a nationalist, romantic view of Japan believing it was a “unique national polity.” He was supported by heavy industry and unlike Yoshida’s admiration for the British, Kishi took inspiration from Germany.²⁸⁶ He moved rightwards as the ideological conflicts of the Taisho Era intensified, believing that Japan needed to be protected simultaneously from Bolshevism and Anglo-American capitalism.²⁸⁷ Consequentially, he was one of those Japanese conservatives who were opposed to private property in sharp contrast with the Anglo-American tradition. His postwar views mirrored his prewar ones, such as a belief in dirigisme, rearmament, constitutional revision, patriotic education, hierarchy, strong leadership, and respect for authority.²⁸⁸ Importantly, his support for rearmament was defensive rather than to restart Japan’s invasions – his 1958 speech to the United Nations stressed national independence, racial equality, and solidarity with Asia, but his views on Japan’s role in combating communism mirrored those of American Cold Warriors like Dulles, Grew, and Kern.²⁸⁹

The modern form of romantic nationalism can be described as a variety of Japanese neo-conservatism which combines a narrative of national pride with an acute sense of threat towards regional challenges, specifically China and North Korea. The name “neo-conservatism” may be confusing for American readers given its association with the American nationalist hawks that provided much of the intellectual justification for the U.S. invasion of Iraq and other attempts at state-building in the Middle East, but the term as applied to Japan takes a more orthodox connotation of a resurrection of Japanese traditional values and a greater sense of continuity between pre-war and post-war Japan, essentially “recovering what was lost” in the war, American occupation, and the chastened sense of nationhood that followed. To that end, Japanese neo-conservatism harbored a deep antipathy for the post-war order in Japan and specifically demilitarization – evocations of national pride are a direct rebuke to the supporters of the postwar order who neo-conservatives blame for weakening Japan and increasing its social and political problems.

Japanese nationalism was effectively limited during the Cold War, as Takahashi Toshiya describes: “Until the end of the Cold War, post-war conservatism remained a political idea in the LDP rather than a working policy program for the Japanese government.”²⁹⁰ But as war memories faded along with the urgency for pacifism, the new generation, of whom Koizumi and Abe may be seen as exemplars, saw Japan’s militarist constraints as anachronistic, especially given the apparently increasing threat from China and North Korea which became the international focus of neo-conservatives enmity. Takahashi (among others) argues that these military challenges to Japan are exploited normatively by neo-conservatives to buttress their goals of strong-state nationalism based on traditional morals and values.²⁹¹

²⁸⁵ Ibid 2020.

²⁸⁶ Welfield 116.

²⁸⁷ Welfield 117.

²⁸⁸ Welfield 120.

²⁸⁹ Welfield 123.

²⁹⁰ Takahashi Toshiya. “Japanese Neo-Conservatism Coping with China and North Korea.” *Security Challenges*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Spring 2010), pp. 21-40.

²⁹¹ Ibid 2010

Analytically, it is difficult to disentangle the material threats presented by China and North Korea's increasing assertiveness with the normative framing of a restorationist strong-state Japan, a complication that is compounded when the United States is introduced into the discussion (discussed below). China's rise and North Korea's nuclear program gained momentum at roughly the same time that Takahashi argues that Japanese neo-conservatives became more influential.²⁹² It would seem natural that there would be Japanese voices that responded to China's rise with a call for a more assertive Japan – the presence of a threat from China would be necessary for the normative framing that Japanese nationalists exploit, but not necessarily conditional.

Japanese nationalists are also notable because of their attitudes towards the United States – one hand, relying on the alliance to the point of fetish, on the other hand, constant disappointment when the United States does not share their hardline estimation of Chinese and North Korean intentions. The Western-oriented conservatives welcomed the election of Ronald Reagan, seeing the event as a revival of conservative values and a rout of the left and marking a restoration of U.S. self-confidence.²⁹³ Takahashi argues that much of the sympathy is normative, with neo-conservatives seeing the United States and Japan as sharing values of democracy, rule of law, human rights, and open markets lined up against authoritarian regimes in China and North Korea.²⁹⁴

Economically, many key conservatives during the early period of the 1955 system were Gaulists, with its emphasis on state involvement in the economy with a degree of national independence from the international economy.²⁹⁵ Japan's earlier economic growth was now joined by similar growth in other Asian states and helped convince Japanese elite that Asian values deserved credit for the phenomenon more than the United States and its Washington Consensus. In this sense, nationalist Ishihara Shintaro fit neatly next to Singapore's Lee Kwan Yew and Malaysia's Mahathir.²⁹⁶

Caution is also necessary to avoid confusing the wish for a greater global role for Japan or even remilitarization with nationalism. Koizumi, who led the greatest expansion of Japan's overseas role through SDF deployment to the Indian Ocean in support of U.S. operations in Afghanistan has been identified as a neoconservative and as a globalist.²⁹⁷ Though infamous in China for his insistence on visiting Yasukuni Shrine, he remained repentant about Japan's imperial atrocities or at least did not hide from acknowledging them. Abe, a more overtly nationalist figure who has expressly sought a greater military role for Japan as a "normal country" though is also not necessarily an assertive militarist. As Tsuruoka writes, "while Prime Minister Abe is often criticized by those who argue that Japan's pacifism is dead, Abe himself keeps claiming that he champions (his version of) pacifism."²⁹⁸

²⁹² Takahashi Toshiya. "Japanese Neo-Conservatism Coping with China and North Korea." *Security Challenges*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Spring 2010), pp. 21-40.

²⁹³ Welfield 443.

²⁹⁴ Ibid 2010.

²⁹⁵ Welfield 119, 132

²⁹⁶ McGregor, Richard. *Asia's Reckoning: China, Japan, and the Fate of U.S. Power in the Pacific Century*. New York: Viking. 2017. pp. 139.

²⁹⁷ Tsuruoka 2020.

²⁹⁸ Tsuruoka 2020.

The United States

U.S. political culture is broadly characterized by individualism and suspicion of strong states or strong central authority.²⁹⁹ Political scientist Louis Hartz described most Americans as Lockean liberals that believe the state's primary role should be the protection of personal property rights among equal producers.³⁰⁰ Western conservatism was especially grounded in a belief of the importance of property rights which formed the basis of their ideas toward the state, commerce, and international relations.³⁰¹ Their distrust of international law and multilateral institutions (often conflated with isolationism) is an extension of its skepticism towards the state.³⁰² American conservatives were strongly defined by their antipathy against communism which took precedence over most other ideological concerns. Their calls for intervention against the Soviet Union and communist China led anti-establishment conservatives to abandon isolation in favor of internationalism.³⁰³ These anti-establishment conservatives were economically individualist but united by a common morality.³⁰⁴

It is worth remembering that the relationships between parties and intellectual strands is fluid over a long enough period and while some correlations may be stronger than others, there is nothing that inherently drives together a given party with a given strand. The affiliation, or even simply the correlation, between these strands and political parties has confused the discussion more than it has clarified it – too often because we observe a particular group or perspective active among Democrats or Republicans, we assume that it must correspondingly be left or right even though historically such trends could be identified among either side at any given point of time. While an important caveat, it is more relevant going farther back in history – most all political science literature on the subject agrees that polarization in the United States has “sorted” the parties ideologically, especially among Republicans who have become far more anti-establishment conservative over the past fifty years. Though this “sorting” can simplify how we correlate ideologies and parties, it is essential to remember that there is effectively no “Democratic foreign policy” nor “Republican foreign policy,” especially for the period in question from 1994-2016. What is more relevant for this study is how different parties have operationalized partisanship and utilized the concept of political space, a concept which is distinct from ideological sorting.

With those caveats in mind, foreign policy debates in the history of the United States are essentially debates over whether U.S. foreign policy should emphasize interests or values, or even a fight between rationalism and moralism and the intellectual strands that are present throughout the intellectual history of U.S. foreign policy reflect this. More unstated is a tension over agency or the self-perception of U.S. power, with some strands believing that unrestrained U.S. power is the only thing capable of delivering global peace and prosperity and others believing in a restrained or even a chaste and self-flagellating view of U.S. history and power.

There is one set that is realist in perspective and internationalist in application. The Republican Party's frequently pro-business elements (like Rockefeller Republicans or Wall Street Republicans) meant

²⁹⁹ Horowitz, Robert B. America's Right: Anti-Establishment Conservatism from Goldwater to the Tea Party. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013. pp 188.

³⁰⁰ Hartz, Louis. The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955.

³⁰¹ Horowitz 2013, pp. 26.

³⁰² Ibid 2013, pp. 30.

³⁰³ Ibid 2013, pp. 33.

³⁰⁴ Ibid 2013, pp. 35-36.

realists have frequently been aligned with Republicans or conservatives given that geopolitical stability and domestic internationalism are essential for commercial access to foreign markets. Robert Horowitz identifies a strand of American conservatives as realists who see rivalry and conflict as inevitable focusing on interests and power with little concern or even disdain for human rights or values.³⁰⁵ Campbell and Chollet describe them as “Oldsmobile Conservatives” that “believe in internationalism and the power of institutions and alliances but are traditional realists hesitant to make values...a core part of U.S. foreign policy at the expense of more concrete interests such as economic wealth, resources or strategic advantage.”³⁰⁶

This strand has its analogue among Democrats as well. Campbell and Chollet identify the Democratic counterpart to “Oldsmobile Conservatives” as “Globalists” and Horowitz describes them as liberal internationalists that emphasize diplomacy, multilateralism, and values and take a broader view of the national interest.³⁰⁷ This strand believes in economic connectivity but emphasizes the normative rather than the material gains of connectivity through a belief in the potential of economic growth to alleviate the root causes of terrorism and instability.³⁰⁸ This reflects a certain idealism among Democratic presidents seen among figures such as Truman, Johnson, Clinton, and Obama. Describing the Democratic Clinton administration, Michael Green identifies national security realists who emerged out of the Pentagon led by William Perry who had, while working under Jimmy Carter, described China’s rise as “the most important geostrategic development of the coming decades” and developed the idea of “preventative defense” that combined confidence building measures with Beijing while also deepening cooperation with Asian allies as a hedge and bulwark against Chinese expansion.³⁰⁹ Perry was responsible for recruiting Asianists like Charles Freeman, Joseph Nye, Ezra Vogel, and Kurt Campbell.³¹⁰

Campbell and Chollet also identify “Truman Democrats,” often referred to as “Democratic hawks” that share Globalists’ goals but are much more comfortable with the use of military force to achieve those ends, ideally with the support of international alliances but not necessarily.³¹¹ In the Clinton administration, Green describes them as “idealists,” composed of Tony Lake who Green describes as a “pragmatic neo-Wilsonian,” Winston Lord, an experienced Asia hand who was critical of Bush’s realpolitik, and Madeleine Albright who prioritized fighting genocide as the first and most important order of business.³¹² Though close to neoconservatives in terms of joining military force with the promotion of values, and often sharing a common lineage through the influence of Washington Senator Henry “Scoop” Jackson, “Truman Democrats” are described to be far more restrained than neocons both in their willingness to use force and in their perception of U.S. values and power.

Many of these Democrats became disillusioned with the American left and specifically the protests against the Vietnam War in the 1960s, and ultimately became known as Neoconservatives defined by

³⁰⁵ Ibid 2013. pp 24.

³⁰⁶ Campbell, Kurt M. and Chollet, Derek. “The New Tribalism: Cliques and the Making of U.S. Foreign Policy,” *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2007, 191-203.

³⁰⁷ Horowitz 2013. pp 24.

³⁰⁸ Campbell & Chollet 2007.

³⁰⁹ Green, Michael J. By More than Providence: Grand Strategy and American Power in the Asia Pacific Since 1783. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017. pp. 455.

³¹⁰ Ibid 2017, 457.

³¹¹ Campbell & Chollet 2007.

³¹² Green 2017. pp. 455.

their vehemence for the fight against communism and their willingness to use whatever means necessary to defeat it. For them, such “radicalism” at home undermined the fight against communism abroad – Norman Podhoretz, a neoconservative who wrote extensively on foreign policy and believed in rolling back communism rather than simply containing it, described how he saw the U.S. antiwar movement representing a “culture of appeasement” that raised the possibility of capitulation against the Soviet Union.³¹³ Campbell and Chollet identify them as “Reagan Republicans” (tying them to the Republican Party) that believe deeply in U.S. exceptionalism and values and that there should be no restraint in promoting these values overseas, especially not from international institutions or alliances.³¹⁴ Robert Kagan and Bill Kristol put it succinctly when they wrote “American hegemony is the only reliable defense against a breakdown of peace and international order.”³¹⁵

Neoconservatives joined forces with the religious right beginning in the 1970s and became almost officially aligned in the 1980s under Reagan’s presidency.³¹⁶ More than simply a strategic alliance, each were repulsed by what they saw as a moral crisis represented by the “New Left,” the antiwar movement, and broader postmodernism that rejected traditional morality, with Irving Kristol seeing U.S. statism as directly connected secular liberalism.³¹⁷ For Americans, the Cold War was almost literally a spiritual fight given its strong theological dimensions.³¹⁸ Horowitz describes their union well: “The United States is always the embodiment of the spirit of freedom...one that locates the messianic future greatness of the country in an idealized national past...It was the perceived departure from and denigration of that idealized national past that fueled the vehemence of the shared religious right-neoconservative perspective.”

The preceding strands are largely internationalist, believing in an essential role for the United States overseas but differing profoundly in their methods and even how they perceive U.S. power, with the realist strands seeing it as a practical tool to provide security and economic gain and the activists displaying an “expansive faith in American power” with the view that the United States should permit no competitor or rival, pursue aggressive unipolar intervention wherever necessary, and should seek transformation rather than coexistence.³¹⁹

There are also strands which believe in restraint, though from different perspectives and for different goals. This strand speaks to the Jeffersonian tradition in American politics as well as the influence of immigrants fleeing the aftermath of Europe’s revolutions of 1848 with a strong anti-imperialist bent who thought the American project was “too pure” to be entangled in Europe’s power games. On the right, Horowitz describes them as “paleo-conservatives” or Jacksonian nationalists that focus on a narrow security-driven concept for U.S. interests with strong anti-foreign and anti-internationalist preferences, and neoconservatives who believe that U.S. power must be used for moral purposes with little concern or regard for international law or institutions which they see as constraining.³²⁰ Campbell and Chollet

³¹³ Horowitz 2013. pp 126-128.

³¹⁴ Campbell & Chollet 2007.

³¹⁵ Quoted in Horowitz, Robert B. America’s Right: Anti-Establishment Conservatism from Goldwater to the Tea Party. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013. pp 146.

³¹⁶ Horowitz 2013. pp 123.

³¹⁷ Ibid 2013, pp 123-124.

³¹⁸ Ibid 2013, pp. 26.

³¹⁹ Ibid 2013, pp 137.

³²⁰ Ibid 2013, pp 24.

describe these nationalists as “America Firsters” who are skeptical of U.S. engagements and entanglements overseas but are deeply suspicious of state-based threats like that they perceive from China.³²¹

Typically found on the left, “Come Home Americans” are described by Campbell and Chollet as emphasizing the homefront above all else, and that while an event like Pearl Harbor or 9/11 may demand an assertive U.S. response overseas it should not come at the expense of domestic necessities.³²² They are also the most skeptical of international trade, believing that it costs U.S. jobs and increases the economic burden on the U.S. middle class.³²³ Green describes economic nationalists in the Clinton administration that prioritized U.S. jobs and economic strength but believed in leveraging U.S. power to achieve those ends. This group blamed George H.W. Bush for an unwillingness to push back against unfair trade practices and champion national industries consisting of Laura D’Andrea Tyson who argued for an aggressive industrial policy like Japan’s, Kenneth Flamm who wanted to demand technological transfers from Japan in exchange U.S. defensive commitments, W. Bowman Cutler who advocated targeted market shares for U.S. exports, and all led by Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown and U.S. Trade Representative Micky Kantor.³²⁴ Campbell and Chollet additionally identify “American Skeptics” with roots in the “New Left” and antiwar movements of the 1960s who reject the idea of American exceptionalism and are endlessly skeptical of U.S. motives and interests in its foreign engagements.³²⁵ Finally, Campbell and Chollet also identify a separate strand of “Faith-Based Interventionists” that believe in a moral vision of U.S. power but who believe the moral imperative of U.S. leadership is to not simply combat threats but also to provide humanitarian assistance to impoverished and crisis-stricken regions.³²⁶

The above discussion should have shown the artificiality of ideological taxonomy, of assigning groups to parties, as mentioned at the beginning of this section. George W. Bush’s presidency expressed realism, Neoconservatism, and “Faith-Based Interventionism” in such ways that limiting his presidency to a single thread would be insufficient to understand his administration. Even more abstract preferences like activism and restraint can both be identified in different situations. “Come Home Americans” and “Jacksonians” may well be the same species but the former’s affiliation (at least at the time of writing in 2006) to the Democratic Party and the latter’s affiliation with the Republican Party may reflect each party’s platform rather than each group’s preference. In other words, if the Democratic Party supported immigration as a party, then the “Come Home Americans” could have been assumed to be supportive of immigration simply because the party they supported included that in their platform. If the conditions were right, then it may have been a low-cost option for “Come Home Americans” to switch to supporting the Republican Party, at which point they may have instead been identified as Jacksonians.

While groups may have common interests, what often distinguishes them is their understanding of power, values, and agency. This is where the most salient differences can be found. Horowitz insightfully points out the role that violence plays for both neoconservatives and the religious right as a purifying mechanism similar to French Jacobins or Christian eschatology.³²⁷ The two nationalist strands, neoconservatives and

³²¹ Campbell & Chollet 2007.

³²² Ibid 2007.

³²³ Ibid 2007.

³²⁴ Green 2017, 455-6.

³²⁵ Campbell & Chollet 2007.

³²⁶ Ibid 2007.

³²⁷ Horowitz 2013. pp 153.

Jacksonians, hold almost no belief in the potential or usefulness of mutual gains and their approach to international engagements is almost always zero-sum, and if the United States is unsuccessful, it is only because decision makers lacked the intestinal fortitude or strength of conviction to see it through. For example, “Come Home Americans” and Jacksonians share a common skepticism of international trade, but Jacksonians frequently scapegoat immigrants as much, if not more than, cheap imports from China. It was not a far leap for “Truman Democrats” to make the switch to neoconservatism once they grew frustrated with the anti-war strands of the Democratic Party and found relief with Reagan’s shamelessly unequivocal rhetoric. Campbell and Chollet’s “Globalists” and “American Skeptics” are the only groups that are comfortable, even welcoming, towards the possible erosion of U.S. power seeing it as either inevitable or the product of a rising tide that has lifted the wealth and agency of U.S. partners.³²⁸

Conclusion

A feature that becomes apparent when comparing Japan and the United States is that their conceptual foreign policy strands could be mapped on a coordinate system with one axis divided between pragmatists and idealists and the other dividing the self-concept of each country between romanticists and the disinterested. These axes exist in a certain tension with partisan politics which usually has only a single axis and this, combined with the fact that politicians’ beliefs may exist on an even more complicated map, has created considerable confusion that mapping conceptual strands in this way cannot hope to solve. Oversimplifying the strands in this way would lose too much of the historical and social context that comprise them, but this helps make clear the essential and abstract questions that confront both countries. Ultimately politics, concepts, and individual beliefs are too complicated to be mapped neatly on any set of coordinates – the point is not to create a definitive map to seek out relationships between concepts and parties (though this is certainly possible) but to abstract the basic principles that create agreement and conflict between parties and individuals.

Understanding a tension between pragmatism and idealism is not new but the role of self-concept has been less explored. Usually attempts at mapping or taxonomies aim to understand the relationship between militarism and pacifism or economic nationalism and libertarianism but unpacking these preferences at a more abstract level can offer better insight into these conceptual strands and with less of the normative biases that often plague such analyses. For example, while American idealists are often focused on a grand spiritual vision of the United States, Japan’s idealists are focused on much more proximate concerns like the future of the constitution and the role of the SDF. This is not to say that American idealists are unconcerned with practical issues or that Japan’s idealists have no lofty ambitions, but that the idealism of each differs in meaningful ways that reveal how each sees the role of their country in the world.

Skinner, Masket, and Dulio also make interesting observations about the differences between Democrats and Republicans (and perhaps by extension, liberals and conservatives) and their relationship to hierarchy: they write “On the individual level, Republicans appear to be more comfortable with Democrats in leaving important party decisions up to party leaders, while Democrats seem to prefer aspects of internal democracy...Democrats feel comfortable engaging in formal recognition of diversity – Republicans avoid it when they can. Democrats demand open discussion and representativeness;

³²⁸ Campbell & Chollet 2007.

Republicans prefer top-down leadership and demonstrations of unity.”³²⁹ Close observers of politics will see such findings are intuitively true, not just in the United States but also elsewhere (it may, in a very abstract sense, help explain the clumsy heterogeneity of Japan’s myriad left/liberal opposition parties).

As will be seen in the following chapters, there is only a marginal relationship between these strands that the decision making of foreign policy leaders in Japan and the United States. The point of the above discussion is to break apart the relationship between political parties and concepts. Parties may have very abstract preferences but understanding the preferences closer to practical issues that shape foreign policy decision making is almost independent of political party and what matters as far as parties are concerned is polarization or the nature and intensity of their political conflicts, with the strands identifying the issues they fight over than the language they use to fight.

