History and Hierarchy
The Foreign Policy Evolution of Modern Japan

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by

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University of
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Abstract

This thesis examines the foreign policy evolution of Japan from the time of its modernization during the mid-nineteenth century though the present. It is argued that infringements upon Japanese sovereignty and geopolitical vulnerabilities have conditioned Japanese leaders towards power seeking policy objectives. The core variables of statehood, namely power and sovereignty, and the perception of state elites are traced over this broad time period to provide a historical foundation for framing contemporary analyses of Japanese foreign policy.

To facilitate this research, a unique framework that accounts for both the foreign policy preferences of Japanese leaders and the external constraints of the international system is developed. Neoclassical realist understandings of self-help and relative power distributions form the basis of the presented analysis, while constructivism offers crucial insights into ideational factors that influence state elites. Social Identity Theory, a social psychology theory that examines group behavior, is integrated to conceptualize the available policy options.

Surveying Japanese foreign policy through this framework clarifies the seemingly irreconcilable shifts in Japan’s foreign policy history and clearly delineates between political groups that embody distinct policy strategies and norms. Consequently, the main contribution of this thesis lies in the development of a theoretical framework that is uniquely positioned to identify historical trends in foreign policy. Owing to the numerous shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy history, this research identifies and examines three distinguishable Japanese “states”: Meiji Japan (1868 - 1912), Imperial Japan (1912 - 1945), and postwar Japan (1945 - present).
Acknowledgements

The last several years of my life have been dedicated to the research found within these pages. While it has often felt like an individual effort, the process of crafting this thesis not only tested me but those around me. I am forever grateful for the support offered by my colleagues, friends, and family during this journey. I would like to call attention to a few individuals in particular:

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMD</td>
<td>Ballistic Missile Defense</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPJ</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Japan</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHQ</td>
<td>General Headquarters (of Allied forces)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMTFE</td>
<td>International Military Tribunal for the Far East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSS</td>
<td>Institute for National Strategic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPCL</td>
<td>International Peace and Cooperation Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSDF</td>
<td>Japan Self-Defense Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDP</td>
<td>Liberal Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCAP</td>
<td>Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>Security Consultative Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIT</td>
<td>Social Identity Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWI</td>
<td>The First World War</td>
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<td>WWII</td>
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Introduction
The geopolitics of the Asia-Pacific region are at the center of global power dynamics. The region is home to the three largest global economies. It contains several of the most advanced militaries in the world, including the lone remaining superpower, and four nuclear states. The waters of the Pacific are host to a number of ongoing territorial disputes. Controversies over ballistic missile technology, national sovereignty, and democratic freedoms have at various times since the end of the Cold War left the region’s great powers at odds with one another.

Such a concentration of power requires nuanced and insightful research that sheds light on the prevailing security concerns of the region. Over the past two decades, questions regarding the future of the Asia-Pacific have centered on China’s rapidly expanding economy and burgeoning military strength. As an emerging superpower, understanding the nature of China’s rise is crucial to the study of international relations. Nevertheless, regional studies are saturated with China-centric literature, leaving other regional actors under-researched.

Among these less discussed actors is Japan. A state that boasts the third largest global economy, one of the most technologically advanced militaries in the world, and the industrial capacity to quickly transform into a nuclear power. Japan’s alliance with America has facilitated its integration into the American nuclear umbrella and provided Japan with crucial technology exchanges that have greatly enhanced its access to ballistic missile systems.

Perhaps even more crucial when considering regional stability, is that China’s emergence as a global power has come at the expense of Japan’s position within the regional power hierarchy. For over a hundred years, Japan held sway as the premier Asian power. Even after the collapse of Imperial Japan and within the bipolarity of the Cold War, Japan remained the preeminent non-Western regional power. By the end of the Cold War, the Japanese economy had grown to such heights, that many observers thought Japan would soon overtake America as a global economic superpower.
Crippling economic stagnation and political ineffectiveness truncated Japan’s potential, enabling China to supplant Japan as the premier Asian power. This shift precipitated a score of international relations literature that explores how the existing status quo is serving China’s economically growth-driven foreign policy. As is the case with any emerging power, China may or may not rebuff the status quo at some unforeseen juncture in the future - a point that has been thoroughly explored by international relations scholars.

What has not been adequately accounted for is how Japan’s loss of power and prestige impacts regional stability. Should Japanese leaders perceive the existing status quo to be detrimental to Japan’s geopolitical interests, new policies may be instituted to bolster Japan’s position. These efforts could unintentionally destabilize the region. Among these policy options is the potential revision of Article 9 of Japan’s postwar constitution, which prohibits Japan from maintaining a military or using force to settle international disputes. Given Japan’s contentious past as an aggressive imperial power, any steps made towards enhancing Japanese military strength are likely to be eyed with suspicion by its neighbors. Furthermore, widespread pacifist norms within the Japanese public constrain the actions of Japan’s leaders.

In order to understand the security trajectory of Japan, and its impact therein upon the region, it is necessary to delve into Japan’s past and explore the factors that shape its foreign policy. The history of modern Japan has been shaped by a number of systemic shifts within the international system that precipitated seemingly irreconcilable transitions in Japanese foreign policy. Following the arrival of the Western imperialist powers in East Asia during the nineteenth century, Japanese leaders bypassed centuries of cultural traditions by embracing modernization and opening relations with the powers of Europe and America. Japan’s alliances with Western states facilitated its rise from an insular feudal state to a great power. Yet in the aftermath of the First World War, Japanese leaders directed their military aggressiveness towards their former Western allies. Mere decades later, this aggression was superseded by the ready acceptance of Japan’s pacifist constitution.
Each transition, from isolationism to imperialism, from a status quo power to a revisionist power, and from revisionism back to a state entrenched in the status quo, can be explained with a degree of effectiveness through appeals to accepted schools of thought within international relations. However, there remains a fundamental problem of theoretical and analytical consistency. Realism is well suited to explain Japan’s rise to great power status and its confrontation with Western powers, but must be considerably stretched to explain the postwar pacifism of Japanese leaders. Constructivism is useful for revealing how identity, culture, and norms shaped the perspectives of Japanese leaders, but offers little utility for determining the direction of foreign policy outputs. Even liberalism has some function with regard to Japan’s commitment to international institutions in recent decades.

The result is a score of limited scholarship that either: (1) truncates Japanese history by assuming August 6th and 9th of 1945 were nuclear reset buttons on Japanese foreign policy; (2) forsakes theoretical rigor to offer a broad historical examination of Japan’s foreign policy evolution; or (3) makes wide scale assumptions about trends, such as militarism or pacifism, presumed to be prevalent within the Japanese collective identity. While these studies contribute greatly to the overall understanding of Japan’s position within the international system, they often offer contradictory conclusions regarding the direction of Japanese foreign policy. Specifically, there is a lack of clarity regarding Japan’s impact on the triangular distribution of power between China, America, and Japan. This conundrum is complicated by conflicting pressures, such as the historical legacy of the Japanese Empire, Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, and the US-Japanese security agreement.

The consequence is a rather fractured representation of Japan within international relations literature. By focusing on the peculiarities within the Japanese polity or upon a particular chapter in Japan’s history and repeating this process over hundreds if not thousands of studies, one could arrive at any number of conclusions. Japan is a pacifist state; Japan is a revisionist state; Japanese leaders seek to obfuscate Japan’s past; Japan clings to the US-Japanese alliance; Japan is pushing away from America; Japan is a regional leader, that Japan is not capable of leading - and so on and
so forth. At the core of these antithetical conclusions is often a presupposing of a particular behavior and then determining whether or not Japan conforms to the selected hypothesis. This problem is compounded by a lack of theoretical consistency where the objects of analysis are not clearly defined, and where the “facts” of history or policy decisions are chosen to fit the author’s argument and not by the analysis.