³²⁹ Skinner et al. 2012.

Chapter 5

Politicizing China: 1990s

Introduction

This chapter will demonstrate how both Japan and the United States grappled with their relationship with China against the backdrop of seeking new foreign policy frameworks with the end of the Cold War, rapid changes and conflicting signals from China, and significant changes to their domestic political systems. Though neither country was able to find a complete answer to the questions before them, this period effectively set out the terms of engagement for both and illuminated questions that decision makers would face going forward. At the same time, leaders in both countries began to understand that domestic politics would be a more complicated field than before.

With the Cold War concluded, new patterns began to take shape. Not only internationally, but politically as well. 1994 has meaning for both countries – for Japan, it marked the passage of electoral reform that sought to end the LDP’s dominance partly through the introduction of a two-party system organized around ideologically distinct political parties. For the United States, it marked the Republican Revolution with Newt Gingrich leading a Republican takeover of both chambers of Congress that would set the tone and course for the period of hyperpartisanship that would follow for the next twenty years and beyond, decisively ending the Cold War consensus of bipartisanship that defined the relationship between Congress and U.S. foreign policy for the previous fifty years. Each country’s relationship with China was changing as well, with both Japan and the United States seeing their approach to China influenced by their history. For Japan, this meant reconciling its legacy of brutal imperialist atrocities and for the United States, this meant extending the optimism that followed the collapse of communism in Russia and East Europe to the world’s largest country. The 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre shocked both, with Japan realizing the brutality that Deng Xiaoping’s previously liberalizing regime was capable of, and with the United States being both horrified by the suppression of student rioters and confirming its suspicions of communism, while also taking it as a sign of a nascent democratizing moment like those which recently toppled communist regimes elsewhere. It was a tentative period, with China and domestic politics in Japan and the United States changing in important ways that were still uncertain.

Japan’s political landscape and China in the 1990s: Reconciliation & Anxiety

The LDP’s dominance since 1995 began to unravel in the 1990s because of a combination of scandals, electoral reform, and the end of Japan’s economic boom. As one high ranking government official described, the LDP had become defined by dirty politics after a series of high-profile scandals.³³⁰ Even the opposition Japan Socialist Party (JSP) had even received under-the-table payments from the LDP and remained institutionally incapable of winning government.³³¹

In 1993 the LDP effectively split, with Ozawa Ichiro leading LDP defectors to join those from the Japan Socialist Party to form the Japan Renewal Party and eventually the Democratic Party of Japan. While much has been written about Ozawa’s dissatisfaction with the pace of reforms in the LDP and his canniness in organizing political support, the state of Japan’s diplomacy also played a role in motivating his actions. For him, Japan’s experience with “checkbook diplomacy” during the 1991 Gulf War was a

³³⁰ Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

³³¹ McGregor 2017, 137.

humiliating debacle that served as a tipping point that led him to promote the idea of Japan as a “normal country” that no longer needed to be subservient to either China or the United States.³³²

There was also an ideological dimension as well – according to a high-ranking government official, the international Cold War had ended but Japan’s domestic Cold War which, as he put it, pitted leftists against realists continued unresolved.³³³ As he described, the pro-Soviet left evaporated with the collapse of the Soviet Union and growing awareness of communist atrocities, leaving only the antiimperialist left and its grievances from the immediate postwar era, even though the LDP had been in governance without interruption since 1955 and the practical meaning of the U.S.-Japan security treaty had been normalized by that point, leaving the debate between, in his words, “fantasy versus realism.”³³⁴ International engagement, even peacekeeping under the UN flag, remained controversial.

The LDP was defeated in the 1993 general election (though it retained a plurality of seats) and replaced by a coalition led by Hosokawa Morihiro of the Japan New Party. The resulting coalition lasted only eleven months before it collapsed and the LDP returned to power, but not before landmark electoral reform was passed that reshaped the nature of elections and party politics. The reforms were intended to replace LDP dominance with a system of two ideologically distinct parties that alternated in power (as well as other goals like reducing corruption and making politicians more accountable to voters).

The outcome of the reforms was summarized neatly by journalist and author Richard McGregor: “The traditional postwar game of Japanese power politics – redistributing the spoils of high growth – was gone for good.”³³⁵ A series of splinters and mergers from the LDP and JSP and JRP eventually formed the Democratic Party of Japan which emerged as a unified opposition party and prime challenger to the LDP which ultimately won power – and the first party besides the LDP to win a majority of seats – in 2009. But the DPJ, as will be seen, would ultimately be intellectually riven due to the heterogenous makeup of the new parties and lacked coherence on policy issues. Another impact of electoral reform meant that many senior Diet members with a longer-term perspective were out of the Diet after 1994.³³⁶

This formed the political context as Japan began to understand the emerging challenge from China. The massacre in Tiananmen Square, the 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis, and the growing friction over the Senkaku Islands all raised questions about China’s intentions.³³⁷ The 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis specifically “crystallized a sea change” and converted most mainstream policymakers into reluctant realists about the threat from Beijing.³³⁸ Japanese elites begin to reflect on the possibility that China might use military force to achieve its aims.³³⁹ The *New York Times*’s Nicholas D. Kristof cited former prime minister Hosokawa Morihiro’s quote that “The immense presence of China is itself a threat – whether the Chinese are conscious of it or not – that certainly Japan cannot deal with alone,” in support of Kristof’s argument

³³² Ibid 2017, 129.

³³³ Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

³³⁴ Ibid

³³⁵ McGregor 2017, 139.

³³⁶ Vogel, Ezra. *China and Japan: Facing History*. Cambridge: Harvard Belknap Press, 2019. pp. 372.

³³⁷ Ibid 2019, 364.

³³⁸ McGregor 2017, 158.

³³⁹ Smith, Sheila A. *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015. pp. 27.

that the rise of China was creating a “real fear” among the countries of Asia.³⁴⁰ Not least of all, China’s geographic proximity exacerbated tensions with Japan.³⁴¹

The makeup of Japan’s “China hands” was changing too. Figures like Tanaka Kakuei, Ohira Masayoshi, and Sonoda Sunao who were personally invested in building deeper relations with China had either passed away or exited the scene.³⁴² Meanwhile conservatives like Kanemaru Shin organized regular conferences with conservatives from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan about how their countries could best keep China at bay.³⁴³

Perceptions of China began to change over time and unevenly across Japan’s political groups. Japanese conservatives have generally been resentful of Japan’s perceived weakness towards China as part of their broader grievances against the postwar restraints on Japanese powers, while Japan’s left has generally seen China as a victim of Japan’s imperialist aggression whose concerns even required special attention. Yet for them, the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre, 1996 Chinese nuclear tests, and other disputes jaundiced their sympathies towards China, with a growing sense that China is fundamentally different or even antithetical to Japan.³⁴⁴ The Higashi report, to the extent that it reveals insight into Japan’s left, shows that even as Japan’s left may have been growing more wary of China, that did not necessarily translate into an analogous embrace of the United States. In this sense they remained consistent with the neutralist view that defined much of the left’s geopolitical perspective during the Cold War.

For the idealist right or neoconservatives, China started becoming an antagonist in the 1980s following the Chinese government’s protests of prime minister Nakasone Yasuhiro’s 1985 visit to Yasukuni Shrine.³⁴⁵ Smith describes Japan’s anti-China nationalists as primarily anti-communists who want Japan to be freed of foreign influence and have the capacity to defend itself.³⁴⁶

There were also those who remained optimistic. China advocates in Japan had not given up hope that the country could be more open, and Japan had pressed more than anyone to end China’s isolation so its businesses could profit.³⁴⁷ U.S. diplomat Kurt Campbell said that “There was a cohort of people in the Diet and the LDP who believed that their destiny lay in much closer ties with China.”³⁴⁸ Prime minister Miyazawa Kiichi, for one, was considered to be sympathetic to China.³⁴⁹ Official speeches expressed this more optimistic, or maybe hopeful, view: Foreign Minister Nakayama Taro’s foreign policy speech to the Diet on March 2, 1990 did not mention Tiananmen Square, but said that it was essential that China maintain and develop positive relations, rather than isolate itself, “for the peace and stability of both the

³⁴⁰ Kristoff, Nicholas D. “The Real Chinese Threat.” *The New York Times Magazine*, August 27, 1995.

³⁴¹ Bush, R.C. *The Perils of Proximity: China-Japan Security Relations*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2010.

³⁴² Vogel 2019, 358-9.

³⁴³ McGregor 2017, 156.

³⁴⁴ Suzuki 2015.

³⁴⁵ Suzuki Shogo. “The rise of the Chinese ‘Other’ in Japan’s construction of identity: Is China a focal point of Japanese nationalism?”, *The Pacific Review*, 28:1 2015, 95-116.

³⁴⁶ Smith 2015, 55.

³⁴⁷ McGregor, 2017, 125.

³⁴⁸ Quoted in McGregor 2017, 129.

³⁴⁹ Vogel 2019, 357.

Asia-Pacific region and the world as a whole.”³⁵⁰ The theme continued with Foreign Minister Nakayama’s 1991 address to the General Session of the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference where he stated “China has been moving forward with its reform and open door policies in recent years, and I expect that progress of these policies will lead to the stability of China as well as of the region,” putting the emphasis on China’s internal reform towards the goal of regional stability.³⁵¹

Murayama Tomiichi’s government, made up of a mish-mash coalition of 13 LDP members, 6 JSP members (including the prime minister), and 2 members of New Party Sakigake (an LDP splinter party that joined the ruling coalition), issued the “Higuchi Report” which ranked multilateral security cooperation as a higher priority than the U.S.-Japan alliance and rejected any mention of upgrading the defense guidelines or acknowledging a problem with China.³⁵²

Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryotaro’s speech “Seeking a New Foreign Policy Toward China” delivered on August 28, 1997 recognized that a new international order was emerging in the post-Cold War era and that it would be necessary to review Japanese policy in the context of these changing circumstances.³⁵³ For Asia, he identified this as a decreased Russian military presence and reduced competition between China and Russia, but still missing the political and military stability seen in Europe through the expansion of NATO and the European Union as well as the overall spirit of cooperation. As far as China-Japan relations are concerned, he proposed mutual understanding and enhanced dialogue at different levels, specifically on environmental issues, energy, and trade & investment. He also acknowledged that China and Japan had mutual concerns about the trajectory of the other’s military power, an issue that he believed could be solved by increased transparency by both sides and to continue to pursue talks on these issues. Hashimoto finally called on China and Japan to jointly respond to promote the political and economic stability of East Asia.

It is worth noting Hashimoto’s framing of East Asia’s political order – for Japan, the “rise” during this period was not only that of China, but all of East Asia. As mentioned, he began by contrasting the post-Cold War situation in Asia with the spirit of cooperation and integration in Europe but elaborated through his (analytically clumsy) comparison of the political and cultural histories of Europe and Asia, arguing that Europe, through a common religion of Christianity and a common Greco-Roman legacy, is politically and economically homogenous in contrast with Asia’s cultural diversity and uneven economic development. He used this argument to form the backdrop to both explain China and Japan’s “frustrations” with each other and to support his idea that the two countries should cooperate in order to contribute to “the advent of a new era in which two countries located in Asia will treat as a shared asset the economic and trade frameworks originating in Western Europe and, as two countries each with its own unique culture and civilization, participate in, and contribute to, the building of an order shared by

³⁵⁰ Tanaka Akihiko. “Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama’s Foreign Policy Speech to the 118th Session of the National Diet.” *The World and Japan Database*, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS); Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia (IASA), The University of Tokyo. Accessed October 27, 2020.

³⁵¹ Tanaka Akihiko. “Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama’s Foreign Policy Speech to the 118th Session of the National Diet Statement by Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama to the General Session of the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference.” *The World and Japan Database*, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS); Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia (IASA), The University of Tokyo. Accessed October 27, 2020.

³⁵² Green 2017, 468, 471.

³⁵³ Hashimoto Ryotaro. “Seeking a New Foreign Policy Toward China.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, August 28, 1997. Accessed October 27, 2020.

the entire world.”³⁵⁴ The context for his remarks was his upcoming state visit to Beijing, so care should be taken to avoid overinflating the significance of his beliefs about Sino-Japanese cooperation, but his comments still reveal considerable insight into his understanding of Japan, Asia, and the larger geopolitical context. In his following speech in Beijing, Hashimoto not only welcomed China’s “rapid economic development” but described its growing international role as almost essential.³⁵⁵ He also framed his comments in the context of the evolving international order and described China’s and Japan’s role as “actors that greatly influence these trends.”³⁵⁶ Obviously, one would expect a visiting Japanese prime minister to be effusive on a state visit to China, doubly so when the legacy of his country’s atrocities in still-living memory were still an open nerve.

Additionally, China’s economic promise is essential for understanding much of Japan’s optimism towards China’s future development. The beginning of China’s growth essentially occurred at the same time that Japan’s stagnation began to set in, and there was a growing realization that Japan’s economic prospects would be tied to China’s economic performance, a realization that changed bilateral economic ties between the two countries.³⁵⁷ Japan’s business sector has consistently advocated maintaining close relations with China, so much so that Japanese political leaders frequently turn to business leaders to help improving relations.³⁵⁸ Yet trade and investment continued to grow despite frequent friction. Obuchi expressed his support for China’s ascension to the World Trade Organization when he visited in November 1999.³⁵⁹

Japan’s imperialist legacy was most urgent in its diplomacy with China on historical reconciliation. It is hard to overstate how much Japan’s diplomacy towards China was shaped by its earlier imperial occupation. As Smith writes, “Japan’s relations with China were guided more by the legacy of the past and the need for postwar reconciliation than by the logic of geopolitics.”³⁶⁰ Politicians and officials recognized that Japan could never aspire to global leadership without first setting the history issue.³⁶¹ This was especially true for Japan’s left, who not just remained acutely aware of Japan’s imperial history, but were also determined to check any potential revanchist moves, no matter how slight or subtle. There were also groups that were more reluctant about Japan possibly overextending on its apology diplomacy, such as the Japan War-Bereaved Families Association had been a major fundraiser and a voter-turnout machine for the LDP and were opposed to a statement of apology.³⁶² Hashimoto Ryutaro was also seen as the biggest obstacle to securing an official apology in 1998 but acquiesced to the eventual statement with only a small change to the draft.³⁶³

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Tanaka Akihiko. “Prime Minister Hashimoto's Speech in Beijing: "Japan-China Relations in the New Age: New Developments in Dialogue and Cooperation.” *The World and Japan Database*, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS); Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia (IASA), The University of Tokyo. Accessed October 27, 2020.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Smith 2015, 27.

³⁵⁸ Ibid 2015, 52.

³⁵⁹ Vogel 2019, 378.

³⁶⁰ Smith 2015, 17.

³⁶¹ McGregor 2017, 154.

³⁶² McGregor 2017, 156.

³⁶³ Ibid 2017, 156.

There was concern in Japan that the Emperor's 1992 visit would be exploited by the Chinese to magnify Japanese war guilt and press the Emperor for an apology.³⁶⁴ According to a Japanese official who was involved in the planning of the visit, the Emperor was opposed to going for this very reason – not because he was opposed to peace diplomacy but because he was worried the trip would be exploited for political ends.³⁶⁵ Japanese conservatives pressed Miyazawa to visit Yasukuni Shrine in exchange for their support for the Emperor's visit, and McGregor has mentioned how Japan's business lobby – typically the most erstwhile supporters of open ties with Beijing – were too cowed by Japan's nationalists to speak up on behalf of the Emperor's visit.³⁶⁶ Indeed, this domestic skepticism of China's intentions made Japan's business interests far more reticent to advocate for economic liberalization.³⁶⁷

By the end of the decade, Japan was tiring of what they saw as China's constant demands for atonement and its failure to acknowledge Japan's earlier apologies.³⁶⁸ A Japanese national security official described how Hashimoto's premiership, and specifically his desire to move beyond relitigating the issue of apologies in Japan's relationship with China, was constrained by the Socialists in his coalition government.³⁶⁹ There was also a growing awareness of the limits of reconciliation diplomacy.³⁷⁰ This "apology fatigue" led Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo to deliver an oral apology rather than a written one.³⁷¹ Obuchi led a single-party government unconstrained by coalition partners like the Socialists or Ozawa, as one Japanese official said, giving him a freer hand on security policy.³⁷² But this also left him with a weak political base, and he could only secure a single written apology (for South Korea) from conservatives who would not even consider one for Jiang Zemin even despite his demands.³⁷³ Jiang Zemin's resulting discussion of history issues during a state dinner with the Emperor was particularly grating.³⁷⁴ Diplomat Okazaki Hisahiko said that Jiang's visit left the Japanese "feeling close to rage."³⁷⁵

This period reveals uncertainty for the future of Japan's relations with China, but the essential contours were in place for the period that would follow. The government, its bureaucracy, and the business sector were the most ostensibly optimistic about Japan's relations with Beijing as the conservatives were the most pessimistic and the most fatalistic and both sides had begun jostling and competing for Japan's China policy.

The U.S. political landscape and China in the 1990s: the strategic partnership

In this period the domestic political landscape was defined by the 1994 Republican Revolution when Newt Gingrich became speaker of the House and ideological moderates in the House and Senate began being replaced by ideological extremists, especially among Republicans. Following Ragusa's work, this period would be the beginning of a process where politicians would learn party loyalty and party rivalry

³⁶⁴ Vogel 2019, 356.

³⁶⁵ Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

³⁶⁶ McGregor 2017, 126.

³⁶⁷ Smith 2015, 49.

³⁶⁸ Vogel 2019, 377.

³⁶⁹ Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

³⁷⁰ Smith 2015, 27.

³⁷¹ Vogel 2019, 378.

³⁷² Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

³⁷³ McGregor 2017, 162.

³⁷⁴ Vogel 2019, 377.

³⁷⁵ McGregor 2017, 163.

with those lessons being internalized and deepening over time.³⁷⁶ Where incentives may have once driven politicians towards bipartisanship, as Trubowitz and Mellow describe was the case during the Cold War, incentives would now begin to drive them apart.³⁷⁷

China-U.S. relations during this period best captured what diplomatic historian and Mead described as the conflict between mercantilism and idealism.³⁷⁸ Once the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed, there was less of a geopolitical need to court China for the purposes of balancing the Soviet threat. Instead, China's growing economy and democratic protests fostered heady optimism among many U.S. decision makers that what happened in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union could happen in China. Mead writes that for Wilsonians, the Tiananmen Massacre was less a sign of the brutality of the communist regime or a revelation of its true nature, but a demonstration that democratic forces actually had a real chance of attaining power and that with the right combination of pressure and incentives the U.S. could force democratic change upon China.³⁷⁹ For others, the violent crackdown against student protestors in Tiananmen Square and the persistence of China's communist government more generally continued to define their image of China, especially after the 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis and once it was apparent that democratization was farther than ever. This optimism and cynicism defined the U.S. imagination of China in the 1990s.

If nothing else, the decade showed disillusionment and impatience with realpolitik. George H.W. Bush did not think of China as a peer competitor and instead thought its behavior could be shaped, which led to the development of the "responsible stakeholder" framework several years later.³⁸⁰ This was also a common theme during the period as many U.S. decision makers sounded convinced of U.S. agency in affecting change in China, that the country's future could be shaped by American influence rather than the United States acting as a bystander. For example, Republican Congressman Cliff Stearns said in 1996 that "we have the opportunity to effect a change in China's policies."³⁸¹

He also did not believe in a Sino-U.S. condominium, and the criticisms made against him for a possible disinterest in human rights likely reflect his instinct to preserve bilateral relations for the sake of geostrategic concerns.³⁸² That is not to say that Bush was deferential to China – he met with the Dalai Lama in 1992 over Beijing's objections and allowed Taiwan to join the GATT before China.³⁸³

But Bush's perceived disinterest gave Democrats their "cudgel" to attack the realpolitik Republican strategies of the Bush administration.³⁸⁴ Paul Blustein, who was a journalist with the *Washington Post* in the 1990s, described how the "demonization of China" had already begun despite the optimism from the White House.³⁸⁵ As McGregor described it, "In the early 1990s, China embodied everything members of

³⁷⁶ Ragusa 2016.

³⁷⁷ Trubowitz and Mellow, 2005.

³⁷⁸ Mead 2001, 139.

³⁷⁹ Mead 2001, 287.

³⁸⁰ Smith, Sheila A. Personal Interview, December 16, 2020.

³⁸¹ Stearns, Cliff (FL) "Announcement by the Speaker Pro Tempore." Congressional Record 142 No. 97 (June 26, 1996), pp H6987-H7026. (Text from: Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection); Accessed October 29, 2020.

³⁸² Green 2017, 430, 435.

³⁸³ Ibid 2017, 438.

³⁸⁴ Ibid 2017, 435.

³⁸⁵ Blustein, Paul. Personal Interview, December 18, 2020.

Congress believed the United States should stand against in the world.”³⁸⁶ The Democrat-controlled Congress was “indignant” at Bush’s China policy and demanded greater input, with Nancy Pelosi sponsoring a bill to extend the visas of students from China in the United States if they wished to stay (students of course made up the bulk of the protestors and victims in Tiananmen Square) – Bush vetoed the bill over public opinion to maintain relations with Chinese leaders.³⁸⁷ Yet both parties continued to publicly condition positive relations with China on progress on human rights issues. The 1992 Democratic platform conditioned favorable trade terms with China on its progress on human rights in China and Tibet,³⁸⁸ while the 1992 Republican platform advocated democratic reform in China, writing “Our policy toward China is based on support for democratic reform. We need to maintain the relationship with China so that we can effectively encourage such reform.”³⁸⁹

Democrats’ objections were not always based on humanitarian or idealist grounds or that Republicans had a monopoly on realpolitik – Democrat Stephen Solarz, the influential chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee’s Subcommittee on Asia and Pacific Affairs, even made the realpolitik argument himself for distancing from China given that the country was no longer necessary for balancing against the Soviet Union.³⁹⁰ The 1996 Democratic platform outlined its goals for China, writing “The Party supports the Administration’s policy of steady engagement to encourage a stable, secure, open and prosperous China -- a China that respects human rights throughout its land and in Tibet, that joins international efforts against weapons proliferation, and that plays by the rules of free and fair trade.”³⁹¹

Mead describes how commercialists and idealists would still collaborate on issues of common cause to each school, such as support for an independent judiciary, rule of law, and Taiwan.³⁹² Indeed, the push and pull of collaboration and conflict neatly summarized Washington’s approach to China during this period. China’s capabilities and intentions were still nascent or debated among U.S. planners and the United States was still flush from its success in the Cold War and rapid democratization of the former Warsaw Pact states in central and eastern Europe. Mead observes that China divided hawks and doves in unconventional ways, with Vietnam-era doves siding reuniting with neoconservative hawks in common concern over China’s human rights abuses and advocating for economic sanctions against the country, a pattern that would be seen in the congressional debate over extension of normalized trade relations with China.³⁹³

The United States has had a commercial interest in China since the earliest days of the republic.³⁹⁴ The U.S. business community has been described as “idealistic” with a mercantilist fascination with China’s market that led to outsized dreams of the country’s potential.³⁹⁵ George H.W. Bush argued that

³⁸⁶ McGregor 2017, 150.

³⁸⁷ Green 2017, 437.

³⁸⁸ Democratic Party Platforms, 1992 Democratic Party Platform Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/273264> [Accessed September 16, 2020]

³⁸⁹ Republican Party Platforms, Republican Party Platform of 1992 Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/273439> [Accessed September 16, 2020]

³⁹⁰ Cited in Green 2017, 430, 435.

³⁹¹ Democratic Party Platforms, 1996 Democratic Party Platform Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/273267> [Accessed September 16, 2020]

³⁹² Mead 2001, 168.

³⁹³ Ibid 2001, 288.

³⁹⁴ Mead 2001, 112-3.

³⁹⁵ Davidson, Mark. Personal Interview, December 17, 2020.

protectionism would have no positive effect on human rights in China and would even be counterproductive by isolating the United States from its allies in Asia and at the United Nations, so he appealed to the business sector and pro-trade Democrats like Montana's Max Baucus to make the argument.³⁹⁶ Hank Greenberg, John C. Whitehead, and Henry Kissinger – thought to be among America's "grantees" of the U.S.-China relationship sought a special meeting with Clinton in 1995 to warn him about the possibility of deteriorating relations with China.³⁹⁷ Of course, they had a special stake in positive U.S.-China relations given their various and significant financial holdings in its rapidly growing economy.

Then again, they may have also needed to make a special effort to get Clinton's attention on China. As president, he had not made a single policy speech on China during his first term and his National Security Council did not hold a meeting on China in his first three years in office.³⁹⁸ Even when pressed by the grantees, Clinton responded by pointing to the domestic issues he was facing at the time.³⁹⁹

The approach marked a shift for Bill Clinton, who attacked incumbent George H.W. Bush on the campaign trail for coddling the "butchers of Beijing," a position that his first Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, would say had left the administration "boxed in" on China.⁴⁰⁰ Human rights advocates wanted a clear linkage between MFN status and China's progress on human rights, as stated in the 1992 Democratic platform, while Clinton's economic advisors wanted quick MFN approval to take advantage of China's rapid growth.⁴⁰¹

Clinton's initial outreach towards China was built around human rights, but in 1993 Winston Lord led a State Department report that recommended "comprehensive engagement" with China that delinked human rights from other issues.⁴⁰² Beijing noticed the conflicting signals from Washington before Secretary of State Warren Christopher's disastrous 1994 trip to Beijing when he demanded improvements in China's human rights situation in exchange for access to the U.S. market – and his Chinese hosts responded by arresting dissidents and scolded and lectured Christopher so sternly that the U.S. delegation considered walking out. His hosts understood the disunity in the Clinton administration and could lecture Christopher confident that the U.S. business community would still lobby Clinton for China's MFN status.⁴⁰³

Ever the pragmatist, Clinton then embraced the idea of engaging China once it was clear that his initial coercive approach would not pay off.⁴⁰⁴ Clinton has been described as indulging in a "missionary complex" by arguing that WTO ascension would make China more like the United States.⁴⁰⁵ Outside experts began to worry that the White House and State Department were becoming too provocative toward China following the Taiwan Straits crisis and thought WTO membership could relieve some of the

³⁹⁶ Green 2017, 438.

³⁹⁷ McGregor 2017, 145.

³⁹⁸ Ibid 2017, 146.

³⁹⁹ Ibid 2017, 145.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid 2017, 462.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid 2017, pp. 462.

⁴⁰² Ibid 2017, 462-3.

⁴⁰³ McGregor 2017, 146; Green 2017, 463.

⁴⁰⁴ Blustein, Paul. Personal Interview, December 18, 2020.

⁴⁰⁵ Blustein, Paul. Schism: China, America and the Fracturing of the Global Trading System. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019. pp. 65.

pressure.⁴⁰⁶ Pro-Taiwan sentiment in Congress forced Warren Christopher to issue a visa to Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui, which help precipitate the 1995 Taiwan crisis that evidenced the weaknesses in China's PLA that motivated its leaders to pursue a rapid modernization.⁴⁰⁷ There was also a realpolitik motivation for Chinese membership in the WTO, as administration realists believed membership would reinforce mutual interdependence, provide an instrument for resolving disputes, and counteract zero-sum security competition.⁴⁰⁸ In 1995, Clinton's frustration with how he had been pushed into a corner by Congress led him to exclaim "I hate our China policy!" and complaining that granting them normalized trade relations with no reciprocal action by the Chinese.⁴⁰⁹

Senator Feinstein offered a similarly apologetic tone regarding China's progress, saying "When I first went to China in 1979, shortly after the end of the Cultural Revolution, no one would talk freely. You could not have a political conversation. It was a totally centrally controlled government. Now all of that has changed."⁴¹⁰ She further connected China's growth to its improvement on human rights, stating "The continued improvement in the economic well-being of China's citizens is critical to the continued growth of human rights. And continued trade with the United States is critical for the continued development of China's economy."⁴¹¹ Senator William Roth, a Republican, offered a similar sentiment, saying "United States businesses help advance human rights and civil society in China by being there, not by leaving or by being shut out...we have a better opportunity to influence China to act in ways we prefer when we enmesh it in the sort of economic relationships fostered by most-favored-nation trade status."⁴¹²

Conversely, Democratic Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi in 1996 disagreed with this idea, saying "I reject that notion of trickle-down liberty."⁴¹³ Democrat Max Baucus said that many Americans felt that China's rise was a threat to American prosperity.⁴¹⁴ Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and organized labor all mobilized against the WTO ascension bill, while the National Association of Manufacturers, Business Roundtable, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and National Retail Federation all mobilized in support.⁴¹⁵

For American observers – and unlike their counterparts in Japan – China's rise appeared to be a discrete concept on its own, an idea that would be mentioned with the expectation that the audience would immediately understand. Former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, a noted defense expert who had served as chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee had only retired from the Senate the year before when he gave

⁴⁰⁶ Green 2017, 477.

⁴⁰⁷ Green 2017, 470.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid 2017, 472.

⁴⁰⁹ McGregor 2017, 150.

⁴¹⁰ Feinstein, Diane (CA). "Setting the Record Straight on China." Congressional Record 142 (April 29, 1996) pp S4276-S4278. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 22, 2020.

⁴¹¹ Ibid 1996.

⁴¹² Roth, William (DE). "Unconditional MFN Status for China." Congressional Record 142 (June 5, 1996) pp S5781-S5785. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 29, 2020.

⁴¹³ Pelosi, Nancy (CA). "Announcement by the Speaker Pro Tempore." Congressional Record 142 No. 97 (June 26, 1996), pp H6987-H7026. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 29, 2020.

⁴¹⁴ Baucus, Max (MT). "Trade Mission to New Zealand and Australia." Congressional Record 151, No. 8 (February 1, 2005) pp. S735-S737. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 29, 2020.

⁴¹⁵ Blustein 2019, 64-65.

an address describing U.S.-China relations on the occasion of his acceptance of the Paul Nitze Award for Distinguished Public Service in 1997. He framed his remarks under the expressions “the emergence of China,” the “growing importance of China,” and the “rise of China.”⁴¹⁶ He marked this transformation through four specific transitions China was making: from a planned economy to a market economy, from rule by revolutionaries to rule by bureaucrats and professionals, from an agricultural society to an industrial society, and from a self-sufficient economy to one that is enmeshed in the global economy. The overall thrust of his speech was to emphasize that U.S.-China cooperation was the only path that could serve both U.S. and Chinese interests and he continually deemphasized potential threats towards China, such as U.S. alliances with Japan and South Korea, and criticism of China’s human rights practices were framed in terms of China’s economic self-interest, such as his comment “China's leaders jeopardize their nation's economic progress and domestic stability by not moving more rapidly toward the rule of law and expanding the opportunities of their populace to participate meaningfully in their own governance.”⁴¹⁷ Special attention was also given to the status of Hong Kong, since the formal transition would occur a few months after Senator Nunn’s speech.

Senator Robert Byrd, when he motioned to include Senator Nunn’s remarks in the Congressional Record, commented that if the then-current consensus on policy towards China broke down, “a historic opportunity of profound importance could be lost.”⁴¹⁸ In his speech, Senator Nunn described the U.S. debate over China as divided between those who thought historical patterns of a “love-hate” relationship were inevitable, that ideological differences were too great to permit a meaningfully cooperative relationship, and those who were concerned that any accommodations would be temporary given the wealth and power disparities between China and the United States at the time.⁴¹⁹

Senator Sam Nunn emphasized the gravity of the situation in a 1996 speech on the floor of the Senate that marked the basic tone of how Washington understood China’s rise where he said “History is littered with the uninformed and ineffective responses of an established power toward a rising power. often the rising power suffered from its own ambitions seeking to accelerate its rise through military means. In modern history, we need only recall the pre-World War II rise of Germany and Japan and the former Soviet Union and the opportunities and mistakes our country and the free world made in coping with their rise.”⁴²⁰

In 1996 Democratic Senator Sam Nunn said “We are now watching the rise of China – a development of at least equal historical significance and implication as the rise of Russia, Germany, and Japan. This is occurring with the important background of the rapid industrialization of Asia.”⁴²¹ Senator Nunn’s 1996 floor speech offered his suggestion for how the United States should address China’s rise: “History should teach us that established powers must provide consistent and credible signals about their

⁴¹⁶ Quoted in Byrd, Robert (WV). “Relationship with China.” Congressional Record 143 (January 30, 1997), pp S833-S835. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 22, 2020.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid 1997.

⁴¹⁸ Byrd, Robert. “Relationship with China.” Congressional Record 143 (January 30, 1997), pp S833-S835. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 22, 2020.

⁴¹⁹ Quoted in Byrd, Robert. “Relationship with China.” Congressional Record 143 (January 30, 1997), pp S833-S835. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 22, 2020.

⁴²⁰ Nunn, Sam (GA). “The Relationship between the United States and China.” Congressional Record 142 No. 22 (February 23, 1996), pp S1285-S1290. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 28, 2020.

⁴²¹ Ibid 1996.

expectations and set forth reasonable terms on which they are willing to incorporate the rising power into the international system.”⁴²²

Democratic Senator J. Bennett Johnston favorably referenced Fareed Zakaria’s line in the *New York Times* that the rise of China would be the defining event of the era. He elaborated that “It is happening so fast, its implications are so vast that it is an event that is being missed. And, certainly, the implications of the event are being missed by the vast proportion of Americans, and I submit, by most Members of this Congress”⁴²³ and contrasting modern China with the poverty that he saw during his visit in 1976.

Democratic Senator Diane Feinstein offered a similar comment when she stated 100 years from now, I have no doubt that when historians look back, the remarkable rise of China as a world power will be considered one of the most important international events in the latter half of the 20th century,” later describing its “ascendance as a great power and its impact as such.”⁴²⁴

China began to loom large – and perhaps menacingly – for the Clinton administration by 1996 as its defense spending grew by 15 percent each year and its military modernized rapidly buttressed by nuclear tests, and increased activity in the South China Sea.⁴²⁵ The 1996 Republican platform offered the first consideration of a potential military threat from China, writing that “Our relationship with the Chinese government will be based on vigilance with regard to its military potential, proliferation activities, and its attitude toward human rights, especially in Hong Kong.” This may have been informed by the Taiwan Strait crisis earlier in the year, when Bill Clinton sent two aircraft carrier groups to the region in response to Chinese provocations towards Taiwan in advance of its government’s presidential elections.

Strategic planners at the Pentagon had been thinking about China’s rise almost from the beginning, far more than their counterparts at the State Department.⁴²⁶ While the Pentagon officially announced that the Article V mutual defense commitment in the U.S.-Japan security treaty applied to the Senkakus, the State Department preferred neutrality on the issue.⁴²⁷ In advance of Jiang Zemin’s 1997 summit, the State Department and National Security Council adopted the “strategic partnership” framework between China and the United States.⁴²⁸ In response to this announcement, the “blue hat” group of conservative defense experts formed directed regular reports of the PLA’s military capabilities and lobbied Congress to require the Defense Department to produce annual reports on China’s military.⁴²⁹

In a 2000 op-ed for the *Washington Post*, journalist Tom Ricks wrote that “many American policymakers expect China to emerge sooner or later as a great power with significant influence over the rest of Asia... Some academics and Pentagon intellectuals see a parallel between the U.S. effort to manage the rise of

⁴²² Ibid 1996.

⁴²³ Johnston, J. Bennett (LA). “Foreign Relations Authorization Act Fiscal Years 1996 and 1997.” Congressional Record 142 (March 28, 1996), pp S3105-S3114. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 22, 2020.

⁴²⁴ Feinstein, Diane (CA). “Setting the Record Straight on China.” Congressional Record 142 (April 29, 1996) pp S4276-S4278. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 22, 2020.

⁴²⁵ Green 2017, 469.

⁴²⁶ Smith, Sheila A. Personal Interview, December 16, 2020.

⁴²⁷ Green 2017, 477.

⁴²⁸ Ibid 2017, 477.

⁴²⁹ Ibid 2017, 478.

China as a great power and the British failure to accommodate or divert the ambitions of a newly unified Germany in the late 19th century.”⁴³⁰

The floor debate in the Senate was often less about the practical benefits of expanding economic relations with China, but often took the tone of a jury charged with weighing its government’s fundamental value. Senator J. Bennet Johnston, a Democrat from Louisiana, further responded criticisms of China by saying “they are not nearly as bad as their neighbors. It is not threatening to invade Taiwan. It is certainly not threatening any of their other neighbors. They never have, Mr. President. They have committed themselves over and over again to what they called nonhegemony in the region. They are proceeding toward Westernization at an astonishing pace. Privatization. It may not be a democracy, Mr. President, but it is certainly not communism.”⁴³¹

Democratic Senator Feinstein was also critical of what she perceived as a double standard towards China, pointing specifically to the State Department’s annual report on human rights which she found was more critical of Chinese human rights practices than towards abuses in countries such as Kuwait or Russia.⁴³² She was critical of U.S. policy towards China, what she described as “probably our most important bilateral relationship in the world today” for “the lack of any conceptual framework or long-term strategy on the part of the United States for dealing with China. Instead, U.S. policy has been reactive and event-driven, responding to whatever happens to be the current revelation – generally about human rights. Each time we lurch from crisis to crisis, we call into question our entire relationship with China.”⁴³³ After criticizing the media for what she described as its universally negative coverage of China’s human rights situation, she counseled patience as the country progressed towards improved rule of law and human rights and encouraged U.S. engagement not only on economic liberalization but also even on the drafting of national legislation.

Conclusions

This period shows a clear influence of political partisanship, though not necessarily neatly or obviously. There appears to be little evidence that any of the specific shifts were from an appeal to public opinion, fear of audience costs, or that public pressure arbitrated whose voice was dominant. This may beg the assumption that decision makers were acting independently of public opinion, but the role of polarization shows its effect in a more nuanced way – rather than expressly aligning decision maker opinions with those of the public, decision makers emphasized areas of difference and exploited those for the sake of demonstrating a cleavage. This was especially the case for campaigns and Congress (especially the opposition party) who could attack the Executive’s foreign policy with little or no cost but possibly with considerable reward. The point was not the policy itself but the cleavage – while Clinton first attempted to stake out a China policy consistent with his campaign message distinguishing himself from Bush, policy pressures forced him in a different direction. As president, Clinton attempted to stake out a China policy consistent with the policy demands, but partisan messaging constrained his room for maneuver.

⁴³⁰ Ricks, Thomas E. “For Pentagon, Asia Moving.” *The Washington Post*, May 26, 2000.

⁴³¹ Johnston, J. Bennet (LA). “Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1996 and 1997 – Conference Report.” *Congressional Record* 142, no. 45 (March 28, 1996) pp S3015-S3114. (Text from *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed May 4, 2021.

⁴³² Feinstein, Diane (CA). “Setting the Record Straight on China.” *Congressional Record* 142 (April 29, 1996) pp S4276-S4278. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 22, 2020.

⁴³³ ⁴³³ *Ibid* 1996.

In other words, there was messaging on cleavages and governing on policy, two contradictory pressures for elected executives that pulled them in complicated and contradictory directions. It was not simply that bipartisanship disappeared, but that for many political actors there were more incentives to pursue divisions, much like the argument established by Trubowitz and Seo.⁴³⁴ Affective partisans did not so much advocate for a certain China policy (much as past literature has argued that political pressures influence an ability to pursue specific policy choices such as liberal internationalism) as much as they exploited differences between the parties to create polarized cleavages while the division of Washington into two camps on China policy, along with the growing polarization in Congress, had the practical effect of boxing in Executive decision makers. This kind of Manichean thinking made for fertile ground after the Republican Revolution of 1994 and the deepening polarization that followed from it – as politics became increasingly zero-sum, so too could a China policy that was predicated on a binary choice of engagement or containment. Blustein described how Republicans would feed stories into the press during this period that were “truly contentless” but would not have had legs if not for the backdrop of hyperpartisanship and anti-Chinese racism.⁴³⁵ There was a clear normative divide between those who sought engagement and those who sounded caution, and a relatively clear bureaucratic distinction such as the disagreements between the State Department and NSC’s adoption of the “strategic partnership” language and the Pentagon’s efforts to push for more reporting on Chinese military spending.

Political partisanship dictated the political space available to Clinton to shape his China policy. Clinton began campaigning against the “Butchers of Beijing” only to have to change course when confronted by events and by the practical reality of managing diplomacy with China against the varying interests in DC. It is not so much that Clinton himself changed – he recognized his dilemma when he said, frustratedly, that he would have campaigned against his own China policy – but both external events (Christopher’s visit to Beijing) and domestic ones (the push for engagement with China) made Clinton’s initial approach untenable.

Yet neither party was completely aligned on China policy. Parties helped organize perspectives but did not necessarily define them. Conservative “blue hats” in the Pentagon amplified the threat from China while Kissinger, Greenberg, and Whitehead, all Republican appointees or donors, appealed to Clinton to maintain open and amicable relations with China. Many Democrats in Congress still wanted human rights at the center of U.S. policy towards China even after Clinton’s turn towards a more pragmatic approach.

George W. Bush campaigned against Clinton’s China policy and conservatives attacked U.S. trade policy with China as a sellout of U.S. principles and an attack on American living standards.⁴³⁶ This may fit with Risse-Kappen’s observation that more open institutional systems like that of the United States leads to unpredictable and volatile policymaking.⁴³⁷ It also parallels Frieden’s account of the relative balance between internationalists and nationalists in the U.S. financial sector during the interwar years, with debates over openness or wariness taking the stage in this case.⁴³⁸ Similarly to Frieden’s finding, this period presented a dualistic and maybe irrational approach to China with different agencies pursuing different visions of China often simultaneously. It might not be inaccurate to say that the parties were

⁴³⁴ Trubowitz and Seo, 2012.

⁴³⁵ Blustein, Paul. Personal Interview, December 18, 2020.

⁴³⁶ Mead 2001, 271-2.

⁴³⁷ Risse-Kappen 1991.