Gaining insight into Japanese foreign policy trajectory requires an alternative approach that expands international relations scholarship by combining theoretical parsimony with longitudinal historical depth. To this end, this thesis has developed a unique framework designed to answer three prevailing research questions:

1. How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy?

2. How have these factors changed with time?

3. What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?

Engaging with these questions provides a means for tracing the numerous trends in Japan’s foreign policy evolution. To provide theoretical consistency over this expansive historical timeframe, it is necessary to explore two levels of analysis that account for (1) the baseline characteristics of states and (2) the group dynamics that define foreign policy creation. The core principles of statehood, most often associated with the realist tradition, bind all states to a fundamental set of interests. States are self-interested entities that must acquire sufficient power to both uphold their territorial integrity (sovereignty) and to pursue their perceived interests (embodied in foreign policy) while operating within the constraints of the international system.

Neoclassical realism provides a useful baseline for defining the parameters of state behavior, but it is not without shortcomings. Individual leaders are charged with interpreting the pressures of the international system and crafting foreign policy strategies based upon their perception, thereby adding a layer of complexity to foreign policy analysis. Neoclassical realist literature acknowledges this dynamic, but offers
limited means for analysis. Similarly, constructivism engages with group norms and identities, which is useful for investigations of ideational factors, but it does not provide the necessary theoretical traction for studies rooted in foreign policy.

This gap is addressed by supplementing international relations literature with elements of social psychology. Social Identity Theory (SIT) is a well-established theory that examines the relationships between social groups and the preferences of in-group members. By utilizing SIT to conceptualize group dynamics and then applying these insights to neoclassical realism and constructivism, a robust framework for interpreting foreign policy trajectories is developed. Resultantly, three categories of foreign policy strategies are identified:

1. **Social mobility** is when a group (state) seeks to elevate its position within a power hierarchy (e.g. the international system) by mirroring the practices of a successful referent group.

2. **Social competition** occurs when a group attempts to equal or eclipse a dominant group by challenging their claim to superiority.

3. **Social creativity** is a re-imagining of the power hierarchy by a subordinate group with the intent of achieving recognition for excelling in an alternate domain that does not directly challenge the dominate group or groups.

The body of this thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 offers a literature review of historical and international relations works relevant to this thesis. Chapter 2 provides a theoretical basis for the framework of this thesis. The remaining five chapters cover distinct historical periods in Japan’s foreign policy evolution and are discussed below with reference to the aforementioned strategies.

- Chapter 3 serves as a historical starting point, and details the collapse of feudal Japan during the mid-nineteenth century. The chapter surveys how the arrival of Western powers in East Asia undermined centuries of isolationist foreign policy. The domestic struggle between traditionalists and reformists, including the
efforts of Japanese officials to placate Western demands for trade liberalization, the signing of unequal treaties, and the Boshin War (1868 - 9) are discussed.

• Chapter 4 explores Japan's transition from an isolated feudal republic to an outward looking modern state. The imperialist Western powers provided Meiji leaders with a blueprint for modernization, and served as a referent group for Japan's evolving strategy of social mobility. The chapter concludes with analyzing the consequences of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-5).

• Chapter 5 examines Japan's continued rise as a great power through ongoing social mobility from the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) through the 1920s. In the aftermath of the First World War (1914-1918), international norms that stressed economic openness and a commitment to international peace rose to prominence. Imperialism remained a defining feature of Japanese foreign policy in subsequent decades, however, Japanese political leaders explored options for incorporating the new norms of internationalism into Japan.

• Chapter 6 expands upon the strategy options facing Japanese leaders. Ultimately, the Imperial Army compelled the Japanese government to abandon its efforts towards adopting internationalism and pushed Japan towards social competition through war. Following the formal surrender of Japan in 1945, Japanese leaders utilized Article 9 of the new Japanese constitution to establish a strategy of social creativity that privileged economic growth and the maintenance of a low diplomatic profile.

• Chapter 7 discusses Japanese foreign policy from the 1970s until the present. The collapse of the Japanese economy and the backlash against Japan's non-participation in the Gulf War (1991) crippled the Japanese strategy of social creativity, and prompting Japanese leaders to explore new directions in foreign policy. The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks shifted global security agendas, enabling Japanese elites to establish a strategy of social mobility that was supportive of America's War on Terror and that sidestepped Article 9.
A few points must be noted before proceeding. First, individuals of Japanese descent are presented within the Japanese custom of listing their surname first followed by their given name. This includes reversing names in some works published in English where the name has been presented in the Western style. Second, romanticized Japanese words follow the example set forth by historian Marius B. Jansen, and utilizes Kenkyusha’s New Japanese-English Dictionary, Fourth Edition (1974). Third, the descriptor “Western” is for the sake of simplicity used in a number of instances and should be simply understood as European and American. For example, “Western powers” most commonly refers to the dominate states of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and occasionally Russia. No other implication should be assumed.
Chapter 1

Interpretations of Japan’s International Relations

Signatures of Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru (right) and cabinet ministers on the Constitution of Japan
This chapter reviews the literature relevant to examining the foreign policy of modern Japan. Studies of Japan’s foreign policy within international relations fall into two broad categories. First, Japan’s advanced economic and technological infrastructure has forced questions regarding the legal restrictions of Japan’s pacifist constitution to the forefront of international relations scholarship. This literature focuses on the prospect of Japanese “normalization”. For reference, the definition of a “normal” country is a state constitutionally capable of deploying its military in pursuit of its national security agenda. Second, Japan’s diplomatic engagement with other states (commonly America and China) and its impact on regional security constitutes another principal concern of international relations authors.

Interpretations of Japanese normalization and interstate relations run the gambit of theoretical conceptualizations. To facilitate a more targeted approach, this review utilizes the research questions presented in the introduction to delineate the sources most relevant to this thesis. Research questions one and two - How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy? and How have these factors changed with time? - are most closely associated with aspects of realism. These elements include the international power hierarchy of states and Japanese sovereignty. Research question three - What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next? - is bound to constructivist notions of norms and identity. Therefore, this review focuses primarily upon four components: realist theory (Section 1.1), realist interpretations of Japanese foreign policy (Section 1.2), constructivism (Section 1.3), and constructivist understandings of Japan (Section 1.4). The reader should note that literature featuring liberal interpretations of Japanese foreign policy commonly surveys economic integration and regionalism, and are outside the research scope of this thesis.

Through this review, two fundamental gaps in the existing literature are identified: (1) the lack of historical detail in analyses of Japanese foreign policy, and (2) the shortcomings of international relations theory in framing the foreign policy strategies of Japanese leaders. There is a myopic view of Japanese history within international relations scholarship that overemphasizes recent events. The research questions address this factor by emphasizing historical transitions within broader understanding of modern Japan’s history. To compensate for this oversight, historical sources (both primary and secondary) are also reviewed (Section 1.5). While historical sources greatly enhance the analysis of this thesis, they generally fall outside the scope of international relations literature and thus do not offer adequate theoretical engagement. This limitation and the noted shortcomings of both realism and constructivism constitute a theoretical gap that is addressed by the framework developed in Chapter 2.

1.1 Neoclassical Realism and Power Dynamics

This thesis proposes a framework that hybridizes several theoretical traditions, with core realist principles regarding relative power distributions and the primacy of states constituting foundational variables. These realist elements must be understood before endeavoring to engage with the concepts of national security and the pressures of the international system raised by the research questions one and two. This section refines the realist leanings of this thesis by focusing on neoclassical realism, and the theory’s emphasis on foreign policy strategies.

As a tradition of political thought, realism spans a space of over 2,000 years, and draws from the classical works of Thucydides and Machiavelli. In more recent years, the scholarship of E.H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau has refined what is collectively understood as classical realism.² Classical realism is not a cohesive theory, but it affirms that ‘the drive for power and the will to dominate [are]...fundamental aspects of human nature’ and that human nature drives political elites within a state

to value interests above ideology.\textsuperscript{3} Subsequently, the primary concern for classical realist scholars is defining how leaders can convert national power into foreign policy.\textsuperscript{4}

In the late 1970s, Kenneth Waltz forwarded a new realist theory that attempted to better understand why states seek power. According to Waltz, the structure of the international system, not human nature as classical realists believe, conditions states towards the pursuit of power.\textsuperscript{5} There are two distinct camps among the neorealist theorists that draw from Waltz. Offensive realists, such as John Mearsheimer, believe that states should strive to maximize their power in order to guarantee their national security agenda. Defensive realists, like Waltz himself, hold that states may be punished by the system (other states) should they acquire too much power.\textsuperscript{6}

Tracing where neoclassical realism fits into this tradition is necessary for understanding its utility in answering this thesis’ research questions. Neoclassical realism defines its theoretical space in response to the problems left unresolved by the neorealist model championed by Waltz. Neorealist theory is primarily a theory of international politics that attempts to explain the outcome of state-to-state interactions. To facilitate this end, neorealism fashions broad assumptions about state motivations.\textsuperscript{7} This simplification is perfectly acceptable to neorealists, whose primary


While political elites are driven primarily by interests, how these interests are determined is dependent upon subjective interpretation. Given the impossibility of completely separating identity, norms, and ideology from a group, this thesis will argue there is significant interplay between these elements.

\textsuperscript{4} Taliaferro, Lobell, and Ripsman, "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy," in Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy, ed. Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 16.


\textsuperscript{6} Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism," in International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity, ed. Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 78.

aim is to describe how the constraints of the international system condition state behavior.⁸

Neoclassical realists refine neorealism by shifting the focus from a theory of international politics to a theory of foreign policy. In other words, neoclassical realism is attentive to the domestic variables, such as state structure and the perception of political elites, which propel foreign policy.⁹ Jeffrey W. Taliaferro asserts ‘that the relative distribution of material power shapes the parameters of states’ foreign policy behavior ... [h]owever, these systemic forces can only influence foreign policy through the medium of leaders’ perception and calculations of relative power and prestige.’¹⁰ To clarify these intervening variables, neoclassical realists draw upon the principles of statesmanship and theories of foreign policy espoused by classical realists.¹¹

Gideon Rose details the nuances of the amalgamated theory through appeals to both neorealism and classical realism. Rose argues notes that:

A country’s foreign policy is driven first and foremost by its place in the international system and specifically by its relative material power capabilities. This is why they are realist. They argue further, however, that the impact of such power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level. This is why they are neoclassical.¹²

Rose continues by arguing that neoclassical realism lies in the middle ground between theorists who accept a ‘direct link between systemic constraints and unit-level behavior’ (neorealists) and those who reject ‘any objective systemic constraints exist’ (constructivists).¹³ Neoclassical realists accept a loose objective reality where external variables constrain state behavior, and the political elite must interpret these

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¹¹ Taliaferro, Lobell, and Ripsman 2009, 16.

¹² Rose 1998, 146.

¹³ The generalized “constructivists” here refers more directly to “thick” constructivists, a subcategory of constructivism that is discussed in the following section.
constraints before rendering foreign policy. It is political leaders’ ‘perceptions of relative power that matter, not simply relative quantities of physical resources or forces in being’. This refinement of realism does not refute the structural elements of neorealism. It suggests rather that short term foreign policy objectives are difficult to assess by solely analyzing systematic constraints, while maintaining that neorealist assumptions account for long term trends in international politics.

While neoclassical realism differs from classical realism and neorealism, certain theoretical elements are shared across the realist tradition. Taliaferro et al. recognize three core elements within the realist tradition. First, human beings survive as members of groups which provide some level of security in exchange for the loyalty of the individual. This sentiment is mirrored by Robert Gilpin, who affirms that groups are the ‘building blocks and ultimate units of social and political life’. Second, groups must compete against one another to secure scarce resources, whether material or social, for their members. As groups have no permanent assurance of another group’s intention, interaction between groups is characterized by uncertainty. Third, groups require power to facilitate their objectives and sustain their existence. William C. Wohlforth mirrors these assertions by contesting that realism is defined by groupism (humans are divided into groups, and depend on these groups for survival), egoism (self-interested behavior drives political action), and power-centrism (power is a fundamental element of politics). Importantly, Wohlforth notes that anarchy is a “scope condition” that varies based upon the structure of the international system. For example, a great power can enforce order over small states, as has historically been the case of the United States in Central America. For these small states, the international system is inherently less anarchical than if the great power was absent. Therefore,

14 Ibid., 147.
16 Ibid., 14-5.
18 Taliaferro, Lobell, and Ripsman 2009, 14-5.
realism is less about assuming anarchy and more a theoretical approach dealing with varying levels of anarchy.\textsuperscript{20}

This thesis’ framework explores these core realist insights within the social world, by examining neoclassical realism’s focus on foreign policy outcomes. This approach helps clarify the the process through which Japan’s foreign policy strategies are created. By examining how group behavior is translated into international relations, several assumptions can be derived:

- Humans are fundamentally social creatures who are compelled to participate within social groups. Group affiliation is determined by shared environmental variables, including community location and ethnicity, which enables the systematic segregation of in-group members and out-group non-members. This groupism is habitual to human interaction and forms the foundation of political life. In the context of international relations, the state constitutes the formative group and is the primary actor in analyzing foreign policy.\textsuperscript{21}

- There is an ongoing struggle between states for ‘material power and security in a world of scarce resources and pervasive uncertainty’.\textsuperscript{22} This uncertainty stems from an anarchical international system that lacks a universal sovereign. Within such a system, states must acquire enough power to provide for their own security (self-help), and relative power distributions set boundaries upon the state’s foreign policy.\textsuperscript{23}

- States desire resources perceived necessary by its members, particularly by state elites. In-group distribution of resources can lead to intergroup conflict.\textsuperscript{24} States competing over the same resources can cooperate by forming a partnership (and sometimes a newly merged group) that by extension excludes

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 41-2.

\textsuperscript{21} Arguments that contest the primacy of states within international relations offer little utility, as this framework is designed to analyze foreign policy outcomes (of states) and not the nature of the international system.

\textsuperscript{22} Taliaferro, Lobell, and Ripsman 2009, 4.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{24} Gilpin 1984, 290.
some other state. Alternatively, a state can forgo collaboration and choose to challenge a competing state. State leaders are charged with the decision to cooperate or compete, and their decisions rely upon their subjective interpretation of the state's perceived need of a resource, whether objective (e.g. raw materials) or subjective (e.g. prestige or status). In other words, the behavior of a state (or group) depends upon the preferences and strategies of its leaders.

Neoclassical realism supplies the necessary theoretical traction to define several of the elements discussed throughout this thesis, and any subsequent discussion of the nature of the international system will have a distinct neoclassical realist leaning. Nevertheless, neoclassical realism does have its shortcomings. It offers little utility for analyzing the intervening variables, namely the perception of political elites, that it so aptly recognizes as significant. Neoclassical realism will therefore be expanded through the incorporation of other theoretical traditions. It should be noted that each theory introduced by this thesis builds upon one another, and in the process refines the analytical space in which the research questions are examined. Neoclassical realism provides the foundation of this approach and its utility is strengthened with the introduction of constructivism (Section 1.3) and SIT (Section 2.2).

1.2 Great Power Politics: Realist Interpretations of Japan

Within the broad school of realist scholarship, Japan has been a popular case study. The economic successes of Japan during the Cold War led a number of realist authors to conclude that Japan’s expanding capabilities would result in increased military assertiveness. One of the earliest proponents of this position was Herman Kahn, who in the early 1970s argued that Japan’s rapid economic expansion would continue until it had economically surpassed the America. Kahn also considers the military implications of Japan’s ongoing development by exploring scenarios through which Japan could translate its massive economy into a military infrastructure on par with the Soviet Union and America.