⁴³⁸ Frieden 1998.

fairly close on China policy in general even as certain groups held meaningfully divergent perspectives towards China. But while partisanship was beginning to become increasingly instrumentalized for political gain, actions and interests were still pursued independent of parties.

While the United States saw polarizing cleavages beginning to deepen, Japan was trying to introduce cleavages of its own. One would then expect the LDP (and other parties) to become more unified on policy questions with less intraparty disagreement, but the constant forming and reforming of new parties limited the extent to which China would become a political issue while the LDP, who continued to supply most of the prime ministers during this period, continued to be divided between those who were wary and those who sought engagement. Instead, China's behavior, and specifically the 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis and Jiang Zemin's visit, put existing questions into sharper relief instead of creating new questions.

The self-concept of Japan and the United States vis-à-vis China is worth noting. Alexander Wendt describes the role of identity construction in states, and there are key differences between Japan and the United States that are relevant for their approach to China.⁴³⁹ Japan's relations with China were marked, even defined, by its imperialist aggression towards the country. This worked in two ways, either leading it to take a more contrite approach that was deferential to China's needs and concerns (typically held by Japan's left) or through resentment of that deference and hoping instead that Japan could stand up for its interests like a "normal" country (typically held on Japan's right). Smith noted how Japan's historical legacy guided its Japan policy more than geopolitical concerns and there was a basic agreement that Japan could not aspire to global leadership without first settling such history issues, rather than focusing on other factors that typically said to define global leadership.⁴⁴⁰

By contrast, the United States saw China as a normative challenge, even if not necessarily a threat. Implicit throughout senators' statements and newspaper op-eds on China is the burden of U.S. responsibility for facing China's rise, language not seen in Japan. There was a broad consensus among U.S. decision makers that China's behavior could be shaped, going back even to George H.W. Bush. Optimists, like Senators Feinstein and Roth, emphasized the progress China had made since the 1970s and argued that the right incentives could keep China on this path. The idea that deepening relations and trade with China would encourage democratic reforms was one of the main arguments for engagement, either expressly (like linking trade to human rights) or implicitly through the expectation that exposure to U.S. ideas and markets would act as an incentive or inspiration for Chinese to follow the same model. The discussion of whether human rights and similar norms should be promoted explicitly or implicitly defined much of the Clinton administration's approach and was responsible for his change of course from overtly demanding human rights concessions to promoting China's ascension to the WTO. The issue of agency is worth noting as well. Japan most always reacted to events rather than trying to shape them.

⁴³⁹ Wendt 1994.

⁴⁴⁰ Smith 2015, 17; McGregor 2017, 156.

Chapter 6

Politicizing China: 2000s

Introduction

This period shows the difference between public engagement and public detachment – for Japan, increased public attention on its country’s approach to China allowed leaders to claim rewards for the “right” approach while deviating too much from a given line could carry political costs, while in the United States public attention on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan gave decision makers working on U.S. policy towards Asia much more leeway to pursue a given approach with much less concern about political costs. In other words, this chapter allows a comparison of two different situations where China policy became much more highly politicized in Japan than in the United States.

Japan and the United States diverged in this period, both politically and regarding China. While there was a deepening realization of a security challenge from China, for Japan this period essentially saw a continuation of the debates from the previous decade but with greater intensity and a sense of higher stakes – where before there was a genuine discussion about how Japan could apologize for its imperialist atrocities, the frustrations with Jiang Zemin showed the limits of apologies and Japan’s leaders instead sought to show how they could stand up to foreign pressure rather than be dictated by it. Beyond this, a debate played out roughly between those who sought deeper engagement with China and those who began to emphasize it as a possible threat, but the LDP’s declining power, culminating with its defeat in 2009, limited the space available for prime ministers to seek their own course with China. The United States experienced the opposite situation – the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq dominated the minds of decision makers and political debates and gave Asia hands in the Bush administration more freedom to set U.S. policy towards China free of much significant domestic political pressure. The resulting policies could basically be summarized as engage-and-balance, reflecting U.S. decision makers own uncertainty about China’s future direction, reflecting both optimism for the economic relationship and caution about the security and political relationship.

Japan’s political landscape and China: Mutually beneficial relations based on common strategic interests

By this point, a common recognition emerged among Japanese elites of most every political inclination that China posed a long-term security threat to Japan, though it has sought to accommodate it and integrate it into the international community rather than confront or contain it.⁴⁴¹ As Smith wrote, “Japan’s vulnerabilities were becoming a source of domestic frustration just as the government was trying to adapt to China’s changing influence on Japanese society.”⁴⁴² The Koizumi administration was specifically when Japanese security experts first became concerned about the trajectory of China’s rise – relations with Jiang Zemin had been abysmal, especially following the experience with his official visit in 1998 and demands for a written statement. and China’s military and economic weight was growing rapidly and combined to focus greater attention on China’s potential threat to Japan.⁴⁴³

⁴⁴¹ Suzuki 2015.

⁴⁴² Smith 2015, 51.

⁴⁴³ Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

While there was tentative optimism, or even hopeful thinking, that Hu Jintao's leadership would be different from the contentiousness of Jiang's administration, there was a growing sense that China was using the apology issue to shame Japan into a deferential position while also relying on Chinese nationalism to help assert CCP rule domestically. Yanan He, writing in 2009, found that Japanese elite, even moderates, increasingly viewed China's evocations of Japanese imperialism to be insincere and evidence instead of growing Chinese nationalism,⁴⁴⁴ while Suzuki Shogo also found that Japanese moderates are growing "exasperated" with what they consider to be cynical attempts to pressure and manipulate Japan.⁴⁴⁵ In his paper on China as the "other" in Japan's identity construction, he shares a chart comparing the number of articles in Japanese newspapers containing the words "US," "Japan," and "Resolute" along with the words "China," "Japan," and "Resolute" in order to see which country formed the "other" in Japan's construction, with the left-leaning *Mainichi* far more concerned about the United States, the right wing *Sankei* clearly more concerned about China than any other paper, and the center-left *Asahi* and center-right *Yomiuri* somewhat more balanced in their expressions, but with the former leaning towards the United States and the latter leaning towards China (interestingly, the right wing *Sankei* was also more concerned with the United States than any other paper, but even this was dwarfed by its concern over China).⁴⁴⁶ Smith agrees that Japanese attitudes have grown more suspicious of China over the past decade and more skeptical of the rewards of cooperation, with the ground "shifting to how to say no to China rather than how to find common ground."⁴⁴⁷

Japan's 2002 Basic Strategy serves as a useful benchmark for understanding the Japanese government's perception of China. The Strategy described the country's relationship with China as "the most important theme in Japan's foreign policy at the outset of the 21st century."⁴⁴⁸ It included the People's Liberation Army's rapid modernization as a possible factor for instability in East Asia.⁴⁴⁹ Regarding economics, the 2002 Basic Strategy wrote that "Japan will be more directly influenced by Chinese economic development than any other country and has a responsibility to articulate a national economic vision under this new paradigm"⁴⁵⁰ and later emphasized the importance of regional economic integration "which should serve also to balance China's expanding sphere of influence."⁴⁵¹ For both countries, the relationship is one that interweaves 'cooperation and coexistence' with 'competition and friction.'⁴⁵² Significantly for this study, the Strategy wrote that "It is important that politics is not brought in too much to the economic aspects of the Japan-China relationship"⁴⁵³ (naturally begging the question of how politics might be brought into Sino-Japanese economic relations, as well as the fact that such a document

⁴⁴⁴ He, Yanan. *The Search for Reconciliation: Sino-Japanese and German-Polish Relations since World War II*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

⁴⁴⁵ Suzuki 2015.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid 2015.

⁴⁴⁷ Smith 2015, 56.

⁴⁴⁸ For comparison, the United States was "the most important country for Japan" and South Korea was "Japan's most important strategic partner in the region."

⁴⁴⁹ Tanaka Akihiko. "Basic Strategies for Japan's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century New Era, New Vision, New Diplomacy," November 28, 2002. *The World and Japan Database*, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS); Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia (IASA), The University of Tokyo. Accessed October 27, 2020.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid 2002.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid 2002.

⁴⁵² Ibid 2002.

⁴⁵³ Ibid 2002.

believed it could recommend that politics be left out of the discussion and expect that recommendation to be observed).

Yet the political space for China policy was narrowing as politics began creeping into the Japanese government's ability to set priorities on China. The so-called "China School" in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had enjoyed what has been described as a "tacit alliance" with camps in the LDP that dominated relations with Beijing.⁴⁵⁴ Yet the authority of these China hands had begun to diminish in the early 1990s and by the end of the 2000s disillusionment with Japan's attempts at reconciliation with Beijing coupled with the gradual unraveling of the LDP.⁴⁵⁵ Even Kato Koichi, the LDP's long-time go-between for relations with Beijing had to acknowledge that "The majority of LDP voters are anti-China."⁴⁵⁶ Akiba Takeo, a diplomat, might have gone even further, saying that "The public loves to see China bashed in the press."⁴⁵⁷

China's growing power and assertiveness, Japan's deepening awareness of the potential threat from China, and the increasing political contentiousness of Japan's relations with China combined to make a vexing decade for Japan's decision makers. Each of Japan's prime ministers during this era reflect the country's complicated relationship with China – Koizumi was sympathetic but unapologetic for his country, Abe tried to repair bilateral relations while staying true to his conservative base, Fukuda tried to mend bridges, and Aso focused on the threat.

Koizumi's relations with China came to be defined by his visits to Yasukuni Shrine, which memorializes Japan's war dead but also includes the souls of 14 Class-A war criminals from Japan's imperialist wars that were controversially interred in 1978 by the shrine's chief priest. His decision was unilateral and criticized – the Emperor ceased visiting the shrine to pay his respects and subsequent prime ministers have had to wrestle with paying earnest and genuine respects to Japan's war dead while delicately avoiding overt commemoration of the convicted war criminals.⁴⁵⁸ Politically, the shrine became a contested space, with the Chinese government infuriated that Japanese prime ministers would worship the criminals that brought so much death to China, and many Japanese becoming incredulous that a foreign government would lecture the country on how to commemorate their war dead. As a result, Yasukuni Shrine became a marker for rejecting foreign criticism of Japan.⁴⁵⁹ Suzuki argues that for what he calls Japan's idealist right (the political grouping often identified with Japanese conservatism and revisionism), confronting China became a matter of principle necessary to overcome Japan's "emasculated" postwar identity.⁴⁶⁰ Even Nakasone Yasuhiro's nationalist credentials could not save him from accusations that he had caved to Chinese pressure after China protested his visit to Yasukuni in the 1980s.⁴⁶¹

Koizumi hoped to find a balance between resisting Chinese pressure with expressing Japan's regret for its wartime atrocities.⁴⁶² It was not that Koizumi denied Japan's crimes – during an official visit to China he

⁴⁵⁴ McGregor 2017, 180.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid 2017, 181.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid 2017, 186.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid 2017, 201.

⁴⁵⁸ Fahey, Rob. "Untangling Yasukuni Shrine." *Tokyo Review*, August 16, 2017.

⁴⁵⁹ Smith 2015, 61.

⁴⁶⁰ Suzuki 2015.

⁴⁶¹ Smith 2015, 80.

⁴⁶² Vogel 2019, 379.

had visited the Marco Polo Bridge, the site of one of the earliest battles of the Sino-Japanese War, and other memorials to commemorate Japanese war crimes and repeatedly expressed his regret for Japan's actions. He had been a protégé of Fukuda Takeo who was vital in restoring China-Japanese relations and insisted to reporters that "I am not a right-winger...I have the same historical recognition as Maruyama [Tomiichi, the Socialist prime minister who formally apologized for Japan's wartime atrocities]." ⁴⁶³ He also rejected concerns about China's rise, saying "Some see the economic development of China as a threat. I do not" and offered a positive outlook for the potential of a rising China. ⁴⁶⁴

For him, the issue not about denying Japan's atrocities so much as it was his belief that no one should dictate whether or not he could pay his respects to Japan's war dead, a perspective that became popular with the Japanese public. ⁴⁶⁵ His motivation was to stop China from playing the history card in its relations with Japan, a view echoed by many Japanese conservatives who thought too many politicians and bureaucrats had been accommodating China with nothing to show for their efforts after Japan's diplomats had wrestled with the issue in the previous decade. ⁴⁶⁶ The LDP's 2005 platform alluded to this somewhat when it called for Japan to feel pride in its global role and to be a decisive regional leader of an Asian community. ⁴⁶⁷ The 2005 anti-Japan protests in China also steered the Japanese public away from China, with a *Yomiuri* poll showing that 72 percent of Japan did not trust China. ⁴⁶⁸ Koizumi's willingness to stand up to China endeared him to the public even if they were ambivalent about the issue of Yasukuni itself. ⁴⁶⁹

Yet even as Koizumi enjoyed the public's support, the LDP was divided and began to step back from his position, which Smith argues reveals that sensitivity to China drove the conversation rather than an embrace of the shrine as a nationalist symbol or historical revisionism. ⁴⁷⁰ LDP heavyweight Kato Koichi, for example, was a long-time go-between with Beijing. ⁴⁷¹ Koizumi's position also created unease among U.S. decision makers. The Pentagon viewed history issues through the lens of security and worried that Koizumi was using up precious political capital with China over the visits, while Michael Green, who served as Asia director at the U.S. National Security Council at the time, worried a U.S. statement on Koizumi's Yasukuni visits would be exploited by China and Japan's left while being seen as a betrayal by Japan's conservatives. ⁴⁷² One LDP official said that Japanese critics of China were also anti-American, so for the sake of both Bush and Koizumi it was best to "keep the 'ultranationalists' at bay." ⁴⁷³

After Koizumi left office, there was still a recognition of the sensitivity of gestures like visiting Yasukuni Shrine, and to that end Abe promised China that he would not visit the controversial shrine during his

⁴⁶³ McGregor 2017, 174, 176.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid 2017, 177.

⁴⁶⁵ Vogel 2019, 380.

⁴⁶⁶ McGregor 2017, 177, 178.

⁴⁶⁷ Volkens, Andrea / Burst, Tobias / Krause, Werner / Lehmann, Pola / Matthieß Theres / Merz, Nicolas / Regel, Sven / Weßels, Bernhard / Zehnter, Lisa (2020): The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR). Version 2020a. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB). [Accessed September 10, 2020]

⁴⁶⁸ Vogel 2019, 384.

⁴⁶⁹ Smith 2015, 80.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid 2015, 93.

⁴⁷¹ McGregor 2017, 180.

⁴⁷² Ibid 2017, 193, 198.

⁴⁷³ Ibid 2017, 198.

visit to Beijing in 2007.⁴⁷⁴ In fact, he became the first Japanese prime minister to visit China on his first visit as head of state, breaking the custom of the prime minister making the United States their first overseas visit.⁴⁷⁵ Abe was described as “hard-headed, even cynical” towards Beijing as he recognized that China would court Japanese investment even as it stoked anti-Japanese sentiment among the public.⁴⁷⁶ Abe also had a deep distrust of the Foreign Ministry and tried to bypass it wherever possible by relying on his personal emissaries (perhaps anticipating his reforms to centralize foreign policy decision making in his second administration).⁴⁷⁷

Fukuda Yasuo also hoped to improve relations with China.⁴⁷⁸ With his father’s role in opening relations with China in the 1970s, Fukuda went so far as to say that he believes that his family has an obligation to maintain stable relations with China.⁴⁷⁹ In 2008, Fukuda summarized his perspective on China succinctly, saying “Clearly it is critical that China as a major nation develop in a stable manner, and for that sake, Japan intends to cooperate with China where it is able. My personal perspective is that Japan must pursue these initiatives with an eye to ensuring a better future for Asia as a whole.”⁴⁸⁰ Notably, supporters of Fukuda were concerned that his tenuous popularity wouldn’t survive the visit from Hu Jintao amidst the public outcry over poisoned dumplings and overall wariness towards China.⁴⁸¹

Aso Taro emphasized the military threat from China and even suggested that the Emperor himself visit Yasukuni Shrine, brandishing his conservative credentials while emphasizing his differences with pro-engagement Fukuda.⁴⁸² Aso criticized Fukuda and other “liberals” not just for accommodating China but for being out of touch with public opinion.⁴⁸³ As foreign minister, his 2006 discussion of “value-oriented diplomacy” where he outlined the “arc of freedom and prosperity” is notable, and labeling both new expressions as the base of Japan’s foreign policy.⁴⁸⁴ For Aso, this meant placing emphasis on “universal values” such as human rights, democracy, freedom, rule of law, and market economics as part of an “arc” of democracies stretching across Eurasia.⁴⁸⁵ He furthermore took a somewhat nationalist perspective towards this when he said that a values-driven diplomacy would signal a Japan that no longer needed to be ashamed of its past rather than having reconciled it before claiming precedents to these modern values in the Kamakura period (roughly 1200 AD) and Edo era (1603-1868). In making this same case to the Diet, he mentioned the importance of economic relations with China and for continuing to develop

⁴⁷⁴ Vogel 2019, 384.

⁴⁷⁵ Takeuchi, Hiroki. “Sino-Japanese Relations: Power, Interdependence, and Domestic Politics.” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* vol. 14 pp. 7-32. 2014.

⁴⁷⁶ McGregor 2017, 203.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid 2017, 203.

⁴⁷⁸ Vogel 2019, 386.

⁴⁷⁹ McGregor 2017, 310.

⁴⁸⁰ Fukuda Yasuo. “When the Pacific Ocean Becomes an ‘Inland Sea’: Five Pledges to a Future Asia that ‘Acts Together,’” May 22, 2008. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

⁴⁸¹ McGregor 2017, 215.

⁴⁸² Ibid 2017, 185-186.

⁴⁸³ Ibid 2017. pp. 217.

⁴⁸⁴ Aso Taro. “Speech by Mr. Taro Aso, Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the Occasion of the Japan Institute of International Affairs Seminar, “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan's Expanding Diplomatic Horizons.” November 30, 2006.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid 2006.

mutually beneficial relations based on common strategic interests, giving the country roughly the same attention that was given to Japan's other neighbors.⁴⁸⁶

The U.S. political landscape and China: The responsible stakeholder

According to McGregor, Asia policy in Washington, DC has “generally been crafted with respect to expertise,” unlike U.S. policy toward the Middle East which he described as a “free-fire zone in [U.S.] domestic politics.”⁴⁸⁷ Indeed, almost the entire decade was dominated by the free-fire zone over the Middle East as 9/11 and war in Iraq cast a shadow over everything. Partisan polarization was also low early in the decade compared to the previous decade, though it spiked in 2008.⁴⁸⁸

Initially the response to 9/11 dominated decision makers' attention, with China planning became event-driven and motivated by not much more than solving the immediate problem of the day,⁴⁸⁹ but one of the effects of this was to isolate the China policy debate from political squabbles. Green described how 9/11 shifted the discussion on China from a binary friend-or-foe debate and “allowed for a more nuanced and consistent policy of engagement.” There was a sense of gravity as well – in a comprehensive 2005 speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, Republican Congressman Mark Kirk drew parallels between China's rise and the rise of the United States, while also cautioning that the last time the United States went to war with a foreign adversary with a larger economy, British troops occupied Washington, DC in 1814.⁴⁹⁰

The George W. Bush administration made meaningful changes to the previous administration's approach to China when it entered office. It replaced Clinton's language of a “strategic partnership” with language identifying China as a “strategic competitor,” with Bush elaborating that that “China would be respected as a great power but in a region of strong democratic alliances.”⁴⁹¹ His succinct three-word goal for the U.S.-China relationship during his administration was “cooperative, constructive, and candid.”⁴⁹² Green wrote that the administration planned to manage China's rise through a “mix of engagement and shoring up a favorable strategic equilibrium centered on the maritime democracies.”⁴⁹³ Bush also consistently raised issues of religious freedom, rule of law, freedom of expression, pressed for release of political prisoners, and met with dissidents.⁴⁹⁴ Green describes how Bush was “compelled by his own faith” which drove his idealism, and conservatives embraced his combination of idealism and realism.⁴⁹⁵

That is not to say that the Bush administration or even the Republican Party were aligned on the U.S. approach to China. The 2000 Republican platform was explicitly more circumspect than the Democratic platform when discussing China, writing “China is a strategic competitor of the United States, not a

⁴⁸⁶ Aso Taro. “Policy Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs Taro Aso to the 166th Session of the Diet,” January 26, 2007. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

⁴⁸⁷ McGregor 2017, pp. 191.

⁴⁸⁸ Brooks and Manza 2013.

⁴⁸⁹ Smith, Sheila A. Personal Interview, December 16, 2020.

⁴⁹⁰ Kirk, Mark (IL). “The Case for a Special Relationship with China.” Congressional Record 150, No. 76 (June 3, 2004), H3773-H3777. (Text from: *Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection*); Accessed October 29, 2020.

⁴⁹¹ Green 2017, 484.

⁴⁹² Ibid 2017, 485.

⁴⁹³ Ibid 2017, 485.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid 2017, 495.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid 2017, 513.

strategic partner. We will deal with China without ill will — but also without illusions.”⁴⁹⁶ Yet its more concrete policy proposals were almost identical to those of the Democrats, as the platform wrote “Republicans support China’s accession into the World Trade Organization, but this will not be a substitute for, or lessen the resolve of, our pursuit of improved human rights and an end to proliferation of dangerous technologies by China.”⁴⁹⁷

While Bush clearly took a less accommodating view of China’s role than what the Clinton administration began to signal with its “strategic partnership” language, this still did not go far enough for conservative hawks like those at the Project for a New American Century, a neoconservative think tank, and the editors of the *Weekly Standard*, who in 1999 scolded the Republican Party because it “loved commerce more than it hated communism.”⁴⁹⁸ Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld brought members of the conservative “blue hat” group into the Defense Department.⁴⁹⁹ Rumsfeld was more clearly a hawk on China, and made fun of Secretary of State Colin Powell’s push for a diplomatic resolution following the April 2001 collision between a PLA fighter jet and a U.S. EP-3 surveillance flight (Powell secured the return of the crew with no U.S. apology ten days after the collision).⁵⁰⁰

Still, Bush’s cautious approach persevered. In 2005, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick was tasked with crafting a longer-term vision that would capture the opportunity and disagreement with China, eventually creating the “responsible stakeholder” framework.⁵⁰¹ When pressed by his Chinese counterparts on the meaning of the expression (they were content with the previous “strategic partnership” framework), Zoellick replied that “partnerships” were only reserved for countries with common norms as the United States like Australia and Japan and made clear that China could still make positive contributions to the international order.⁵⁰²

This perception was reflected somewhat in the 2008 Democratic platform, which expressed cautious optimism on China, writing that “We will encourage China to play a responsible role as a growing power—to help lead in addressing the common problems of the 21st century...It’s time to engage China on common interests like climate change, trade, and energy, even as we continue to encourage its shift to a more open society and a market-based economy, and promote greater respect for human rights, including freedom of speech, press, assembly, religion, uncensored use of the internet, and Chinese workers’ right to freedom of association, as well as the rights of Tibetans”⁵⁰³

A practical illustration of making China a responsible stakeholder was its role in the Six-Party Talks with North Korea. At the time, the Bush administration was still preoccupied with the war in Iraq and the broader War on Terror, giving them an additional motive to “devolve” the North Korea issue to China.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁶ Republican Party Platforms, 2000 Republican Party Platform Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/273446> [Accessed September 16, 2020]

⁴⁹⁷ Republican Party Platforms, 2000 Republican Party Platform Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/273446> [Accessed September 16, 2020]

⁴⁹⁸ Green 2017, 485.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid 2017, 485.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid 2017, 489.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid 2017, 497.

⁵⁰² Ibid 2017, 497.

⁵⁰³ Democratic Party Platforms, 2008 Democratic Party Platform Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/278858> [Accessed September 16, 2020]

⁵⁰⁴ Smith, Sheila A. Personal Interview, December 16, 2020.

China's convening of the Six-Party talks was seen as a "diplomatic coming-of-age" for Beijing.⁵⁰⁵ Christopher Hill, U.S. pointman on the talks, complained that the negotiations had been forced on him by the "East Asia Security Club" of DC, and even came to hate working with Tokyo.⁵⁰⁶ The approach was effectively over once Hu Jintao embraced North Korea's Kim Jong-un after North Korea shelled a South Korean island.⁵⁰⁷ There was a perception in Washington that China had been taking advantage of the United States and the sinking of a ROK vessel drove home the idea that the current U.S. approach was not working.⁵⁰⁸

Trade and economics were the most contested political space of this period. The hope that economic engagement could moderate Chinese elites and eventually lead to economic and even political liberalization (the motivations that led the United States to support China's membership in the WTO) was pitted against the suspicion that China was cheating by dumping cheap products on the U.S. market and undercutting U.S. workers, driving down wages and causing massive unemployment. The perception that China is a cheater is almost always taken for granted among U.S. foreign policy elites and pundits despite China's fairly standard compliance record at the World Trade Organization (as well as the fact that Japan, whose economy is far more exposed to trade with China than the United States, did not experience similar job disruptions following China's ascension to the WTO).⁵⁰⁹

Support for economic engagement with China came from both Republicans and moderate Democrats. The George W. Bush administration held off on pursuing safeguard cases against China (though not antidumping cases) from fear of disrupting the broader trade relationship.⁵¹⁰ Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson was extremely optimistic about working with China⁵¹¹ and he helped initiate the Strategic and Economic Dialogue with China to make progress on market access and expand economic cooperation.⁵¹² The Bush administration also gave China space to pursue economic reforms, even allowing it to depreciate its currency, in the belief that China would eventually overcome the growing pains of becoming a member in the rules-based economic order.⁵¹³ Meanwhile in Congress, Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman, in introducing the United States-China Engagement Act of 2005, (predictably, given the name of the bill) spoke in favor of engaging China and deepening American knowledge of the country in order to take advantage of China's large and growing consumer market.⁵¹⁴

The 2000 Democratic platform advocated engagement with China, consistent with the Clinton administration's approach, writing that "we must continue to engage China - a nation with 1.3 billion people, a nuclear arsenal, and a role in the 21st Century that is destined to be one of the basic facts of international life. We must search out ways to cooperate across a broad range of issues, such as the environment and trade, while at the same time, insisting on adherence to international standards on human

⁵⁰⁵ McGregor 2017, 209.

⁵⁰⁶ McGregor 2017, 210.

⁵⁰⁷ Green, Michael. Personal Interview, December 22, 2020.

⁵⁰⁸ McGregor 2017, 255.

⁵⁰⁹ Blustein 2019, 9.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid 2019, 125-6.

⁵¹¹ Ibid 2019, 128.

⁵¹² Green, 2017, 498.

⁵¹³ Blustein 2019, 227.

⁵¹⁴ Lieberman, Joe (CT). "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions." Congressional Record 151, No. 71 (May 25, 2005) pp. S5923-S5936. (Text from: Congressional Record Permanent Digital Collection); Accessed October 29, 2020.

rights, freedom, the persecution of religions, the suppression of Tibet, and bellicose threats directed at Taiwan... China cannot be ignored, and these issues cannot - and must not - be marginalized.”⁵¹⁵

Instead, it was the 2008 Financial Crisis which had a more significant impact on the United States’s relationship with Asia, as the crisis – and ensuing political deadlock about how to respond – badly affected U.S. confidence, especially when contrasted with China’s massive and rapidly-passed economic stimulus package.⁵¹⁶

Conclusion

The way in which Japan changed its approach to “apology diplomacy” begins to reveal how domestic political groups response to the evolving geopolitical environment may empower or marginalize certain groups and perceptions. At the beginning of the 1990s, the predominant view of Japan’s relationship with China was one of contrition, a sense of guilt and obligation that required a certain deference to China’s position, but by the end of the 2000s politicians could be buoyed more by their willingness to stand up to China’s demands. Part of this is unquestionably the result of China overplaying its hand diplomatically as PRC leadership sought to leverage nationalism to solidify its domestic rule. But the result for Japan was the emergence of politicians more willing to assert Japan’s perspective and not feel as encumbered by Chinese demands, showing that it was not simply geostrategic conditions that changed Japan’s behavior but also domestic political conditions. Koizumi illustrates this well in the sense that he was not a historical revisionist but insisted that Japan could commemorate its war dead on its own terms. The contrite view, though never vanishing, faded into the background as it became apparent that China’s requests for an apology were more cynical than sincere. According to Suzuki, the way that Japan’s left sees China is increasingly like that of Japanese conservatives, with both viewing China as “a bullying state that attempts to force Japan into making unjust compromises with China,” even converging with the broad contours of the political discussion about China in the United States.⁵¹⁷

What is also interesting is that the DPJ did not take up a contrary position to Koizumi and the LDP despite what one might expect from an emerging two-party system. In fact, it was the LDP that was divided over Koizumi’s stance out of concern that his Yasukuni visits might jeopardize Japan’s potential economic gains in China. The 2005 DPJ platform called for rebuilding Japan’s relations with China as one of the top priorities for Japanese diplomacy.⁵¹⁸ The Social Democratic Party was more explicit, criticizing Koizumi’s visits to Yasukuni Shrine, and said as much in its 2005 platform, advocating instead for restoring the trust of Japan’s Asian neighbors.⁵¹⁹

For the United States, in the 1990s there was dispute over China’s future role; in the 2000s, there was a certain top-level consensus about understanding China as something to be cautiously engaged with. This consensus, even superficial, may reflect Green’s observation that the furor over the Iraq War and broader

⁵¹⁵ Democratic Party Platforms, 2000 Democratic Party Platform Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/273271> [Accessed September 16, 2020]

⁵¹⁶ McGregor 2017, 240.

⁵¹⁷ Suzuki 2015

⁵¹⁸ Volkens, Andrea / Burst, Tobias / Krause, Werner / Lehmann, Pola / Matthieß Theres / Merz, Nicolas / Regel, Sven / Weßels, Bernhard / Zehnter, Lisa (2020): The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR). Version 2020a. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB). [Accessed September 10, 2020]

⁵¹⁹ Ibid

War on Terror allowed space for a more nuanced debate on China. While that may hold at the level of the Executive Branch, in Congress and elsewhere there was remarkable anger toward China for perceived unfair trade practices.

Even so, Japan seems to have reached a consensus on China before the United States. It might be ironic to say that China was less politically contested in Japan than it was in the United States, but certain concerns that were elevated in the United States, such as human rights and the economic balance, were never really contested in Japan. One reason may be that, unlike the United States, Japan actually experienced job growth as imports from China increased – in fact, using the same methodology that demonstrated U.S. job loss following the growth in imports from China, Mina Taniguchi showed that Japanese labor markets saw job *growth* rather than losses.⁵²⁰ Many Japanese companies do more business in China than in Japan and its balance of trade with China has been consistently positive unlike China’s trade balance with the United States.⁵²¹ The different experiences with China’s ascension to the WTO provide a sort of control factor for understanding how Japan and the United States responded differently to China’s behavior – for Japan, economic relations would be an effective release valve for maintaining a constructive relationship with China while for the United States its economic relationship with China would come to be one of the points which most discredited its proponents of engagement. As will be seen in the next chapter, the result was that Japan was able to maintain the space to continue positive relations with China while the United States became more deeply entrenched in confrontation.

⁵²⁰ Solis, Mireya. “Follower No More? Japan’s Leadership Role as a Champion of the Liberal Trading Order.” Published in The Crisis of Liberal Internationalism: Japan and the World Order. Yoichi Funabashi and G. John Ikenberry, eds. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2020.

⁵²¹ Vogel 2019, 394.

Chapter 7

Politicizing China: 2010s

Introduction

This chapter will demonstrate how the patterns explored in the two preceding chapters have informed the events in the current chapter, though with greater clarity as to how the international context can set the political question with China's increasingly assertive behavior under Xi Jinping putting a finer point on concerns about China's trajectory and undermining the case for engagement, perhaps fatally. Japan's relationship with China was highly contentious at the beginning of the decade though became more settled in keeping with the more settled political situation domestically, while the U.S. relationship with China has become one of the key international questions for U.S. decision makers and a significant domestic political question as well. This demonstrates that domestic political factors are still significant in setting a country's approach to the international setting even as the setting itself may have meaningfully changed.

By this point, both the nature of the challenge from China had become clearer and party systems in both countries began to show the effects of the changes that had begun in 1994. Japan and the United States reached these points in different ways – Japan's perception of China had been steadily becoming more threatened by China's assertiveness and of the limits of Japan's ability to push back, while its political system saw its biggest shock in 55 years with the election of the DJP and, supposedly, the opportunity to try a new approach to China. Decision makers in the United States, and particularly in the Obama administration, understood that China's ascension to great power status was inevitable but were less decisive about the nature of Chinese power, while increasing domestic polarization began to mark the entirety of Obama's relationship with Congress during this period.

By 2016, decision makers in both countries had essentially reached a consensus on the nature of China under the regime of Xi Jinping, but the political meaning was markedly different – for Japan, the fraught debate over responding to the Senkaku Islands disputes never formed into a broader anti-China coalition even as nationalist conservatives asserted their presence in the debate and the issue never gained much salience once the proximate crisis subsided. For the United States, China became a meaningful point of contention on debates related to economics, security, the environment, and geopolitics and became fodder for political campaigns. By the end of the period, a broad if loose coalition had formed that saw China as a geopolitical threat that demanded a U.S. response with almost everything related to it, even the Chinese diaspora in the United States, becoming fair game for politicization. In both cases, while China's behavior changed markedly under Xi's leadership, the ways in which Japan and the United States reacted to China's behavior was decisively guided by each country's domestic politics rather than simply a reaction to Chinese behavior.

Japan's political landscape and China: Grey Zones

Japan's relations with China during this period became less of an abstract as the Japanese public came to see a series of incidents with China that were capable of impacting their daily lives, making compromise more difficult and creating openings for political opportunists who might be willing to exploit such unease.⁵²² This also had the effect of diversifying Japan's "China stakeholders" to a broader set of

⁵²² Smith 2015, 237.

business, veterans, and consumer groups that were not always interested in a conciliatory approach.⁵²³ Adam Liff points to the 2008-2012 period as precipitating a major shift in Japanese and U.S. perceptions about China's intentions.⁵²⁴ China's military modernization and moves in the South China Sea were mostly overlooked in the mid-2000s and notes that leaders in both Tokyo and Washington see China's rhetoric and behavior as "corrosive of international law and rules-based norms."⁵²⁵ Writing in 2015, Smith described Japan's response to China well, writing that "China's influence is testing Japan's ability to reform itself and to continue to rely on the norms and principles that have formed its own postwar ascension to global power."⁵²⁶ Japan's reaction to China rise has focused less on revising national strategy and more on reforming its existing policies, rather than ideological impulses of either decision makers or the public.⁵²⁷

The 1994 electoral reforms' promise of ushering in a true two-party system appeared to become good with the Democratic Party of Japan's election in 2009. The DPJ had been steadily growing towards this for about a decade and finally not only won a majority consigned the LDP to minority status. Smith has noted that Japan's leadership transitions have helped determine its diplomatic relationship with China and this period would illustrate that rule.⁵²⁸

But while the electoral reform may have made a DPJ win possible, it could not on its own prepare the DPJ for governance. 64 years of LDP rule had helped solidify an "iron triangle" in decision making composed of the LDP, bureaucracy, and business whose familiarity and long-standing relationships allowed them almost to govern in concert and in each other's interests. As a former bureaucrat for the Foreign Ministry described, the LDP had been in power for so long that it had irreplaceable experience and practice in operating the policymaking machinery, and the Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Office similarly had experience working with the LDP becoming politically influential and relevant for public affairs.⁵²⁹

The DPJ not only lacked this institutional advantage, but actively campaigned against the power of the bureaucracy. Once in office, they put their campaign pledges to work, replacing the LDP's regular question-and-answer sessions with bureaucrats with what have been described as media opportunities for passing judgement on bureaucrats.⁵³⁰ In response, bureaucrats began to withdraw from the government for their own protection.⁵³¹ A high-ranking MOFA official who is now retired but worked with DPJ leadership described "structural defects" in the DPJ's decision making.⁵³² Instead of the bureaucracy, the DPJ government relied on a specific key individual for a specific crisis but was unable to implement a

⁵²³ Ibid 2015, 238.

⁵²⁴ Liff, Adam. "Proactive Stabilizer: Japan's Role in the Asia-Pacific Security Order." Published in *The Crisis of Liberal Internationalism: Japan and the World Order*. Yoichi Funabashi and G. John Ikenberry, eds. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2020.

⁵²⁵ Ibid 2020, 47-48.

⁵²⁶ Smith 2015, 250.

⁵²⁷ Ibid 2015, 244, 255.

⁵²⁸ Ibid 2015, 234.

⁵²⁹ Interview, High-Ranking Former MOFA Official, January 29, 2021.

⁵³⁰ Ibid

⁵³¹ Ibid

⁵³² Ibid

more formal decision making structure and – critically for the heterogenous DPJ – was unable to harmonize the party’s dissonant views into a coherent policy.

This was especially an issue for the DPJ’s first prime minister, Hatoyama. His key diplomatic initiative for the region was to build an East Asian “community of nations” based on his belief the U.S.-led model of globalization was ending and his intention was to instead make Asia the center of attention for Japan acting as a bridge between the United States and East Asia, as did his immediate successor Kan Naoto to a lesser extent.^{533,534} Hatoyama believed his defeat over the LDP gave him a public mandate for this initiative, and went so far as to tell Hu Jintao that he aimed to downgrade Japan’s relationship with the United States and build a new relationship with China.⁵³⁵

Many in the DPJ were frustrated with Hatoyama’s approach and saw him as an amateur in his relations with Beijing.⁵³⁶ Part of it was down to a lack of administrative finesse –his vision was unclear and his administration sent conflicting messages and made it clear that his administration, politicians, and bureaucrats were not on the same page.⁵³⁷ Nagashima Akihisa, vice minister of defense in Kan Naoto’s cabinet, mentioned that the “DPJ started out very friendly to China.”⁵³⁸ The DPJ’s election was described as a “golden opportunity” for China by (now retired) diplomat Miyake Kunihiko,⁵³⁹ but for its part China did not believe that Hatoyama’s premiership was an opportunity they could exploit and so they were not so interested in working with him.

In 2010, Kan Naoto, Hatoyama’s successor, approached China more similarly to his LDP predecessors, calling for mutually beneficial relations based on common strategic interests. However, he also called attention towards China’s growing military capabilities and “ambitious maritime activities.” In response to these developments, he stated “We hope and expect that China will speak and act in a manner befitting its role as a responsible member of the international community. Both countries need to proceed with calm as we respond to the various issues that could arise between us.”⁵⁴⁰

In keeping with Kan’s concerns, the 2011 National Defense Program Guidelines identified China as a major growing power whose increased defense spending, military modernization, growing maritime ambitions, and lack of transparency were “of concern for the regional and global community.”⁵⁴¹ The Guidelines also recognized China’s rise (along with that of Russia and India, as well as the “relative change of influence” of the United States).⁵⁴² Still, the Guidelines recommended continued engagement

⁵³³ McGregor 2017, 219.

⁵³⁴ Vogel 2019, 386.

⁵³⁵ McGregor 2017, 223.

⁵³⁶ McGregor 2017, 227-228.

⁵³⁷ Ibid 2017, 224.

⁵³⁸ Ibid 2017, 287.

⁵³⁹ Ibid 2017, 245.

⁵⁴⁰ Kan Naoto. “Policy Speech by Prime Minister Naoto Kan at the 176th Extraordinary Session of the Diet,” October 1, 2010. Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet.

⁵⁴¹ “National Defense Program Guidelines for FY 2011 and beyond,” December 17, 2010. Ministry of Defense of Japan.

⁵⁴² Ibid 2010.

with China consistent with the existing model of a “mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests,” encouraging China to take “responsible actions in the international community.”⁵⁴³

Yet that was not what would define Kan’s approach to China. In September 2010, a Chinese fishing trawler collided with a Japanese Coast Guard vessel and the captain was detained by Japanese authorities, sparking a furious reaction from China who demanded the immediate release of the captain and his crew. In a particularly unsettling development for Japan, an apparent Chinese embargo on rare earths imports to Japan undermined the argument for economic cooperation and exposed vulnerabilities in Japan’s relationship with the Chinese market.⁵⁴⁴ It also raised questions about China’s future role as a rulemaker in the international system.⁵⁴⁵ While the “embargo” was in fact the result of issues with Chinese domestic production rather than a deliberate coercive measure, Chinese officials still behaved as though the embargo was consciously directed toward Japan and said as much in their conversations with U.S. officials.⁵⁴⁶

The arrest of the Chinese boat captain came just as Kan Naoto and Ozawa Ichiro were jostling for DPJ leadership.⁵⁴⁷ Ozawa was seen as pro-Beijing, so much so that Maehara Seiji told his U.S. counterparts not to trust him since Ozawa always tells his audience what they want to hear, though McGregor describes him less as pro-China than anti-LDP.⁵⁴⁸ On the other hand, Kan had the support of Maehara, who had described China’s rising military budget as a direct threat to Japan.⁵⁴⁹ With Hatoyama gone and Kan in office (and Maehara named as foreign minister, someone extremely unpopular with the Chinese⁵⁵⁰), Japan’s leadership moved closer to mainstream public opinion on China.⁵⁵¹

But the captain was released to China later that month out of concern for the impact the incident was having on Sino-Japanese relations.⁵⁵² Kan was said to have “panicked under pressure,” and ordered the captain’s release.⁵⁵³ Nagashima Akihisa, vice minister of defense in Kan’s cabinet, described how the DPJ was swept up in the “emotional patriotism” worked up by the incident and felt compelled to do something.⁵⁵⁴ Even so, the Kan administration’s handling of the crisis was seen as a humiliation for Japan.⁵⁵⁵

Even if Kan had moved closer to “mainstream” public opinion on China, the political toll that the crisis wrought on his premiership illustrates the narrow political space for the DPJ to navigate domestically on China and the short leash the party held before accusations of being “soft on China” became corrosive. The DPJ’s entire mission became survival. Koizumi’s credentials as someone who could stand up to Chinese pressure were almost unassailable given his stance on visiting Yasukuni Shrine, an advantage

⁵⁴³ Ibid 2010.