Although much of Kahn’s analysis derives from realist understandings of power acquisition, he discusses important domestic elements, such as modes of thinking and social institutions, that contribute to Japan’s uniqueness. Contemporaries of Kahn, although falling outside a purely realist perspective, support much of Kahn’s conclusions regarding the uniqueness of the Japanese. Anthropologist Chie Nakane examines the social elements of Japan and contends that Japanese society conditions its citizens to value success.26 Seymour Broadbridge notes that Nakane’s ‘analysis of social structure and motivation supports Kahn’s emphasis on Japanese capacity for purposive, dedicated and communal action’.27

The rise of neorealism in the late 1970s reformulated realist interpretations of Japan. Neorealism favors system level analyses of international relations over unit-based or reductionist approaches. Consequently, much of the uniqueness discussed by Kahn was abandoned for positivistic research interested in the conditioning of Japan by external forces. Despite this shift, Kenneth Waltz’s emphasis on the necessary confluence of political, economic, and military capital to support the emergence of a great power drives neorealist conclusions on a trajectory parallel to those of Kahn.28 Waltz furthered this position in the early 1990s by suggesting that ‘[m]uch in Japan’s institutions and behavior supports the proposition that it will once again take its place among the great powers’.29

The end of the Cold War marked a renewed emphasis of realist interpretations lynchpinned by the assumption that the external hindrances to Japanese militarization had vanished.30 Christopher Layne explores the neorealist hypothesis that unipolarity propels the rise of great powers to challenge hegemony through the balance of

power. Laye notes that in the post-Cold War environment Japan may eventually militarize to counter American supremacy, resulting in a highly competitive US-Japanese relationship. Richard Betts also considers the implications of Japan’s economic strength and potential militarization on East Asian stability by noting that ‘[f]or a realist, a normally armed Japan, unless it is pinned down by a powerful common enemy, is a potential threat.’ Betts continues by suggesting a number of strategies that Washington can adopt to ‘keep Tokyo a uni-dimensional superpower’.

The apprehension towards a fully militarized Japan noted by Betts is mirrored by Aaron Friedberg who examines sources of potential instability in East Asia in the early 1990s. With regard to Japan, Friedberg suggests East Asian states ‘are also looking nervously toward Japan and, at the very least, hedging against the possibility that the Japanese too will begin to expand their capacity for projecting military power.’

Samuel Huntington contends that an economic superpower will utilize its wealth to maximize power. For Huntington, Japan has adopted realist principles into its economic strategy by seeking power through market control. Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels develop a similar thesis, termed “mercantile realism”, which ‘recognizes technoeconomic security interests—including, but not limited to, those associated with military security—as central considerations of state policy’. Consequently, the pair argue that Japan’s foreign policy objectives are centered on the advancement of its technoeconomic position. Reinhard Drifte suggests there is no

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33 Ibid.


37 Ibid., 171-2.
guarantee an economic power will transform into a military power.\textsuperscript{38} Drifte examines how the term ‘power’ has been conceptualized within Japan, and notes ‘[a]lthough Japan now has fewer inhibitions about action on the basis of its economic power ... it remains restrained in the area of security.’\textsuperscript{39} He argues that Japan prefers to pursue national security through economic power. From this perspective, Japan’s expanding economic strength requires it to assume greater responsibilities globally to assure its national security.

Many of the assumptions regarding Japan’s harnessing of economic strength were realigned in the wake of the “lost decade” of economic stagnation and the shock of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. Michael Green asserts that since the end of the Cold War, Japan slowly transitioned to a strategy of “reluctant realism”.\textsuperscript{40} Having recognized the limit the Japanese economy, Green suggests that Japan’s foreign policy has become increasingly sensitive to its power relations with China and expanding its national security interests. The terrorist attacks of September 11\textsuperscript{th} 2001 shifted the global security agenda of the international community as America initiated the War on Terror, and likewise affected realist interpretations of Japan. Daniel Kliman suggests that following 9/11 Japan’s political elite have adopted a realpolitik security perspective that derives policy primary from material consideration designed to enhance state power rather than ideological factors.\textsuperscript{41} Kilman argues that ‘Japan’s security outlook will be wholly realpolitik’ and that ‘[n]o state guided by realpolitik would rely on a single ally for security without at least establishing the kernel of a new strategic option’.\textsuperscript{42} By examining the increased assertiveness of the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) since 9/11, Kilman identifies several complimentary forces within the Japanese political infrastructure that have catalyzed this transition.


\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 104.

\textsuperscript{40} Green, \textit{Japan’s Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power} (New York: Palgrave, 2001).


\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 183.
The publications of Christopher Hughes support much of Kilman’s work, albeit without the same overt appeals to realism. Hughes assesses the military and economic security policies within Japan’s domestic infrastructure. In his 2004 publication, Hughes scrutinizes post-Cold War Japan’s security policy. Hughes argues that Japan has adopted a more assertive military position through stronger integration within the US-Japanese alliance. This evolving security posture is re-examined by Hughes in 2009 where he analyzes the trajectory of Japan’s remilitarization following the Koizumi premiership (2001-2006). Despite numerous legal and cultural hindrances to normalization, Hughes suggests that ‘Japan has continued on its path of remilitarisation ... [t]his has been manifest in long-term changes in the structures of its military capacity, in civil-military relations, in the military-industrial complex, in Japan’s external military commitments and in societal attitudes towards the military and military power.’ Accordingly, the long-term security benefits of a traditional military infrastructure will compel Japan towards continued strategies of power projection and enhanced integration with America.

A defensive realist interpretation of Japan would depart from the offensive realist assumption that states react to the possibility of conflict (which assumes Japan would translate its economic strength into military strength) by suggesting alternatively that it is the probability of conflict within a security dilemma that drives states. Defensive realists suggest that interstate relations are dependent upon how state elites interpret other states, that is to say that states interpreted as friends are treated differently than those interpreted as enemies. However, it has been argued that defensive realism fails to account for the role of economic power within the

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44 Hughes 2004

45 Hughes 2009, 142.

46 Ibid.

47 Dunne and Schmidt 2014, 130.
security dilemma.\(^{48}\) This is a significant oversight given Japan’s foreign policy strategies.

More specialized variants of realism, such as postclassical realism, ‘construes states as actors who, while highly sensitive to the economic costs of defense, are maximizing their security without threatening others in a situation of the security dilemma.’\(^{49}\) Tsuyoshi Kawasaki argues that Japan’s foreign policy is driven by a desire to ‘reduce the intensity of the security dilemma in Northeast Asia.’\(^{50}\) To this end, Japan maintains a restrained defensive posture and supports its alliance with America. Any alternative would destabilize the region, a fact the weighs heavily upon Japanese foreign policy leaders. Furthermore, Kawasaki contends that although economic considerations do impact Japan’s foreign policy objectives, the importance of these factors has been overemphasized by mercantile realists.\(^{51}\) While Kawasaki’s analysis is compelling, his overemphasis on material elements ultimately contradicts the work of Kahn and other domestically focused researchers. Furthermore, Kawasaki published before the effects of 9/11 could be considered. The empirical evidence present in Kliman and Hughes’ work demonstrates that Japan has become more assertive, and challenges Kawasaki’s security dilemma premise.

While the realist tradition provides an interesting context for Japan’s power potential, it does not adequately address the restrictive domestic institutionalization that inhibit the emergence of Japan as a traditional great power. In his criticism of this realist shortcoming Andrew Oros notes that ‘[c]entral tenets of realist theory would predict that [the] vestiges of Japan’s defeat over half a century ago would long since have been discarded. Realists’ standard response is that there is simply a time lag.’\(^{52}\) Conversely, Inoguchi Takashi argues that both political and military normalization are underway in Japan. Inoguchi notes that the political structure of Japan is shifting


\(^{49}\) Ibid., 223.

\(^{50}\) Ibid.

\(^{51}\) Ibid.

\(^{52}\) Oros 2008, 37.
towards a two-party system and greater assertiveness internationally that calls for eventual constitutional revision. Inoguchi’s emphasis on political pragmatism and security embody general realist themes, and his emphasis on how changes to domestic institutions are complementary to a normal security posture offer an interesting (although not contradictory) counter to Oros.

Although realist theorists have overall struggled to accurately gauge the character of Japanese foreign policy in the post-Cold War era, this should not be seen as a whole scale failure of realism. It must be remembered that much of the discussed realist scholarship draws from either classical or neorealist theories, whose tenets were established under multipolar and bipolar international systems, respectively. Both of these brands of realism are better equipped to analyze the period of modern Japan from the Meiji Restoration until the end of the Pacific War. Given the unipolar nature of the international power hierarchy over the past twenty years, combined with the emergence of economic multipolarity, realism has again adapted and offered new insights through the development of neoclassical realism.