⁵⁴⁴ Smith 2015, 240.

⁵⁴⁵ Blustein 2019, 3.

⁵⁴⁶ McGregor 2017, 265.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid 2017, 262.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid 2017, 243-244.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid 2017, 262.

⁵⁵⁰ Smith 2015, 194.

⁵⁵¹ McGregor 2017, 263.

⁵⁵² “Japan frees Chinese boat captain amid diplomatic row.” *BBC News*, September 24, 2010.

⁵⁵³ McGregor 2017, 265.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid 2017, 272.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid 2017, 265.

that Japan's DPJ did not enjoy.⁵⁵⁶ Suzuki noted that both LDP and DPJ politicians began stating that China would be dealt with in a resolute manner, with both parties using the expression *kizen to shita taido* which has come to denote a tougher stance toward China.⁵⁵⁷ He describes how Japan's media frequently chided politicians of both main parties, with the left-leaning *Asahi Shimbun* criticizing Kan Naoto's decision to release the Chinese captain of the fishing boat that collided with a Japanese Coast Guard vessel, the conservative *Yomiuri Shimbun* praising DPJ leader Maehara Seiji's 2005 statement that China represented a "realistic threat."⁵⁵⁸ In fact, the DPJ's Asianist reputation (made concrete during Hatoyama's premiership) and emphasis on reconciliation and engagement opened the party up to public skepticism that it was unwilling to stand up to China when tested.⁵⁵⁹

This opening, with nationalists out of power and Asianists in government, created an opportunity for Ishihara Shintaro, Tokyo's outspoken nationalist governor, an opening that he did not have before when he launched his bid to purchase the disputed Senkaku Islands.⁵⁶⁰ At Washington, DC's Heritage Institute, a conservative think tank, Ishihara explained that his intention behind the purchase of the Senkaku Islands was to keep China's "radical movements" at bay and to protect fishing grounds since he thought the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was "too scared" to protect Japan's territory.⁵⁶¹ His speech was also notable for using expression "Shina" to refer to the Chinese, a pejorative word that hinted back to Japan's wartime occupation of China.⁵⁶² Tellingly, Ishihara Shintaro criticized China's claim over the Senkaku's but ignored Taiwan's claims.⁵⁶³

The Japanese public was shown to be more sympathetic to Ishihara's approach than that of the DPJ.⁵⁶⁴ According to Ezra Vogel, Ishihara's prior popularity as an author and public figure made it difficult for politicians to disagree with him in public. Ishihara was able to tap right-wing groups for money to help fund his purchase of the islands.⁵⁶⁵ The nationalist organization Ganbare Nippon, former general Tamogami Toshio, and Koike Yuriko organized a protest against the Kan government's handling of the dispute.⁵⁶⁶ Japan's government relied on the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, a think tank, to help develop its maritime strategy.⁵⁶⁷

Domestic pressures forced Noda Yoshihiko to act.⁵⁶⁸ Noda was regarded as more pragmatic than Hatoyama or Kan but did not want to appear weak against China.⁵⁶⁹ Believing he could diffuse the situation by having the national government administer the islands rather than the right-wing Ishihara, Noda initiated an agreement to purchase the islands from their owners. Niwa Uichiro, a former executive with the major holding company Itochu rather than a seasoned bureaucrat, had been named ambassador to

⁵⁵⁶ Smith 2015, 144.

⁵⁵⁷ Suzuki 2015.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid 2015.

⁵⁵⁹ Smith 2015, 206.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid 2015, 226.

⁵⁶¹ McGregor 2017, 270.

⁵⁶² Ibid 2017, 270.

⁵⁶³ Smith 2015, 218.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid 2015, 219.

⁵⁶⁵ McGregor 2017, 271.

⁵⁶⁶ Smith 2015, 226.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid 2015, 137-138.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid 2015, 229.

⁵⁶⁹ Vogel 2019, 390.

China to break the bureaucracy's grip on foreign policy.⁵⁷⁰ Smith describes how he needed to use an interview with the *Financial Times* to communicate his concern over the purchase of the Senkaku Islands, revealing his isolation and the difficulty in managing public pressure during the crisis.⁵⁷¹ Yet his interview did not make much of an impact in Tokyo.⁵⁷²

Noda wanted to keep the government's purchase a secret in order to first inform the Chinese, but the plan was leaked almost immediately and appeared on the front pages of the *Asahi* newspaper before Noda had a chance to begin discussions.⁵⁷³ It is likely that Noda oversold China's reaction to the central government's purchase of the islands, both to the public and when he tried to reassure the United States as well.⁵⁷⁴

The LDP was back in power not long after, winning the national elections in December 2012. The Japanese public wanted stable leadership after a long period of political instability from 1994-2012.⁵⁷⁵ While the DPJ's handling of Japan's relations with China was hardly the only reason for its defeat, Abe used the Senkaku crisis on the campaign trail, advocating for government personnel to be stationed on the islands.⁵⁷⁶

Once in office, Abe was much more circumspect in his response to the dispute. Tsuruoka, a scholar at Keio University, has placed Abe in his "global Japan" school and has described how "expanding Japan's diplomatic horizon" was one of his goals that driven in part by his ability to centralize foreign policy decision making in the Kantei.⁵⁷⁷ Partly drawing on international law, he publicized Chinese incursions and emphasized a policy of de-escalation and restraint.⁵⁷⁸ His 2013 "Japan Is Back" speech delivered at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, described Japan as a "rules-promoter" and "commons' guardian."⁵⁷⁹ After reiterating Japan's claim to the disputed Senkaku Islands, he emphasized his administration's pursuit of "mutually beneficial relations based on common strategic interests" with China based on continued engagement rather than escalation.⁵⁸⁰

His 2014 policy address to the Diet continued the conciliatory theme with China, again under the banner of "mutually beneficial relations based on common strategic interests," saying that the two countries "share an inseparable relationship, and the peaceful development of China is a great opportunity for Japan," and that China and Japan "bear great responsibility for the peace and prosperity of the region."⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁰ McGregor 2017, 263.

⁵⁷¹ Smith 2015, 53-54.

⁵⁷² McGregor 2017, 271.

⁵⁷³ Vogel 2019, 391.

⁵⁷⁴ McGregor 2017, 276.

⁵⁷⁵ Vogel 2019, 392.

⁵⁷⁶ Smith 2015, 231.

⁵⁷⁷ Tsuruoka 2020.

⁵⁷⁸ Smith 2015, 231-232.

⁵⁷⁹ Abe Shinzo. "Japan is Back (Shinzo Abe's speech at CSIS)," February 22, 2013. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid 2013.

⁵⁸¹ Abe Shinzo. "Policy Speech by Prime Minister to the 187th Session of the Diet," September 29, 2014. Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet.

Yet Abe was also suspicious of China, like other conservative politicians in the region.⁵⁸² He was adamant that the “days of kowtowing” to China were over.⁵⁸³ There was significant disagreement among Japan’s conservatives on how to pursue Japan’s interests with China given that there was no interest in revising economic relations and no broad national movement for a different track.⁵⁸⁴ Japanese businesses are also wary of technology sharing with China, similar to Japan’s foreign counterparts that do business in China, and prefer to source high-tech components from Japan rather than asking Chinese firms to develop them.⁵⁸⁵ Yet political faction leaders, friendship associations and business leaders acted as intermediaries in the relationship when Abe and Xi Jinping were not talking.⁵⁸⁶ Cui Tiankai, China’s ambassador to the United States, was so confident about these backchannels that he reassured U.S. officials concerned with deteriorating Sino-Japanese relations by saying “The CCP and LDP know how to talk to each other.”⁵⁸⁷

The U.S. political landscape and China: The End of Idealism

Questions about China’s future as a partner or a rival became more pointed and urgent. While a broad consensus of engaging and balancing China had emerged by the time Obama took office, Green writes that U.S.-China relations “have suffered most from inconsistency in Washington.”⁵⁸⁸ China was growing more confident and more explicitly assured. As Ezra Vogel wrote, the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing “served as China’s debut as a major global power that was surpassing Japan and was poised to being challenging the United States.”⁵⁸⁹ China itself seemed to recognize the gravity of the event, and tried to moderate its voice and temper its confrontations in the lead-up to the Games.⁵⁹⁰ But as Hu Jintao’s leadership drew to a close and his successor – and how they saw China’s future – remaining unclear and China becoming more assertive in its dispute with Japan over the Senkaku Islands, there were few guarantees that a moderate temper from China would be the future. The disagreements within Washington were no longer confined within the Beltway, as there were concerns in the region about a Democratic tendency towards protectionism and dogmatic views on human rights, climate change, and other issues.⁵⁹¹

Still, in Obama’s first term, the priority was essentially to wait out China’s leadership transition and see the results.⁵⁹² Jeffery Bader, director for Asia at the National Security Council, wanted to avoid what he saw as Reagan and Clinton’s mistake of revising their China policy after already expending political capital and losing leverage with Beijing.⁵⁹³ By Obama’s second term, there was more clarity not only about China’s leadership but also about the challenge it presented to the region – but while his administration was growing more disillusioned about engagement, the number of issues that required China’s cooperation continued to grow.⁵⁹⁴ Whatever Kerry’s frustrations with Japan, Obama’s misgivings over China began to outweigh those he had toward Abe.⁵⁹⁵ He was especially angered by China’s

⁵⁸² McGregor 2017, 289.

⁵⁸³ Ibid 2017, 310.

⁵⁸⁴ Smith 2015, 254.

⁵⁸⁵ Vogel 2019, 395.

⁵⁸⁶ McGregor 2017, 310.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid 2017, 311.

⁵⁸⁸ Green 2017, 518, 543.

⁵⁸⁹ Vogel 2019, 371.

⁵⁹⁰ McGregor 2017, 216.

⁵⁹¹ Green 2017, 520.

⁵⁹² Smith, Sheila A. Personal Interview, December 16, 2020.

⁵⁹³ McGregor 2017, 255.

⁵⁹⁴ Smith, Sheila A. Personal Interview, December 16, 2020.

⁵⁹⁵ McGregor 2017, 319.

cybertheft of intellectual property and corporate secrets and thought that China was out to “screw” the United States.⁵⁹⁶

Realpolitik became a theme, less out of intellectual conviction and more because of disillusionment following Bush’s high expectations for democratization in the Middle East and elsewhere. Hilary Clinton, Obama’s first Secretary of State, said that human rights would not “interfere” with U.S.-China economic relations, while Obama didn’t meet with dissidents and kept a low profile on prominent cases like that of blind activist Chen Guangcheng’s attempt to get a visa to come to the United States.⁵⁹⁷ Obama inadvertently created a perception of his administration’s weakness toward China by canceling a 2009 meeting with the Dalai Lama at Beijing’s request and brining a huge domestic policy entourage with him on his first trip to China.⁵⁹⁸ Democratic-aligned Asia experts advising Clinton called for bilateral cooperation with China, with a new Sino-U.S. condominium that centered on collective efforts against climate change and financial governance.⁵⁹⁹ The Obama White House also institutionalized its approach to China by adapting Bush’s language of “cooperative, constructive, and candid” to “positive, constructive, and comprehensive,” and by elevating Paulson’s SED to the “Strategic and Economic Dialogue,” putting State and Treasury on equal footing in the discussions.⁶⁰⁰

Even within the broad framework of a realpolitik approach there was disagreement over what the U.S. could accomplish vis-à-vis China’s rise. Essentially, the administration was torn between the pursuit of a “concert of democracies” to counter authoritarianism led by figures like Hilary Clinton, Samantha Power, and Anne-Marie Slaughter. Additionally Clinton, Kurt Campbell, Clinton’s Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, the Pentagon, and many in Wall Street saw China as a rival.⁶⁰¹ Clinton and Campbell both have been described as hailing from the hawkish wing of the Democratic Party that was not bound by the vestigial phobias of the U.S. experience in the Vietnam War.⁶⁰² Campbell particularly has been described as being consistently suspicious of DC’s China crowd, believing that they had little respect or attention for U.S. allies in the region.⁶⁰³

Another group that included John Kerry and Susan Rice saw China as a potential partner and favored the G2 model of power relations that prioritized cooperation with China at the expense of relations with allies.⁶⁰⁴ One national security expert who briefed John Kerry before his first visit to China as Secretary of State even came away with the impression that Kerry thought China was a better and more reliable partner in East Asia. Kerry in fact named Japan, and not China, as the biggest problem in Asia.⁶⁰⁵ In part this was informed by the frustrating experience of working with Hatoyama, but there was also a profound skepticism towards the LDP among ideological liberals in the White House who were uncomfortable with Abe, with one senior State Department official describing Abe’s supporters as a bunch of “right wing

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid 2017, 320.

⁵⁹⁷ Green 2017, 533, 534.

⁵⁹⁸ McGregor 2017, 255.

⁵⁹⁹ Green 2017, 525.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid 2017, 525.

⁶⁰¹ Green, Michael. Personal Interview, December 22, 2020.

⁶⁰² McGregor 2017, 224.

⁶⁰³ Ibid 2017, 254.

⁶⁰⁴ Green, Michael. Personal Interview, December 22, 2020.

⁶⁰⁵ McGregor 2017, 300.

nutjobs.”⁶⁰⁶ In 2013, Daniel R. Russell, recently having replaced Campbell as assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, reportedly said that “You would need a microscope to find one iota of an upside in the return of Shinzo Abe.”⁶⁰⁷ When Kerry replaced Clinton as Secretary of State he embraced Xi Jinping’s “new model of great power relations,” even over Japan’s objections.⁶⁰⁸

This more “dovish” camp generally rejected democratization out of its association with the foreign policy of George W. Bush what they perceived as his militarist foreign policy, instead advocating for an unsentimental realpolitik.⁶⁰⁹ Susan Rice particularly developed a reputation as being frustrated, even dismissive, of allies and showed a disinterest in working with them or accommodating their interests.

This fed into Campbell’s concern about DC’s China hands, and he worried that Kerry and Rice’s emphasis on relations with Beijing would come at the expense of ally concerns.⁶¹⁰ In fact, centrist Democrats were in fact as supportive of the U.S.-Japan alliance as Republicans.⁶¹¹ Campbell’s fears were not misplaced, as Asian diplomats were concerned that Obama and Kerry were more concerned about getting a deal done on climate change than about confronting China’s steps in the South China Sea.⁶¹² The division between the two camps is reflected in two of Obama’s joint statements with China, as the 2009 joint statement with Hu emphasized respect for each other’s “core interests” and building and deepening strategic trust.⁶¹³ After regional allies expressed concern that the statement could mark an end to the engage-and-balance framework towards a Sino-U.S. condominium, the 2011 statement, led by Campbell and David Shear (director of the China desk at the State Department) removed the “core interest” language and replaced it with “a relationship...which is both vital and complex.”⁶¹⁴

James Steinberg, deputy secretary of State, charted something of a middle course, hoping to build trust and transparency with Beijing to reduce the potential for unintentional conflict.⁶¹⁵ Yet the phrase that he coined to advance this idea, “strategic reassurance,” was killed off almost immediately for being “too conciliatory” toward China, while the “new model of great power relations” concept was also dropped.⁶¹⁶

The hawks were able to set a market with the publication of Clinton’s *Foreign Policy* article that set out the idea of the “pivot” to Asia.⁶¹⁷ The “Pivot” was almost more of a branding exercise to bring more attention to Obama’s Asia policy.⁶¹⁸ Yet it had the practical effect of galvanizing the U.S. government and military to focus on China, with one Pentagon official being quoted as saying that “It was shorthand code for China, even though we said it wasn’t.”⁶¹⁹ The Trans-Pacific Partnership, the economic component of the Pivot, was organized with an eye toward China.⁶²⁰ One former diplomat described TPP (and the

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid 2017, 527.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid 2017, 300.

⁶⁰⁸ Green 2017, 526-527.

⁶⁰⁹ Green 2017, 532-533.

⁶¹⁰ McGregor 2017, 284.

⁶¹¹ Ibid 2017, 301.

⁶¹² Ibid 2017, 342.

⁶¹³ Green 2017, 526.

⁶¹⁴ Green 2017, 526.

⁶¹⁵ McGregor 2017, 284.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid 2017, 284, 318.

⁶¹⁷ Green, Michael. Personal Interview, December 22, 2020.

⁶¹⁸ McGregor 2017, 254.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid 2017, 284.

⁶²⁰ Blustein 2019, 214.

Quad) as the “no China club.”⁶²¹ Sue Schwab, U.S. Trade Representative under George W. Bush, wanted TPP for promoting market access and open-market values rather than as a geopolitical tool to combat China.⁶²² Susan Rice, national security advisor for Barack Obama, even expressed openness to China’s eventual membership.⁶²³

The administration was not completely unified, however, as it was reluctant to so openly focus on military competition with China at the same time it was pursuing “strategic reassurance” with Beijing.⁶²⁴ Advocates for the Pivot needed to overcome opposition from the Treasury Department and other economic officials who worried that it might dilute the other regional economic forums that the United States was involved in.⁶²⁵ Obama’s domestic policy advocates were opposed to the idea of Obama going to Asia twice a year.⁶²⁶ The Pentagon wanted to ensure that there was some substance to the initiative⁶²⁷ and that the Pivot didn’t amount to a “big nothing.”

In terms of security policy, even though the U.S. doctrine of Air-Sea Battle was deliberately designed to counteract China’s Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2AD) strategy, the reluctance of Navy and Air Force chiefs to explicitly say that it was focused against China made it difficult to marshal support for ASB in Congress and among allies.⁶²⁸ Even so, other military officials were less openly committed to maintaining U.S. commitments under Article V to the Senkaku Islands, with one official saying that the United States would “not go to war over a rock in the Pacific Ocean.”⁶²⁹ White House staff delayed Obama’s statement in support of extending Article V to include the Senkaku Islands in the hope that it would build leverage to extract concessions from Japan on pork tariffs in the TPP negotiations.⁶³⁰

Yet TPP was no less complicated. The adage among trade policy wonks was that trade united Republicans and divided Democrats. Yet in the past 10 to 15 years, Republicans have since grown significantly more skeptical on trade while Democrats have cautiously become more supportive.⁶³¹ Anger over China’s trade practices was seen almost as much among Republicans as among Democrats – Republican Senator Marco Rubio viewed the “Made in China 2025” campaign announced in 2015 as a plot for China to cheat its way to global domination.⁶³² Trump’s campaign and subsequent administration tapped into anger against China’s trade practices.⁶³³

Democratic support was still hard for Obama to attain – and ultimately too difficult. Obama campaigned against TPP in 2008 for opportunistic rather than ideological reasons.⁶³⁴ Once in office, Obama used forums like the G20 to push back against protectionism rather than to advance trade liberalization,

⁶²¹ Davidson, Mark. Personal Interview, December 17, 2020.

⁶²² Blustein 2019, 208.

⁶²³ Ibid 2019, 215.

⁶²⁴ Green 2017, 529-530.

⁶²⁵ McGregor 2017, 284.

⁶²⁶ Ibid 2017, 284.

⁶²⁷ Ibid 2017, 284.

⁶²⁸ Green 2017, 531.

⁶²⁹ Ibid 2017, 527.

⁶³⁰ Ibid 2017, 527.

⁶³¹ Smith, Sheila A. Personal Interview, December 16, 2020.

⁶³² Blustein 2019, 176.

⁶³³ Ibid 2019, 225.

⁶³⁴ Green 2017, 536.

responding to the anti-trade political climate in the United States following the 2008 financial crisis.⁶³⁵ But when Obama tried to secure TPP ratification through Congress, Democrat Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader and an outspoken opponent of trade deals, was seen became the key obstacle to securing Trade Promotion Authority which was vital for security congressional ratification of TPP, and the White House only began pursuing TPA once Republicans took control of the House and Senate in 2014.⁶³⁶ Even then, Obama prioritized labor and environmental issues in the TPP negotiations in the hope of securing Democratic support even though most of the votes would have likely come from Republicans.⁶³⁷ Ultimately Trump withdrew the United States from the agreement following his election in 2016.

Conclusion

Political parties in Japan and the United States showed meaningful ideological differences within their parties even though Japanese electoral reform was supposed to distinguish its two main parties ideologically and the United States political system was fraught with polarization on many significant issues. There was also consensus between the U.S. parties, and more especially among their foreign policy elites, on important questions regarding China as well, especially regarding the nature of the threat from China. Administrations in the United States sought to differentiate themselves more clearly, with Trump immediately withdrawing from TPP or Obama's desire to decisively break with the preceding Bush administration's emphasis on democracy promotion and human rights was in response to the controversial and politically contentious wars in Iraq and Afghanistan rather than in response to the Bush administration's actual China policy itself. In other words, making a break with his predecessor drove Obama's China policy more than China itself buttressed by a genuine belief that China was the United States's most reliable partner in Asia. This limited the issues on which the United States was willing to engage China and effectively took human rights or liberalization off the table, and instead dealing with China as it was as either a peer competitor or a peer.

By this point in Japan, differences in foreign policy could be exploited to create cleavages between the parties. Most obviously this could be seen in the conservative reaction to the DPJ's handling of the Senkaku Crisis and specifically during Abe's 2012 campaign. As with the United States, emphasizing these differences was not only because of genuine disagreement but also to make the division between the parties clearer for voters.