Neoclassical realism, as defined in the previous section, is a theory of foreign policy that contends the external pressures of the international system must be interpreted through intervening variables, such as the perceptions of political elites, before policy can be enacted. This sensitivity to domestic factors is promising, and although neoclassical realist interpretations of Japan are extremely limited, Oros suggests that authors such as Green and Kliman in part derive their theoretical frameworks from foundational neoclassical realist theorists including Randall Schweller and Gideon Rose. One of the objectives of this thesis’ theoretical framework is to further neoclassical realist scholarship by applying core realist assumptions through a historically nuanced analysis of Japan.

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54 Oros 2008, 37.
1.3 Ideological Factors and Constructivism

In addition to the neoclassical realist underpinnings described in the preceding two sections, this thesis also engages with ideological considerations. This section introduces constructivism as a method for addressing the role of ideational factors on foreign policy. Of particular interest are the variables of group dynamics and trans-generational norms raised by the research question three: *What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?* Constructivism contends that the structure of the international system is contingent upon historical and social factors, rather than originating from intrinsically given characteristics of international politics.\(^{55}\) Although not a fully actualized theory, research founded on constructivist methodology is designed to elicit a thorough ontological explanation of the social elements that collectively comprise international relations. This is to say, constructivists investigate pivotal factors of international relations that exist beyond the scope of neoclassical realism.\(^{56}\)

Much of the constructivist doctrine is a direct reaction to neorealism, which was the dominant theory of international relations during its emergence. For the purposes of this thesis, Alexander Wendt’s critique of neorealism will form the basis of the constructivist elements of this thesis. Wendt contests that the neorealist premise that anarchy is an inherent property of the international system by asserting that anarchy, although a possible feature of the international system, is a socially constructed.\(^{57}\) This contention provides Wendt and other constructivists with the necessary theoretical space to argue that the behavior of a state proceeds from social

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\(^{56}\) Ruggie Autumn 1998, 878-80.

factors, such as the shared identity of a state's leaders and public, termed “collective identity” throughout this thesis, and the perception of its political elite.58

Wendt notes that: 'Identities are the basis of interests. Actors do not have a “portfolio” of interests that they carry around independent of social context; instead they define their interests in the process of defining situations.'59 Similarly, Alice Ba and Matthew Hoffman state ‘the interests and identities of actors in world politics are malleable ... their interests and identities depend on the context in which they find themselves.’60 Identities are therefore at the forefront of constructivist theorizing. Unlike classical realist reasoning which is underpinned by interpretations of human nature, constructivists assert that identities emerge from the social construction of ideas, beliefs, and associations that are themselves perpetually linked in a recursive feedback loop with the social world. In the words of Ian S. Lustick and Dan Miodownik:

The fundamental insight [of constructivism] is that the social world is not given to us as pre-organized in some immutable fashion, but that the categories of action and interpretation that help us produce and reproduce a familiar world are themselves constructed out of processes in which we participate, but which we may or may not understand.61

This conclusion is echoed in a wealth of literature that endeavors to explain international relations though the lens of constructivism.62 Despite the sometime


divergent arguments of constructivist authors, Lustick and Miodownik distilled several key attributes of identity that are consistent across most constructivist writings. What follows below is a summation of David Rousseau’s elaboration on the research of Lustick and Miodownik.\(^6^3\) According to Rousseau:

- Identities are fluid and subject to change over time.\(^6^4\) Linda Bishai expands upon this point by claiming that ‘identities...are constructed constantly by our own accounts of all the circumstances through which we exist.’\(^6^5\)

- Groups and individuals have multiple identities, and they shift between these identities depending upon the situation and environment.

- These contextual (situation and environment) variables derive from the political, economic, and social structures within which the group and individual operate. Ba and Hoffman note that ‘the identity and interests of states change across contexts and over time.’\(^6^6\)

- Social interaction influences the saliency of one identity over other possible identities and the emergence of new identities.

- Certain actors (e.g. politicians and intellectuals) have greater access to the resources and modes of communication necessary for disseminating identity. These actors have a greater influence on the identities (including collective identities) prevalent within society.

While Rousseau explores the interplay between identity and the individual, it remains unclear how the individual forms a notion of self, or how the self operates as a member of a group. Understanding this process is essential to examining this thesis’ focus on how group dynamics help shape foreign policy outcomes. Subjective self-identification shapes identity formation, and consequently how collective identity

\(^6^3\) Rousseau, "The Emergence of a Shared Identity: An Agent-Based Computer Simulation of Idea Diffusion," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 5 (2005): 686-90. This thesis has deferred to Rousseau’s analysis on account of the numerous of examples he deploys to clarify the work of Lustick and Miodownik.

\(^6^4\) Ibid., 687.

\(^6^5\) Bishai, "Liberal Empire," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 7, no. 1 (2004): 60..

\(^6^6\) Ba and Hoffman 2003, 20.
functions within the international system. Conceptualizing the self can only be accomplished through the self’s dichotomous relationship with the other. That is to say, the boundaries of the self are constrained by that which lies outside the self (the other). This paradoxical definition is posited by Franke Wilmer, who states the self ‘is constituted by referring the bounded self to something else, something with which the self is either identified (as the same) or from which it is different’.\(^\text{67}\)

The division between the self and the other is significant when examining the socialization inherent to human interaction. Humans are fundamentally social creatures who are compelled to participate within social groups. Group association supplies its members with material (acquisition of resources, distribution of labor, protection from threats) and emotional (comfort, sense of belonging, purpose) benefits. The self-other delineation that enables an individual to define themselves as separate from another translates directly to these social groups. For example, two individuals borne of the same parents will view each other with less otherness than an individual with different parents. Likewise, an individual born and raised in a specific village would likely view a foreign traveler as being more other than a fellow village dweller. Although these examples may oversimplify a rather complex feature of human behavior, they reflect an underlying aspect of the self-other complex: that otherness is both inclusive and exclusive. The siblings from the first example are unique individuals with their own (self) identity that is exclusively distinguished from all others. They are also part of a family (a group), whose membership is inclusively defined by excluding others from different families.

Membership within a group is not always voluntary (siblings do not choose their family), but groups nonetheless form their own identities through the communication of shared thoughts and perceptions between its members.\(^\text{68}\) The collective identity of the group, which is continually constructed through the dialogue of members, informs the individual identity of each member.\(^\text{69}\) Additionally, some

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\(^{67}\) Wilmer 2002, 69.

\(^{68}\) Bishai 2004, 61.

\(^{69}\) Sterling-Folker, ”Neoclassical Realism and Identity: Peril Despite Profit across the Taiwan Strait,” in *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, ed. Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 110.
actors within the group will exert a greater influence on the group’s collective identity (and by extension upon each group member) than members with less leverage. Collective identity is thereby dynamically recreated by in-group members, and constantly confined by out-group others. When considering the shifts in Japan’s foreign policy strategies, it is necessary to understand how identity is defined and constrained by group leaders (namely state elites).

Within the group, particular ideas and beliefs are transmitted between members. These factors help define the “norms”, or the rules which govern behavior and ideology, of the group. Robert Axelrod discusses norms as standards of behavior governing cooperation and reciprocity between actors.70 Hugo Dobson notes that other constructivist literature, especially the work of Friedrich Kratochwil, expanded Axelrod’s definition of norms to ‘not only as constraining but also encouraging, or constituting, behavior.’71 Peter J. Katzenstein divides norms into two categories: regulatory and constitutive. Regulatory norms ‘define standards of appropriate behavior that shape interests and help coordinate the behavior of political actors’ while ‘[c]onstitutive norms express actor identities that also define interests and thus shape behavior’.72 These complementary sets of norms are transmitted from one generation to the next, and in the process simultaneously reforge and reinforce the collective identity of the group.73 Toni Erskine clarifies this dynamic, noting that norms ‘embody established codes of what actors should do, or refrain from doing, in certain circumstances.’74 From this scholarship we can derive a definition of norms. Norms within this thesis can thus be understood as a system of established rules that inform the behavior of actors.