It may be an oversimplification, but in Japan events determined whose perspectives were ascendent while in the United States who was ascendent determined events. Japan's three DPJ prime ministers each tried to steer Japan in their own direction regarding China, but events – whether Hatoyama's mishandling of the base relocation issue, Kan's handling of the detainment of the Chinese ship captain, or Noda's purchase of the Senkaku Islands – all had their own effect of steering Japanese policy back towards a certain center as the political space for these men's particular initiatives became ever more constrained.

Leadership in the United States meanwhile retained more space to act such that they could explore policy alternatives with the constraints guided by their own initiative rather than by events. Part of this may be that there was no immediate crisis that faced U.S. decision makers like that which faced DPJ decision makers such as with China's furious response the detainment of the ship captain or the attempted

⁶³⁵ Ibid 2017, 536.

⁶³⁶ Ibid 2017, 538.

⁶³⁷ Ibid 2017, 538.

purchase of disputed territory. Still, Obama was mostly free to make his own political space rather than working with what he was given by China. The constraints which were faced were primarily domestic, such as with Obama's furtive attempts to ratify TPP.

The emergence of Democratic hawks is also notable given that such voices were not ascendent during the Clinton administration, but they and the accommodationists both deserve mention for the certainty of their positions. When a Democratic president was last in office during the Clinton administration the discussion of China focused on its potential to be shaped or if a contest was inevitable. That discussion now appeared to be settled with the debate now focused on whether China should be engaged or balanced. Where before those who supported engagement were largely driven by the potential economic gains of a positive relationship with China, those who supported engagement in the Obama administration seemed to genuinely believe that a Sino-U.S. condominium was possible and that such a partnership was the key to solving major global issues like climate change, even if it came to the detriment of established allies. If the Obama administration wavered, it was less out of uncertainty of the nature of China as a great power or political debates in Washington and led to certain messages becoming muddled or diluted, particularly regarding the Pivot. Intraparty disunity among Democrats was notable when Obama tried to ratify TPP and needed to rely on Republican support to overcome opposition from his own party.

A sense of threat from China settled in for both countries but in distinct ways. In Japan, the country most proximate to that threat, has responded intellectually in a restrained manner – clearly concerned but seeing the threat more as a geopolitical challenge than an ideological one. One high-ranking official familiar with Japan's national security discussions on China said that China had abandoned communism or even any ideology and was only focused on "money and power," with China's leadership convinced that Chinese domination is inevitable and a Sino-U.S. condominium would only be an armistice.⁶³⁸ Japan's anti-China nationalists were anti-communist rather than anti-Chinese and wanted Japan to be more autonomous and free of foreign influence.⁶³⁹ Importantly, anger towards China in one area rarely crossed into anger in other areas as a broad banner of anti-China nationalism never developed.⁶⁴⁰

That is not to say that the threat is not felt acutely – one high-ranking official in Japan's national security apparatus put Japan's isolation facing China bluntly, saying "We are alone," elaborating that Japan has no reliable partners in East Asia and must cooperate Australia, India, and the United States even if they are all too far away.⁶⁴¹ If anything, the threat from China has not galvanized an ideological perception towards China but rather one towards its political actors, with defiance to China being seen as a test of mettle and punishment delivered for politicians for decision makers who were seen to be as too weak towards China. Japan's incremental approach rarely satisfied domestic advocates.⁶⁴²

The United States has responded to China's rise with a similar essentialism as that which was seen in the 1990s in the congressional debates over China's MFN status – except this time any optimism has vanished. In a telling example, Graham Allison's Thucydides Trap, which suggests a zero-sum competition between status quo powers and rising ones, has become one of the core texts for students of

⁶³⁸ Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

⁶³⁹ Smith 2015, 54.

⁶⁴⁰ Smith 2015, 240.

⁶⁴¹ Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

⁶⁴² Smith 2015, 250.

national security in the United States for understanding the power balance between the United States and China.⁶⁴³ One former journalist described how the current attitude toward China reminded him of the sense of threat from Japan during the 1980s, when journalists were determined to appear critical to avoid giving the impression that they were “on the take” and the incentives were to overhype the negative aspects and quote from people making those arguments.⁶⁴⁴ The “responsible stakeholder” framework is still held onto by the U.S. business community and many in the Democratic Party, though they remain a minority.⁶⁴⁵ While China’s threat to the United States is more normative than practical, at least compared to Japan and without minimizing the challenge to the United States, the U.S. response has been resembled its behavior and language against the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Recalling Risse-Kappen’s discussion of domestic structures as an intervening variable between public opinion and foreign policy, the evolution of national security institutions in each country’s decision making apparatuses are worth noting as well. In effect, a desire for centralized control in both Japan and the United States has driven a process of centralization in their respective executives. For Japan, lasting changes could be seen in its policymaking apparatus, especially in the relationship between politicians and the bureaucracy. While the DPJ was openly antagonistic towards the bureaucracy, the Abe administration instituted changes of its own which had the effect of sidelining the bureaucracy as decision making was centralized in the prime minister’s office. Along the implementation of political appointments into ministries giving the prime minister’s office further influence over the ministries, the structure which defined the previous seventy years of Japanese decision making has changed, probably permanently and with still-uncertain effects. A former high-ranking MOFA bureaucrat lamented that politicians’ suspicions toward the bureaucracy has persisted even after DPJ rule passed.⁶⁴⁶ Other once reliable channels are not as reliable as they once were – Japanese investment in China flatlined or even declined following the Senkaku crisis while the old communication channels that Cui Tiankai expressed so much confidence in began to dry up.⁶⁴⁷

There has been a similar centralization in the United States with decision making becoming increasingly concentrated in the White House and National Security Council. A practical reason for this is to avoid Congress – appointing officials who do not need Senate confirmation or leaving “acting” officials who are spared from the contentious confirmation process where executive appointments may be held up or blocked not only in opposition to the appointees themselves but also to make a larger unrelated point to the administration. The increase in executive orders, which are ephemeral as policy but also avoid Congress, also reflects this. There is also the obvious point that centralized decision making increases Executive oversight and avoids what may be complicated bureaucratic slogs.

The tension between internationalism and nationalism became subsumed into something else during the Trump administration. Ideology and even race began to take more of a role and adherence to the Trump administration’s framing of the China threat began to supersede other interests. This is not entirely the fault of the Trump administration, as Xi Jinping’s more coercive approach to foreign firms doing business in China helped marginalize the economic interests which had been one of the key advocates for

⁶⁴³ Davidson, Mark. Personal Interview, December 17, 2020.

⁶⁴⁴ Blustein, Paul. Personal Interview, December 18, 2020.

⁶⁴⁵ Davidson, Mark. Personal Interview, December 17, 2020.

⁶⁴⁶ Interview, High-Ranking Former MOFA Official, January 29, 2021.

⁶⁴⁷ McGregor 2017, 312.

engagement. Where before the executive would center on a certain strategy once there was enough distance from the need for cleavage messaging, such differentiation shaped much of the Trump administration's approach to foreign policy and perhaps each successive administration in the future.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Introduction

The period under investigation dating back to 1994 has shown a clear influence of political partisanship, though not necessarily neatly. The short answer to how is that partisan politics required decision makers to message on cleavages but to govern on policy, with the effect of finding their policy choices constrained by partisan politics. It should be clear that foreign policies do not neatly align with political parties, nor vice versa, but parties were an essential domestic factor arbitrating the perspectives of foreign policy networks. Interparty competition defined the political space and range of choices available to decision makers while intraparty competition helped guide decision makers towards certain choices. Political parties in Japan and the United States showed meaningful ideological differences within their parties even though Japanese electoral reform was supposed to distinguish its two main parties ideologically and the United States political system was fraught with polarization between parties on many significant issues. It might be counterintuitive, but intraparty disputes on ideology and policy were almost more consequential for foreign policy choices than interparty disputes on the same. Interparty disputes were determinative in shaping the political space available to decision makers and limiting the policy options available, especially in situations of partisan polarization where incentives guided parties towards emphasizing and exaggerating political cleavages. Parties in both countries seemed to emphasize differences not only because of genuine disagreement but also to make the division between the parties clearer for voters.

Decision makers in both countries were indeed not only receptive to changes in behavior from China as realist theory predicts but were also (and maybe even more so) receptive to where they thought China was headed or could be headed, demonstrating that an understanding of underlying perceptions and biases is essential for understanding decision maker choices. The Obama administration's framing of China seemed to come as a reaction to China's behavior even though there were competing schools of thought on how to respond to China's great power status while Japan's threat perception of China can be linked to changes in China's behavior. But if there is one difference between Japan and the United States, it is their relative optimism or idealism. This is important because it speaks to both countries' sense of agency – the United States believed that China could be shaped in a favorable direction with the right combination of carrots and sticks. Maybe overconfident following the end of the Cold War, the United States more often believed that its actions could be determinative in setting the course of a country of more than 1 billion people and set many of its policy goals toward that end. Japan's approach was much modest in what it hoped to achieve – essentially territorial security, political stability, and positive economic relations and no Japanese leader or decision maker showed similar evidence of any transformative ability in Japan's relationship with China.

The role of perception is important because it emphasizes that changes in state behavior or in the geopolitical context explain only half of the story – the other half is how states chose to respond. Abe did not station SDF forces on the Senkaku Islands as a deterrent to Chinese incursions as he suggested on the campaign trail, but instead sought to ease tensions with China rather than exacerbate them. The Obama administration did not adopt a confrontational response to China's economic strategy but balanced its choices on the economic realm with competing choices on security and climate change. There are obviously reasons and explanations for those choices and the others presented in this study, but what is important is that domestic politics played a role in setting the choices that were available in almost every

case in ways that the international context cannot completely explain. Understanding the domestic political context is almost as important as understanding the international context.

What is also notable is that China was very rarely the issue unto itself but a proxy or symbol for something else. For Japan, China was only rarely the direct object but a way for politicians to appear firm in the face of pressure and where the public looked to its leaders not to back down. For the United States, China seemed to assume the role that the Soviet Union once claimed as a normative and geopolitical challenge to the U.S. vision of the world. These differing fundamental perspectives on China offer important insights into nationalism and the formation of the “other” in each country. Anti-China sentiment became very real in the United States while never really gaining traction in Japan. Ishihara, through his use of anti-China slurs, was very clearly intent on antagonizing China, but he remains the exception among most Japanese politicians. Koizumi went to great lengths to clarify that he took Japan’s violent imperialist history seriously and that his visits to Yasukuni Shrine were not about denying Japan’s legacy but in allowing Japan to express itself as any other country would without foreign pressure. Japan’s hesitancy about delivering an apology to China was driven by (justified) concerns that any apology would be politicized by China’s leadership.

The role of foreign policy networks, loosely formed but clearly impactful, has turned up repeatedly throughout the case study. While it might be a stretch to say that there was no relationship between whose sets of preferences were ascendent and the party in power, it would not be a big stretch. Parties did not choose from networks like selecting options from a menu; what guided the ascendancy of these networks was a combination of events, the individual characteristics of given administrations, and the domestic political space which was shaped by political polarization. But once a network was ascendent it was the key factor in determining an administration’s worldview, its behavior, and its reputation as a foreign policy actor.

China’s salience as a political issue was different between Japan and the United States as well. This is consistent with the chapter on partisanship which observed that activists in the United States are motivated by an abstract sense of attachment to a party or cause and driven by affective motors while in Japan attachment is instrumental and driven more by clientelist benefits or proximity to a specific candidate than to a broader cause. Risse-Kappen specifically described how the salience of foreign policy was relatively low but that decision makers still felt the burden of public opinion regardless⁶⁴⁸ and Page & Shapiro demonstrated that the weight of public opinion is most strongly brought to bear on issues of high salience.⁶⁴⁹ These differing ideational threads or networks had meaningful implications for how Japan and the United States conducted their foreign policy towards China.

Japan

While the United States saw polarizing cleavages beginning to deepen during this period, Japan was trying to introduce cleavages of its own. Consistent with earlier research on political cleavages in Japan, foreign policy remained a clear cleavage issue, although, at least as far as Japan’s relationship with China is concerned, these cleavages did not take the form of militarism versus anti-militarism but more about an abstract sense of resolve or a sense that Japan could become a “normal” country unconstrained by foreign pressure. Most obviously this could be seen in the conservative reaction to the DPJ’s handling of the

⁶⁴⁸ Risse-Kappen 1991.

⁶⁴⁹ Page and Shapiro 1983.

Senkaku Crisis and specifically during Abe's 2012 campaign. But even here it is uncertain if this sentiment was simply a reaction to China's apology diplomacy or if it reflected a broader shift in Japan's foreign policy cleavages. While politicians in Japan were able to capture public sentiment, it is less clear if they were responding to signals from voters or if the public was responding to elite cues. It is more certain that public opinion on China limited politicians' maneuverability on China, especially if they were vulnerable to charges that they were "weak" or "soft" on China.

Ideational networks also made their presence felt in Japan, even as Japanese decision makers appeared to be much more highly attuned to public pressures and clearly absorbed costs for breaking with public opinion, especially regarding China. The way in which Japan changed its approach to "apology diplomacy" begins to reveal how domestic political groups respond to the evolving geopolitical environment may empower or marginalize certain groups and perceptions. At the beginning of the 1990s, the predominant view of Japan's relationship with China was one of contrition, a sense of guilt and obligation that required a certain deference to China's position, but by the end of the 2000s politicians could be buoyed more by their willingness to stand up to China's demands. Part of this is unquestionably the result of China overplaying its hand diplomatically as PRC leadership sought to leverage nationalism to solidify its domestic rule. Yet pro-engagement actors in Japan, such as the "China School" in MOFA became marginalized and there was a growing recognition that bashing China could be politically beneficial. The result for Japan was the emergence of politicians less deferential to Chinese demands. Koizumi illustrates this well in the sense that he was not a historical revisionist but insisted that Japan could commemorate its war dead on its own terms. The contrite view, though never vanishing, faded into the background as it became apparent that China's requests for an apology were more cynical than sincere. According to Suzuki, the way that Japan's left sees China is increasingly like that of Japanese conservatives, with both viewing China as "a bullying state that attempts to force Japan into making unjust compromises with China," even converging with the broad contours of the political discussion about China in the United States.⁶⁵⁰

What is also interesting is that the DPJ did not take up a contrary position to Koizumi and the LDP despite what one might expect from an emerging two-party system. In fact, it was the LDP that was divided over Koizumi's stance out of concern that his Yasukuni visits might jeopardize Japan's potential economic gains in China. The 2005 DPJ platform called for rebuilding Japan's relations with China as one of the top priorities for Japanese diplomacy.⁶⁵¹ The Social Democratic Party was more explicit, criticizing Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine, and said as much in its 2005 platform, advocating instead for restoring the trust of Japan's Asian neighbors.⁶⁵²

The DPJ's election and tenure seemed to demonstrate that while the 1994 electoral reforms may have been successful in developing a furtive two-party system, the parties were still ideologically heterogeneous and the intellectual distinctions between the two were largely incoherent. The DPJ only differed from the LDP in two major respects – the idiosyncratic premiership of Hatoyama and the party's determination to

⁶⁵⁰ Suzuki 2015

⁶⁵¹ Volkens, Andrea / Burst, Tobias / Krause, Werner / Lehmann, Pola / Matthieß Theres / Merz, Nicolas / Regel, Sven / Weßels, Bernhard / Zehnter, Lisa (2020): The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR). Version 2020a. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB). [Accessed September 10, 2020]

⁶⁵² Ibid.

sideline the bureaucracy. The former revealed intellectual fissures within the party and opened them up to attacks from nationalist conservatives while the latter proved to undermine DPJ decision makers' capacity for action when faced by the crises with China. Fundamentally, the party was, like the LDP, still trying to find the right balance of engagement against the concern over China's trajectory as a rising power, as expressed in the 2011 Defense Guidelines.

But the two features that marked DPJ governance – Hatoyama's administration and its sidelining of the bureaucracy – were decisive. In the most acute crises – the detainment of the Chinese fishing boat captain and the purchase of the Senkaku Islands – national decision makers were severely constrained in their possible courses of action, not least of all by the deterioration of the government's relationship with the bureaucracy and undermining institutional channels that might have assisted in a crisis. At the same time, the actors which benefited the most were taking advantage of the political space that presented itself, maybe ironically by being out of government and free from the costs of decision making – the nationalist Ishihara by attacking the Asianist government with the conservative LDP out of power, and Abe by attacking incumbent mismanagement. Neither can be said to have created a wave of support – while they successfully exploited the cleavage between public sentiment and the government's crisis management, in neither case was the cleavage permanent nor could they be said to secure lasting political advantage for their maneuvers.

The United States

The influence of polarization was seen throughout the period, and decision makers emphasized areas of difference and exploited those differences for the sake of demonstrating a cleavage. This was especially the case for campaigns and Congress (especially the opposition party) who could attack the Executive's foreign policy with little or no cost but possibly with considerable reward. Contrary to much of the literature on foreign-domestic linkages, which often assumes an alignment between decision maker opinions with those of the public, there seems to be little evidence that any of the specific shifts were from a direct appeal to public opinion, fear of audience costs, or that public pressure arbitrated whose voice was dominant. This may beg the assumption that U.S. decision makers were acting independently of public opinion, but the chapter on partisanship explained how the public holds very few preferences on issues but rather take their cues from the nature of elite divisions instead.

The point was not the policy itself but the cleavage – while Clinton first attempted to stake out a China policy consistent with his campaign message distinguishing himself from Bush, policy pressures forced him in a different direction. As president, Clinton attempted to stake out a China policy consistent with the policy demands, but partisan messaging constrained his room for maneuver. Political partisanship dictated the political space available to Clinton to shape his China policy. Clinton began campaigning against the “Butchers of Beijing” only to have to change course when confronted by events and by the practical reality of managing diplomacy with China against the varying interests in DC. It is not so much that Clinton himself changed – he recognized his dilemma when he said, frustratedly, that he would have campaigned against his own China policy – but both external events (Christopher's visit to Beijing) and domestic ones (the push for engagement with China) made Clinton's initial approach untenable. Obama also tried to emphasize his differences from the preceding Bush administration, even though the differences that he hoped to emphasize were more relevant to the Middle East rather than to China policy.

Put differently, there was messaging on cleavages and governing on policy, two contradictory pressures for elected executives that pulled them in complicated and contradictory directions. It was not simply that bipartisanship disappeared, but that for many political actors there were more incentives to pursue divisions, much like the argument established by Trubowitz and Seo.⁶⁵³ Affective partisans did not so much advocate for a certain China policy (much as past literature has argued that political pressures influence an ability to pursue specific policy choices such as liberal internationalism) as much as they exploited differences between the parties to create polarized cleavages. Meanwhile the division of Washington into two camps on China policy during the 1990s and to a lesser degree in the 2000s, along with the growing polarization in Congress, had the practical effect of boxing in Executive decision makers. This kind of Manichean thinking made for fertile ground after the Republican Revolution of 1994 and the deepening polarization that followed from it – as politics became increasingly zero-sum, so too could a China policy that was predicated on a binary choice of engagement or containment. Blustein described how Republicans would feed stories into the press during this period that were “truly contentless” but would not have had legs if not for the backdrop of hyperpartisanship and anti-Chinese racism.⁶⁵⁴

Yet neither party was completely harmonious in its China policy. There was also consensus across the U.S. parties on important questions regarding China as well, especially in regard to the nature of the threat from China. Parties helped organize perspectives but did not necessarily define them. Conservative “blue hats” in the Pentagon amplified the threat from China while Kissinger, Greenberg, and Whitehead, all Republican appointees or donors, appealed to Clinton to maintain open and amicable relations with China. Many Democrats in Congress still wanted human rights at the center of U.S. policy towards China even after Clinton’s turn towards a more pragmatic approach. George W. Bush campaigned against Clinton’s China policy and conservatives attacked U.S. trade policy with China as a sellout of U.S. principles and an attack on American living standards.⁶⁵⁵

There was a clear normative divide between those who sought engagement and those who sounded caution, and a relatively clear bureaucratic distinction such as the disagreements between the State Department and NSC’s adoption of the “strategic partnership” language and the Pentagon’s efforts to push for more reporting on Chinese military spending. It might not be inaccurate to say that the parties were fairly close on China policy in general even as certain groups held meaningfully divergent perspectives towards China. But while partisanship was beginning to become increasingly instrumentalized for political gain, actions and interests were still pursued often independent of parties. The Obama administration’s focus on downplaying military balancing as it pursued strategic engagement with China and its delay in extending the Article V security guarantee to the Senkaku Islands in order to extract concessions from Japan in TPP negotiations are further examples. This may also fit with Risse-Kappen’s observation that more open institutional systems like that of the United States leads to unpredictable and volatile policymaking, both between administrations and within.⁶⁵⁶

The tension between internationalism and nationalism became subsumed into something else during the Trump administration. Where before the executive would center on a certain strategy once there was

⁶⁵³ Trubowitz and Seo, 2012.

⁶⁵⁴ Blustein, Paul. Personal Interview, December 18, 2020.