The in-group/out-group division correlates directly to the international system, where the principle actor is the state (the primacy of the state is explored in Section


72 Katzenstein 1996, 18.

73 Ibid., 18-9.

1.1). Each state possesses a unique collective identity and contains several competing identities. For example, the collective identity of America is defined by norms of democracy and personal liberty while the competing identities of the general public are roughly divided by conservative (Republican) and liberal (Democrat) factions. Within the state, political elites not only control foreign policy outcomes, but they exert greater influence on the collective identity of the state. Additionally, social factors affect the collective identity of a group. For example, state leaders can cultivate nationalism (a facet of collective identity) to bolster their political position.

The social environment of international relations is the international system, and the recursive socialization of states comprises the external pressures that constrain state leaders. As a result, the objective reality of neoclassical realists is in part created through the subjective reality of state elites. The neoclassical realist interpretation of foreign policy follows a pattern similar to the previous discussion of collective identity formation, whereby in-group leaders are constantly engaged in interpreting and redefining the collective identity of the group. In terms of neoclassical realism, the subjective reality of state elites are in constant dialogue with the objective reality of the international system that in turn defines the boundaries of the subjective world. Integrating constructivism with neoclassical realism is an essential component in conceptualizing identities as intervening variables within the framework of this thesis. In this manner, the proposed combination of approaches enhances this thesis’ conclusions by expanding the offered analysis beyond the traditional scopes of neoclassical realist or constructivist research.

1.4 Ideational Considerations: Constructivist Interpretations of Japan

Japan's unique position within the international system and its unconventional approach to foreign policy has prompted a number of studies that focus on the domestic dynamics of Japan. These works differentiate themselves from the more traditional international relations understandings of a state’s foreign policy goals by adopting a constructivist methodology. Constructivism examines how the interaction

\[75\text{ Rousseau 2005, 686-90.}\]

\[76\text{ Rose 1998, 152.}\]
between actors (state and non-state) in the social world establishes norms, transforms identity, and affects the development of policy. With regard to Japan, constructivists most commonly employ socially rooted variables, such as norms and identity, to explain Japan’s reluctance to remilitarize. Unlike classical realism or neorealism which privileges power dynamics, constructivists contend that Japan’s resistance to normalization is a result of inherent Japanese antimilitarism. In particular, Thomas Berger and Peter Katzenstein examine the impact of these social elements on Japanese national security.

Thomas Berger asserts that Japan’s security agenda has been profoundly influenced by cultural factors. For Berger, Japan’s position as an economic superpower that has forgone military normalization is a result of a “culture of anti-militarism” that defines the goals of its political actors.77 Through a comparative analysis of postwar Japan and Germany, Berger argues that Japan’s rejection of traditional great power policies must be understood as a result of Japan’s cultural aversion to its disastrous militaristic past. In his review of East Asian security, Berger notes that constructivism ‘offers a convincing explanation for the historical shift of actor preferences from security to economic concerns.’78 While his historical analysis of Japan’s security policies does provide an intriguing discussion of norms and values, Berger’s analysis could benefit from expanding upon the complex external factors that also influence foreign policy

Katzenstein examines the role of norms and how their institutionalization into societal and legal practices influences security practice.79 Norms serve as a behavioral mitigator to Katzenstein who argues that policy decisions are constrained by expected


78 Ibid., 408.

standards of behavior. In particular, Katzenstein discusses the reluctance of the Japanese police and military to use violence. Katzenstein develops a useful theoretical approach through his engagement of norms. He contends that norms, which are often overlooked by realist or liberal approaches, are a necessary component of Japanese-centric studies.\(^8^0\) Despite these insights, Katzenstein has been criticized for misinterpreting some of the domestic historical developments essential to his norm-based framework.\(^8^1\) Glenn Hook develops a similar thesis by exploring the effects of Imperial Japan's legacy on Japanese policy. By discussing Japanese security policy through a survey of both internal and external pressures, and with significant consideration of the Japanese identity, Hook provides an excellent context to understand Japan's pacifist foreign policy. By emphasizing the role of language on security policy, Hook introduces several insights from discourse analysis to the aforementioned constructivist frameworks.\(^8^2\)

While these sources provide an excellent starting point for analyses of Japanese foreign policy, the complex interaction of norms and identity on foreign policy can lead to an oversimplified understanding of Japanese society. Pacifist norms are core components of postwar Japan's collective identity, but Kenneth Pyle notes that there is a historically entrenched disconnect between the Japanese ruling elite and the Japanese masses.\(^8^3\) While Japan's leaders cannot flagrantly violate domestic pacifist norms, this divide has provided the necessary traction for Japan's evolution towards a more traditionally conservative foreign policy, witnessed by its increased assertiveness over the past decade and a half. Norms still operate heavily within this equation, but it is worth noting these norms are constantly evolving. Hugo Dobson investigates this transformation by discussing Japan's participation in United Nations (UN)

\(^{80}\) Katzenstein 1996


Peacekeeping operations. Dobson emphasizes the role of norms on behavior as a contributing factor to Japan’s peacekeeping involvement.\textsuperscript{84}

Andrew Oros builds upon the work of Berger and Katzenstein and argues that a culture of domestic anti-militarism still dominates Japan’s security agenda. According to Oros, a systemic shock would be needed to override the salience of antimilitarism within the Japanese identity. Oros notes that existing constructivist literature has devoted limited attention to ‘the question of how contending views of security identity in Japan have structured specific security practices in postwar Japan’.\textsuperscript{85} For Oros, antimilitarism norms emerged from competing security perspectives of postwar Japanese leaders who negotiated a security identity contingent upon the “three Rs” of “reach, reconcile, reassure”.\textsuperscript{86} With regard to Japan’s apparent shift away from its Cold War agenda, Oros argues that the “three Rs” still constrain its new objectives.

The general acceptance of pacifist norms by constructivist methodologies is challenged by Jennifer Lind who suggests that if Japanese foreign policy embodied pacifist norms, Japan would adopt a truly military defensive doctrine that was less integrated with America.\textsuperscript{87} More historically geared analyses, such as that offered by Pyle and Samuels, provide an excellent counterpoint to constructivist studies. Rather than focusing only on Japanese culture and foreign policy from the Cold War forward, these authors begin their analysis with the transformation of Japanese society under the Meiji Restoration and progress to the present. This approach is replicated in this thesis.

Constructivist insights into identity and norms are essential in understanding the domestic aspects that influence Japan’s foreign policy. Nevertheless, constructivism struggles to define the role of pacifist principles in Japan’s increasingly assertive stance. As referenced in Section 1.2 and fully discussed in Chapter 7, since

\textsuperscript{84} Dobson 2003

\textsuperscript{85} Oros 2008, 40.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 33.

9/11 Japan has become a more active participant in regional and global security measures. Of particular note is the sidestepping of constitutional restraints, which are the legal institutionalization of norms, with the enactment of supplemental laws that expand Japan’s security options. Neoclassical realism provides some insight into how changing external constraints have conditioned Japanese leaders to alter their foreign policy approach. However, without a firm basis in Japanese history the relationship between a more assertive foreign policy and the existing pacifist norms remains opaque. This thesis addresses this need by drawing heavily upon historical evidence.

1.5 Historical Context

This thesis develops a broad historical discussion that offers a cohesive understanding of Japan’s foreign policy evolution. The research questions specifically reference both external and internal transitions affecting Japan across historical periods. Both neoclassical realist and constructivist factors must therefore be framed within the context of modern Japanese history. Within this thesis, “modern” Japanese history refers to the period following the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Prior to this period, Japan was isolated from the international community and practiced minimal foreign policy. When considering the foreign policy evolution of Japan, the policy strategy crafted by early Meiji leaders provides a clear historical starting point. This point is expanded in Chapter 3.

Current international relations literature provides a wealth of information regarding Japanese foreign policy over the last fifty to sixty years. However, such a limited historical scope leaves crucial elements of the research questions unanswered. Each research question contains a historical element, which have been placed in bold text for clarity: How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time? What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next? As detailed in the introduction, this thesis provides a

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88 Here the historical element is implied. If policy shifts are to be analyzed, the status of Japanese foreign policy both before and after said shift must be contextualized with historical evidence.
framework that accounts for both theoretical and historical factors. This framework is developed in Chapter 2, but first it is necessary to review the historical sources used throughout each chapter.