⁶⁵⁵ Mead 2001, 288, 271-2.

⁶⁵⁶ Risse-Kappen 1991.

enough distance from the need for cleavage messaging, such differentiation shaped much of the Trump administration's approach to foreign policy. Ideology and even race began to take more of a role and adherence to the Trump administration's framing of the China threat began to supersede other interests. This is not entirely the fault of the Trump administration, as Xi Jinping's more coercive approach to foreign firms doing business in China helped marginalize the economic interests which had been one of the key advocates for engagement. To Mead, the idealist Wilsonians oversold their ability to change China, much as one former diplomat who since moved to the private sector described how the U.S. business community's (Hamiltonian) mercantilist dreams were overoptimistic.⁶⁵⁷ Unlike the Cold War, it is unlikely that international great power competition will steer U.S. politics towards greater bipartisanship as Trubowitz and Mellow argued,⁶⁵⁸ since the electoral incentives currently lead U.S. parties towards polarization even if they may agree on policy issues.

The ways in which consensus was formed were complicated. In the 1990s there was dispute over China's future role. In the 2000s, there was a certain top-level consensus about understanding China as something to be cautiously engaged with. This consensus, even superficial, may reflect Green's observation that the furor over the Iraq War and broader War on Terror allowed space for a more nuanced debate on China. While that may hold at the level of the Executive Branch, in Congress and elsewhere there was remarkable anger toward China for perceived unfair trade practices. The U.S. economic relationship with China may have been the most politically contested issue during the 2000s, with Democrats and Republicans largely in agreement on the overall contours of the broader U.S. relationship with China. While the Republican platforms were notably more wary, both sets of party platforms essentially agreed on the basic approach, and both agreed that the United States was capable of encouraging China to move in a more liberal direction.

Revisiting Alternate Explanations: The China Threat

An important finding is that for both countries, a certain perception of China was formed through extended periods, accumulated interactions, and the vagaries of domestic politics. Focusing on discrete interactions or incidents, as the literature on linkage politics emphasizes, is not enough to understand the evolution in how perceptions were formed. Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine take on a different color when juxtaposed against Japan's recent experience with apology diplomacy; U.S. skepticism of engagement in the 2010 only makes sense when considered in the context of the promises made in 1990s if China achieved WTO membership. While it is possible to draw lessons from these specific events and others, this study has demonstrated how their meaning for the broader evolution of perceptions is different when considered in the wider context and shows that it is possible to understand the foreign-domestic nexus beyond the methodological constraints of linkage research. Decision makers were not playing on two games simultaneously on two boards but contesting pressures from multiple fronts between the international realm, domestic politics, and from within their own administrations while also building upon and distinguishing themselves from their predecessors. This iterative process carried out over decades and across administrations also makes it difficult to support interest-based arguments since interests change and the priorities of administrations often differ.

⁶⁵⁷ Mead 2001, 288., Personal interview, December 17, 2020.

⁶⁵⁸ Trubowitz and Mellow, 2005.

A sense of threat from China settled in for both countries but in distinct ways. Japan seems to have reached a consensus on China among its foreign policy elites before the United States. In Japan, the country most proximate to that threat, has not framed the threat ideologically or even normatively – clearly concerned but seeing the threat more as a power game than an ideological one. One high-ranking official familiar with Japan’s national security discussions on China said that China had abandoned communism or even any ideology and was only focused on “money and power,” with China’s leadership convinced that Chinese domination is inevitable and a Sino-U.S. condominium would only be an armistice.⁶⁵⁹ Japan’s anti-China nationalists were anti-communist rather than anti-Chinese and wanted Japan to be more autonomous and free of foreign influence.⁶⁶⁰ Importantly, anger towards China in one area rarely crossed into anger in other areas as a broad banner of anti-China nationalism never developed.⁶⁶¹ If anything, the threat from China has not galvanized an ideological perception among Japanese decision makers towards China but rather one towards its political actors, with defiance to China being seen as a test of mettle and punishment delivered for politicians for decision makers who were seen to be as too weak towards China. Japan’s incremental approach rarely satisfied domestic advocates.⁶⁶²

Conversely, the United States saw China as a normative challenge, even if not necessarily a threat. Implicit throughout senators’ statements and newspaper op-eds on China is the burden of U.S. responsibility for facing China’s rise, language not seen in Japan. There was a broad consensus among U.S. decision makers that China’s behavior could be shaped, going back even to George H.W. Bush. Optimists, like Senators Feinstein and Roth, emphasized the progress China had made since the 1970s and argued that the right incentives could keep China on this path. The idea that deepening relations and trade with China would encourage democratic reforms was one of the main arguments for engagement, either expressly (like linking trade to human rights) or implicitly through the expectation that exposure to U.S. ideas and markets would act as an incentive or inspiration for Chinese to follow the same model. The discussion of whether human rights and similar norms should be promoted explicitly or implicitly defined much of the Clinton administration’s approach and was responsible for his change of course from overtly demanding human rights concessions to promoting China’s ascension to the WTO.

The United States has responded to China’s rise with a similar essentialism as that which was seen in the 1990s in the congressional debates over China’s MFN status. In a telling example, Graham Allison’s Thucydides Trap, which suggests a zero-sum competition between status quo powers and rising ones, has become one of the core texts for students of national security in the United States for understanding the power balance between the United States and China.⁶⁶³ One former journalist described how the current attitude toward China reminded him of the sense of threat from Japan during the 1980s, when journalists were determined to appear critical to avoid giving the impression that they were “on the take” and the incentives were to overhype the negative aspects and quote from people making those arguments.⁶⁶⁴ The “responsible stakeholder” framework is still held onto by the U.S. business community and many in the

⁶⁵⁹ Interview, High Ranking Government Official, January 25, 2021.

⁶⁶⁰ Smith, Sheila A. *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015. pp. 54.

⁶⁶¹ Smith 2015, 240.

⁶⁶² Smith 2015, 250.

⁶⁶³ Davidson, Mark. Personal Interview, December 17, 2020.

⁶⁶⁴ Blustein, Paul. Personal Interview, December 18, 2020.

Democratic Party, though they remain a minority.⁶⁶⁵ While China's threat to the United States is more normative than practical, at least compared to Japan and without minimizing the challenge to the United States, the U.S. response has been resembled its behavior and language against the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

It could be said that the United States spent the 2000s the way that Japan had spent the 1990s – by cautiously trusting in engagement and hoping to encourage China to develop in a more amicable direction. For Japan, this had meant turning the page on the history issue and deepening economic engagement, while for the United States this meant encouraging political and economic liberalization. While the United States was set to follow through on what it hoped would be a constructive relationship, Japan was simultaneously beginning to reckon with the limits of engagement and contemplate the practical meaning of an assertive China. Certain concerns that were elevated in the United States, such as human rights and the economic balance, were never really contested in Japan. One reason may be that, unlike the United States, Japan actually experienced job growth as imports from China increased – in fact, using the same methodology that demonstrated U.S. job loss following the growth in imports from China, Mina Taniguchi showed that Japanese labor markets saw job *growth* rather than losses.⁶⁶⁶ Many Japanese companies do more business in China than in Japan and its balance of trade with China has been consistently positive unlike China's trade balance with the United States.⁶⁶⁷

The ways in which Japan and the United States have conceptualized the threat from China is one of the most notable differences between the two. Alexander Wendt describes the role of identity construction in states, and there are key differences between Japan and the United States that are relevant for their approach to China.⁶⁶⁸ Japan's relations with China were marked, even defined, by its imperialist aggression towards the country. This worked in two ways, either leading it to take a more contrite approach that was deferential to China's needs and concerns (typically held by Japan's left) or through resentment of that deference and hoping instead that Japan could stand up for its interests like a "normal" country (typically held on Japan's right). Smith noted how Japan's historical legacy guided its Japan policy more than geopolitical concerns and there was a basic agreement that Japan could not aspire to global leadership without first settling such history issues, rather than focusing on other factors that typically said to define global leadership.⁶⁶⁹

Revisiting Alternate Explanations: The Public and Foreign Policy

There was little evidence of elite and public congruence on specific issues and only rarely – mostly during the DPJ's administration in Japan – was public opinion leveraged for political purposes. The patterns observed here are closer to Freiden's findings that the relative ascendance of specific stakeholders is more determinative on shaping policy choices.

For the United States, the influence of public opinion was less direct pressure and more of a meta-condition that shaped decision makers' understandings of the political landscape and where their priorities should be. Public opinion was a factor that shaped political space but less directly than political

⁶⁶⁵ Davidson, Mark. Personal Interview, December 17, 2020.

⁶⁶⁶ Solis 2020.

⁶⁶⁷ Vogel 2019, 394.

⁶⁶⁸ Wendt 1994.

⁶⁶⁹ Smith 2015, 17, McGregor 2017, 156.

partisanship, and rarely seemed to influence decision maker choices except when new administrations sought to distinguish themselves from their predecessors, effectively trying to remind voters of partisan differences.

There is more evidence of a relationship between public opinion and decision maker choices in Japan, but neither here is it a neat relationship or congruence of preferences. What seems to have fired the Japanese public was not so much parties or partisan identification so much as issues and perceptions. Public opinion exerted a very meaningful force on issues like the Senkaku Islands and expressed support for Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine, but this support never exactly translated into support for political parties so much as into chastising incumbents. This is consistent with the findings of McElwain and Ueda who showed that the 1994 electoral reform markedly increased the salience of party identification along with producing a surge of independent voters⁶⁷⁰. As they argue, the outcome has been the inverse of what has happened in the United States, resulting in a mass of voters with ideological convictions but no partisan affiliation in contrast to the U.S. partisans with deep party identification but thin ideological convictions.

With so little partisan identification among Japanese voters, there was little to operationalize public sentiment into political partisan support and therefore less opportunity for partisan polarization. One would expect the LDP (and other parties) to become more unified on policy questions with less intraparty disagreement given the goals of the 1994 electoral reforms, yet within and across premierships there were notable differences on China policy. It could also be said that the LDP did not lean into conservative nationalism as much as might be expected for electoral support once their ability to exploit political patronage was diminished in the 1994 electoral reform. Obviously the LDP is the most conservative and nationalist of Japan's major parties and makes up a significant part of their ideology. The differing trends in polarization mean that partisans in the United States saw issues through the lens of party politics ever more deeply, while in Japan such framing only occurred among the most committed voters but being far fewer in number there not as much opportunity or incentive to bring their weight to bear on decision makers.

It seems that in Japan public opinion did not so much open choices for decision making so much as it constricted them – in other words, while the DPJ paid a significant political price for acquiescing to China's demands, there do not appear to be any political incentives for taking a harder line against China or avenues for more assertive defense and security policies. While one might have assumed that China's assertiveness coupled with public frustration with the DPJ's response may have opened a path for revising Japan's war-renouncing Article 9, especially given Abe's openly revisionist ambitions, he was unable to make any progress on amending the constitution and paid a heavy political price for passing a series of laws reinterpreting the constitution that may have improved Japan's ability to deter China. One result is that issues became "stove-piped" in Japan with little opportunity to transfer anger on one issue towards similar anger in another – Smith, for example, observed that Japanese public's unease with the tainted dumpling crisis or the Senkaku Islands dispute never translated into broader anti-China sentiment.

This is not the case in the United States, where the entire "China debate" is almost a discussion about the entire nature of China as a place and a people and a deeply fraught political issue despite it presenting a far more abstract challenge. Those with the deepest material interests in a positive China-U.S. relationship

⁶⁷⁰ McElwain and Ueda, 2014.

have largely been forced to retreat to the background. Where there is essentially a consensus among policy actors in Washington on the threat China poses, important and meaningful nuances remain in the intensity of the threat and how to face it.

Revisiting Alternate Explanations: The Role of Institutions

Domestic institutional structures require consideration as well. Recalling Risse-Kappen's discussion of domestic structures as an intervening variable between public opinion and foreign policy, the evolution of national security institutions in each country's decision making apparatuses are worth noting as well. In effect, a desire for centralized control and political polarization in both Japan and the United States has driven a process of centralization in their respective executives. For Japan, lasting changes could be seen in its policymaking apparatus, especially in the relationship between politicians and the bureaucracy. While the DPJ was openly antagonistic towards the bureaucracy, the Abe administration instituted changes of its own (building on similar reforms made by LDP predecessors like Hashimoto and Koizumi) which had the effect of sidelining the bureaucracy as decision making was centralized in the prime minister's office. Along the implementation of political appointments into ministries giving the prime minister's office further influence over the ministries, the structure which defined the previous seventy years of Japanese decision making has changed, probably permanently and with still-uncertain effects. A former high-ranking MOFA bureaucrat lamented that politicians' suspicions toward the bureaucracy has persisted even after DPJ rule passed.⁶⁷¹ Other once reliable channels are not as reliable as they once were – Japanese investment in China flatlined or even declined following the Senkaku crisis while the old communication channels that Cui Tiankai expressed so much confidence in began to dry up.⁶⁷²

There has been a similar centralization in the United States with decision making becoming increasingly concentrated in the White House and National Security Council. A practical reason for this is to avoid Congress – appointing officials who do not need Senate confirmation or leaving “acting” officials spares them from the contentious confirmation process where executive appointments may be held up or blocked not only in opposition to the appointees themselves but also to make a larger unrelated point to the administration. The increase in executive orders, which are ephemeral as policy but also avoid Congress, also reflects this. There is also the obvious point that centralized decision making increases Executive oversight and avoids what may be complicated bureaucratic slogs.

Yet the pressure brought to bear on decision makers by partisanship seems to have impacted policy choices independently of institutional centralization. This may be because the institutions available were what decision makers made of them – those who made the most of those institutions achieved a degree of insularity from partisan politics while those who avoided, ignored, or sidelined them faced the full force of politics. While there is not enough evidence in this study to draw concrete conclusions on the interaction of institutional centralization and domestic political pressure, this could be an interesting topic for future research. For now, there is enough to conclude that institutional centralization alone is insufficient to explain the findings in this research.

⁶⁷¹ Interview, High-Ranking Former MOFA Official, January 29, 2021.

⁶⁷² McGregor 2017, 312.

Conclusion

By sketching the interaction of political parties, concepts, and leaders against the backdrop of geopolitical change, it should be possible to understand how political polarization impacts foreign policy decision making. It should be clear that concepts are wedded to political parties in only a very abstract sense and even that is not absolute. Where political parties compete, they are defined by their competition more so than their ideas – ideas are the tools of combat, but the point is to win. That is not to say that political actors do not genuinely believe in what they are arguing for – most do – but this goes much farther in explaining the relationship between parties and foreign policy platforms than prior explanations. Foreign policy is relatively low-cost for domestic political actors and often a way to show off their worldview or distinguish themselves from their opponents.

The challenge is when foreign policy decision makers need to apply their work against a backdrop of political competition where worldviews and choices are contested, sometimes critically. It is impossible to say that politics stops at the water's edge. Foreign policy decision makers cannot operate independently from the domestic political scene they are tied to. Bill Clinton encapsulated the dilemma perfectly when he shouted that he would run against his own China policy, recognizing that what was needed internationally and what was needed for domestic politics are two different things – in his case, completely at odds against each other. In this way, domestic politics and polarization in particular increases the costs for decision makers but very rarely confers proportionally equal rewards.

The most successful leaders were the ones who could partition domestic concerns from international pursuits, but even this may not be entirely up to them. George W. Bush's East Asia policy was largely isolated from domestic politics because of the contentiousness of the War on Terror and Iraq War. Abe commanded such a significant majority and was so dominant in elections that he could buck many of the LDP's traditional agricultural interests and pursue a more liberal and open foreign economic policy. In neither of those scenarios were conditions permanent and once the situation changed the political space evaporated. If it was not optimized, the opportunity was lost. It is also worth considering how foreign powers can manipulate a leader's domestic political space – while it may not have been China's deliberate intention, by increasing the pressure on the embattled DPJ during the dispute over the Senkaku Islands they were able to pile on to a narrative that the DPJ was incapable of crisis management.

At this point it is worth a word of caution to avoid overselling the findings. The point has been to give partisanship and ideas their rightful place rather than pride of place in the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy decision making. Explaining the politicization of foreign policy through competition does not necessarily supersede economic preferences or regional sectarian purposes, but it instead explains how economics and sectarianism are given political life and operationalized into a political program. For example, Mead takes an instrumentalist view of the rise and fall of his schools, writing that they reflect the rising and falling of the special interests that they represent.⁶⁷³ Instead, it may be more accurate to argue the opposite; that the special interests pursued by a country reflect the ascendancy of a certain school or coalition at a given moment. By connecting these strands to political parties and then to foreign policy decision making they become something more dynamic that express a

⁶⁷³ Mead, 2001, pp. 95.

country's self-image and sense of agency. Self-interest can explain motives, but competition explains both motives and process.

Obviously, the work is not complete. If there is one gap that should be built out, it would be to better unpack the role of institutions in mediating the relationship between political parties and decision making. There is still admittedly a gap in the middle level analysis between the micro (foreign policy choices) and the macro (foreign policy concepts) to offer greater detail on the mechanics of how these processes work and how they may have evolved. There is certainly no lack of possible explanations in the political science literature but applying those explanations against the framework of this study would offer a more grounded explanation of the relationship between parties, concepts, and ideas. There is also the question of whether partisanship is constitutive (does it provide context?) or whether it is causal (does it explain outcomes?).

Of course, the final remaining question is what this will mean for the future of Sino-Japanese and U.S.-China relations. Clearly tension has increased following Xi Jinping's ascension to power and as polarization in the United States has reached a tipping point where every successive election is the most important and each carries a very real possibility of the capture of government by a party that rejects basic democratic norms. Unpacking the history of how the Republican Party came to this point is well beyond the scope of this paper and many other worthwhile studies have handled the topic well enough to speak to this issue. Relevant to this study is both the Republican Party's capture of the legislative process and its exploitation of the system of checks-and-balances to narrow the political space of a Democratic executive to only those powers immediately available to the Office of the President, along with its deepening reactionary ideology and nationalist vision of the United States. For them, any confrontation with China is ideological and existential, reenacting the spiritualism and self-righteousness that guided the United States in the Cold War and with clear echoes of the motivations that propelled their fight against Democrats. In other words, the ways in which partisans identify themselves domestically can become how they identify themselves internationally – but with different actors and different stakes. What exactly they do with this vision depends on circumstances of the U.S. relationship with China and their control over the U.S. government, but their determination to confront China will push tensions to historic levels and their incompetence in managing governance will increase the chances of the mistakes that can lead to full conflict.

Japan's future is much less clear because it is uncertain what lies for the LDP with Abe having left office. The opposition parties remain too fragmented and lack the public's trust too greatly to be a viable alternative (it took over a decade of steady incremental gains for the DPJ to finally unseat the LDP), so what matters for Sino-Japanese relations is a matter of what happens to the LDP. While Abe managed a relatively coherent course towards China, both thawing relations after the Senkaku Islands disputes while deepening defense and economic ties among allies to shape regional international governance and balance China as far as possible, the LDP's era of "revolving door prime ministers" shows that the future may be more complicated. Not only do one-year prime ministers lack the political capital for major initiatives, but the revolving door era immediately before Abe featured prime ministers who each had very different approaches to China. In the worst instances, a new prime minister was left to try to repair the damage with his Chinese counterparts, reacting to events rather than trying to shape the space. Meanwhile the bureaucracy is still stung by its experience in the DPJ government and by its relative marginalization following the centralization of decision making in the prime minister's office. Though still certainly

influential, it lacks the clout it once had and may be less able to provide the continuity and institutional memory it once did, both of which would be sorely needed in a new period of weak prime ministers. Against all this, the essential tension between economic connectivity and security threat has not changed though the latter has unquestionably intensified. The combination of a deepening threat perception and diminished capital to respond to threats is an uncertain mix.

Put differently, the findings of this study mean that concerning China, Japan will have to react, and the United States will be driven to shape. Both are consistent with each country's historic roles. Whether both can be effective depends on how effectiveness is defined, but letting partisans dictate the space of foreign policy decision makers when the stakes have been set so high and when the sense of threat grows is something that has not yet been tested. It will not be enough to hope that partisans "come to their senses" and allow decision makers the necessary space and latitude to make their choices insulated from domestic partisan politics. Decision makers will need to learn to somehow manage and the ability to create political space and optimize that which is available is what will make effective decision making.

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List of Interviews

Paul Blustein (via videoconference December 18, 2020)

- **Senior Fellow, Center for International Governance Innovation**
- **Former journalist *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post***

Mark Davidson (via videoconference December 17, 2020)

- **Director of Government & External Affairs, Amway**
- **U.S. Department of State (former)**

Mike Green (via videoconference, December 22, 2020)

- **Senior Vice President & Japan Chair, CSIS**
- **Senior Director for Asian Affairs, National Security Council (former)**

Kanehara Nobukatsu (via videoconference, January 25, 2021)

- **Senior Advisor, Asia Group**
- **Deputy Secretary General, National Security Secretariat (former)**

Kohara Masahiro (via videoconference, January 29, 2021)

- **Former consul-general, Shanghai**

Sheila Smith (via videoconference, December 16, 2020)

- **Senior Fellow for Japan Studies, Council on Foreign Relations**