Three types of historical resources are used within this thesis. First, a wide range of anthologies are utilized. These works cover large periods of Japanese history with specific chapters dedicated to a particular era or approach (e.g. political economy or Japanese imperialism). Notably, the Cambridge History of Japan series is used extensively, as are the works of renowned Japanese scholars, such as Marius Jansen and W.G. Beasley.89 Second, this thesis draws from detailed accounts of specific historical events found in stand alone publications. These resources are generally more focused than historical anthologies, and are extremely useful for analyzing a particular event or person, such as Ian Hill Nish’s work on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance or Seki Hiroharu’s examination of the Mukden Incident.90 Third, primary source material in the form of autobiographies, memoirs, and translated accounts of political correspondences are deployed to provide an account of how Japan’s political elite reacted to key historical events. Examples include Kajima Morinosuke’s masterful detailing of correspondences between Meiji leaders, Kume Kunitake’s collection of


translated documents from the Iwakura Mission, and Prime Minister Yoshida’s memoirs.91

There are a handful of sources that provide both the historical depth necessary to develop a nuanced understanding of Japanese foreign policy, and that forward a central argument geared towards international relations. Kenneth Pyle’s *Japan Rising: The Resurgence of Japanese Power and Purpose* merges historical evidence from a wealth of primary and secondary sources with insights from international relations theory.92 Pyle addresses the aforementioned shifts in Japanese foreign policy by detailing the external factors upon which Japanese leaders have acted. By tracing these factors from the Meiji Restoration until the present day, Pyle effectively challenges existing assumptions that these sudden shifts in Japan’s foreign policy direction are either unpredictable or a radical departure from the norm. It is an extremely informative text that has been fundamental to this thesis, but it nonetheless has its shortcomings. Pyle’s engagement with international relations theory could be more substantial. He makes extensive use of realist tenets, but deploys the English school, constructivism and liberalism without providing an overall framework that justifies this diverse use of theory.93 This approach does not detract from the effectiveness of Pyle’s excellent work, but it does highlight the need for a more comprehensive theoretical framework for analyzing Japanese foreign policy.

Richard J. Samuels approaches Japanese security policy through a detailed historical analysis in *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*.94 Samuels traces the historical context of Japan’s foreign policy evolution and utilizes these factors to frame the current security discourse in Japan. Similar to Pyle,

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92 Pyle 2007

93 Realism is used throughout, but is particularly relevant to pages 45-65. Hedley Bull of the English School is discussed on page 72. Alexander Wendt is referenced on page 100 and liberalism surfaces on page 147.

94 Samuels 2007
Samuels challenges assumptions prevalent in Japan-centric literature that oversimplify and misinterpret the security strategies of Japanese leaders. Samuels contends that domestic political debates and the perception of external factors must be considered when examining Japanese policy. To this end, Samuels traces a wealth of ideological perspectives from the Meiji era to the present, and demonstrates how security policies arose out of the contestation of divergent ideas and interpretations of the international system. While Samuels’ work draws from a vague historical timeframe, it is heavily slanted towards Cold War and post-Cold War Japan. This focus is understandable given Samuels’ aim to provide a historical basis for current strategic debates facing Japanese leaders. Additionally, Samuels draws from both realist and constructivist theory, without fully engaging with either theory or forwarding a comprehensive theoretical framework. Much like Pyle, such a strong theoretical focus falls outside of the desired scopes of their desired projects, and does not distract from the potency of their research.

Ian Neary also provides a strong historical basis for his analysis of Japanese foreign policy, tracing liberal and authoritarian trends in the Japanese polity from the Meiji Restoration to the present. In this manner, Pyle, Samuels and Neary utilize a similar methodology. Neary’s incorporation of historical factors provides a unique examination of domestic factors (particularly the evolution of party politics) over a broad historical timeframe, but ultimately suffers from limited details within a relatively short publication.

Pyle and Samuels’ nuanced and historically rigorous approach does much to address the lack of historical detail in international relations literature, but their work suffers from a broad theoretical approach that does not clearly identify its frame of analysis. This thesis is heavily indebted to the research of both authors. Nevertheless, it will diverge considerably from their methodology by deriving theoretical assumptions from a neoclassical realist perspective that incorporates constructivism and SIT. In more general terms, historical analyses of Japan would benefit from a robust yet consistent theoretical framework that clearly defines its objects of analysis. Such a framework is proposed in the following chapter.

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1.6 Summarizing Existing Theories and Research Gaps

This chapter constitutes the first half of the analytical approach developed by this thesis, and overlaps considerably with the framework fashioned in Chapter 2. The research questions driving this thesis build upon existing realist and constructivist scholarship, but pulls its analytical tools from specific nuanced strands within each theory. It was therefore necessary to contextualize the theoretical underpinnings of this research project. First, neoclassical realism was introduced. Neoclassical realism focuses primarily upon foreign policy but also considers domestic variables, such as state structure and the perception of political elites, which propel foreign policy. The theory offers considerable insight into the concepts of national security and international power hierarchies raised by the research questions one and two, but its emphasis on foreign policy output leaves questions regarding domestic variables unanswered. This discussion of the realist tradition was supplemented with a review of current international relations literature that forwards realist interpretations of Japanese foreign policy.

Constructivism was introduced as a method for remedying the problems left unresolved by neoclassical realism. Constructivism is a loose theoretical tradition that examines the role of the social world within international relations. It also examines elements crucial to surveying interstate relations, such as identity and norms, that exist beyond established outside the scope of realism. This thesis utilizes constructivism to supplement neoclassical realism, and as a method for examining social considerations relevant to the research questions. A review of constructivist understandings of Japan was also discussed.

Through this review, two complementary research gaps were identified. First, international relations literature often presents short-sighted analyses of Japan that neglects historical factors. This thesis draws heavily upon historical detail, and a review of relevant sources was provided. While significant progress has been made by a handful of authors to incorporate history within international relations, existing resources are wanting for a comprehensive theoretical framework. Second, current theoretical interpretations of Japan do not provide adequate means for addressing both these historical and the aforementioned theoretical factors. In Chapter 2, a unique framework derived from neoclassical realism, constructivism, and SIT is developed to address this second gap.
Chapter 2

Framing Japanese Foreign Policy

National Diet Building, Tokyo
This chapter expands upon the sources reviewed in Chapter 1 and synthesizes a theoretical framework through which the objectives of this thesis are analyzed. Given the diversity of concepts raised by the research questions of this thesis, it is necessary to draw from multiple schools of thought. Therefore, this framework supplements neoclassical realism and constructivism with Social Identity Theory (SIT). It is an amalgamation tailored specifically to understand the evolution of Japan's foreign policy, but that is nevertheless robust enough to accommodate other research interests. In broad terms, this framework is founded on neoclassical realist assumptions that regard the state as the primary actor (statism) amidst the intergroup interaction of other self-interested states within an anarchical international system (survivalism), that states must act to secure their own interests (self-help), and that these interests are dependent upon the perception of political elites. Examining these elements of neoclassical realism is essential for understanding national security, power dynamics, and the nature of the international system, which underscore the research questions one and two.

Constructivist insights on identity formation and norms are then utilized to complement neoclassical realist assumptions, with a specific interest in clarifying how the perspective of state elites is formed. The central elements of constructivism distilled in Chapter 1 provide the necessary means for engaging with the concepts of group dynamics and trans-generational norms also raised by research questions three. The collective identity of a state both conditions the actions of political leaders and forms a channel through which leaders communicate with domestic populations. Additionally, the norms of the international system similarly constrain the foreign policy options available to state leaders. Combining the constructivist and neoclassical realist traditions is an essential component of how this thesis analyzes the strategies of political leaders (Section 2.1).

SIT, a social psychology theory that explores status-seeking group behavior, further enhances this framework by delineating the foreign policy strategies available to Japanese leaders (Section 2.2). Despite drastic shifts in Japanese foreign policy, Japanese leaders have consistently acted upon neoclassical realist notions of survivalism and self-help as understood through their subjective perception of the international system. This perception is dependent upon identities and norms, but the
pragmatic privileging of certain identities and norms is best interpreted through SIT. When applied to international relations, SIT contends that all foreign policy strategies are designed to bolster the relative position of states (Section 2.3). For example, Japan’s transition to an aggressive revisionist state during the early twentieth century and its low diplomatic stance during the Cold War are critical moments that require thorough academic engagement. By analyzing these seemingly divergent policies through SIT, a consistent drive within Japan’s foreign policy infrastructure to strengthen state power while solidifying its sovereignty is identified. Having addressed these factors, an example is offered to demonstrate the efficaciousness of this three pronged approach in conceptualizing foreign policy outputs (Section 2.4).

### 2.1 Neoclassical Realism and Identity

Neoclassical realism’s sensitivity to intervening variables offers an avenue for incorporating constructivism within a hybridized framework. However, it is necessary to consider areas of possible contradiction. Exploring these concerns ensures that methodological conclusions drawn from either theoretical approach are consistent, thus enhancing the theoretical viability of the framework. It should be noted that both theories have been considerably refined through the review of Chapter 1, and geared specifically to answer the research questions of this thesis. References to either approach must be understood within the specific context that they have been developed. Nevertheless, two potential sources of contention must be resolved if neoclassical realism and constructivism are to be successfully integrated: (1) *Is the international system characterized by prevalent anarchy?* (2) *Does constructivism share neoclassical realism’s emphasis on self-preservation through relative power distributions?*

In lieu of a hierarchically superior coercive force within global affairs, it can be said that some degree of anarchy exists within the international system. Consequently, resolution of international disputes depends upon the relative power distribution of states. Anarchy is therefore also relative, as is defined in Section 1.1. Within constructivism the “facts” of the international system (namely anarchy) do not derive
from a material reality, but rather from an intersubjective social reality. Ergo, the structure of the international system depends upon the ideas and perceptions of its actors, rather than concrete objective factors.

Within the constructivist camp there are two discrete epistemologies, described by Wendt as "thin" and "thick" (and by John G. Ruggie as "neoclassical" and "postmodernist") constructivism. Thin constructivists maintain that reality is socially constructed, but it exists externally from actors and can be engaged through empirical research. Thick constructivists counter this assumption by insisting that no true reality exists, because what is observed cannot be shown to exist independently of observation.

The thick constructivism has limited application within international relations, and is better suited for philosophy. For thin constructivists, however, anarchy and its corollary effects (e.g. self-help) are mutually constructed institutions. In Wendt’s words:

An institution is a relatively stable set or "structure" of identities and interests. Such structures are often codified in formal rules and norms, but these have motivational force only in virtue of actors' socialization to and participation in collective knowledge. Institutions are fundamentally cognitive entities that do not exist apart from actors' ideas about how the world works.

Actors thus participate in constant dialogue with an international system that is created by their beliefs and concurrently constrained by these same beliefs. This sentiment is mirrored by Rose’s understanding of neoclassical realism, where political actors operate as an intervening variable between an objective reality that has already been created, and a subjectively derived reality they seek to shape through foreign policy. Conceptions of anarchy within thin constructivism and neoclassical realism are therefore complementary to a nuanced interpretation of the international system, and do not exclude the deployment of both theories within this framework. Resultantly,

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96 Onuf 2012, 35-43.


98 Wendt 1999; Ruggie Autumn 1998, 327.

99 Actors are still part of the externally existent system.

100 Barkin 2003, 326-7.

when deriving analysis regarding the nature of the international system, which underpins the security emphasis of research questions one and two, it should be understood that relative anarchy is a persistent feature of interstate relations. This assertion is supported by the previous discussion of scope conditions in Section 1.1.

Regarding the primacy of power, there is significant overlap between constructivism and core tenets of realism covered in Chapter 1. Both approaches argue that under anarchy an actor’s first concern must be preservation (self-help/egoism). The distribution of power is thereby delimitated between actors (states) who cognitively distinguish themselves from other actors.\(^\text{102}\) What differs between constructivists and neoclassical realists is the perceived utility of material power. J. Samuel Barkin considers the role of material power and reasons that constructivism and realism can be merged into a hybrid theory of international relations. Barkin holds that the realist emphasis on material power is based on the assumption that an adversary’s military can ‘threaten the very existence of a state’\(^\text{103}\). Since much of the foundational realist work (namely neorealism) was crafted during the Cold War, Barkin suggests that military threats were commonly the focus of seminal realist literature. Barkin concludes that in an international system where ‘no imminent military threat[s] exist’, such as the current hegemonic world-order, that no ‘a priori reason exists within realist theory to privilege military power over other forms of power.’\(^\text{104}\) Barkin examines the broad realist tradition, of which neoclassical realism is but one of many subsets, and his conclusions provide a useful starting point for conceptualizing “power” from a neoclassical realist perspective.

Soft power, economic strength, prestige, and other alternate forms of power can be combined with military strength to supply states with the necessary leverage to assure their security.\(^\text{105}\) This assumption is by no means revolutionary to realist thinking, even Waltz noted that ‘[a] state becomes a great power not by military or economic capability alone but by combining political, social, economic, military, and

\(^{102}\) Ibid.

\(^{103}\) Barkin 2003, 329.

\(^{104}\) Ibid..

\(^{105}\) The saliency of preferred forms of power depends upon the interpretation by political elites of international norms and their desired foreign policy outcome.
geographic assets in more effective ways than other states can.\textsuperscript{106} Furthermore, neoclassical realist conceptions of power are immersed in relative power distributions. Since there is no definitive empirical method to quantify state power, power calculations are accomplished through a partially subjective analysis of the political elite.\textsuperscript{107} These elite must also navigate the status quo vs revisionist state dichotomy stressed by Schweller to evaluate the nature of a foreign state’s ambition.\textsuperscript{108} As Kang notes, ‘more important than power itself is what states want to do with that power’.\textsuperscript{109} The resulting interpretations of political leaders are deeply entwined with their state’s collective identity, and as will be argued in subsequent sections, the strategy chosen by the political elite can be best understood under the terminology of SIT. When determining the external factors conditioning state elite (research questions one and two) and the perception of those elite (research question three) is necessary to consider this conceptualization of power.

Having established that neoclassical realism is compatible with constructivism, it is posited that identities are a central variable among the intervening factors noted within neoclassical realism. The synthesis of both neoclassical realism and constructivism provides a more complete picture of the interaction between states and the international system. The core goals of state elites are realist, i.e. motivated by self-interest, and are constrained by the external pressures of an international system in which realist-orient states interact with one another.

The interaction between a state and the international system is, however, dependent upon the intervening variables noted within neoclassical realism. The perception of the political elite within a state filters and interprets the pressures of the international system before determining foreign policy. Furthermore, the collective identity and competing domestic identities of that state influence state behavior. Constructivism is essential to understanding intervening variables, which exist


\textsuperscript{107} Rose 1998, 146-7.


between the state and the state elite, and “filtering variables”, which act between the state elite and the international system. Figure 2.1 provides a visual reference for these interrelated factors.

Analysis of these filtering and intervening variables is limited by the inherently nebulous conceptualization of identities and norms. It is impossible to define clear boundaries for identities or the exact degree to which identities influence the foreign policy apparatus of a particular state. Norms may restrain the behavior of actors and transmit ideational factors between the international system and state elites, and between state elites and their public, but remain similarly vague. Owing to this intrinsically opaqueness, intervening and filtering variables are referred to collectively as “gray variables”. Acknowledging the analytical limitations of gray variables is essential if faulty conclusions are to be avoided. Nevertheless, gray variables are crucial for conceptualizing the relationship between neoclassical realist actors and determining the relevant objects to analyze, as presented in Figure 2.2. The two categories of gray variables are represented: intervening variables (domestic political constraints, norms, and political policies) and filtering variables (international norms
and external pressures). Also note that the hierarchical distribution of norms mirrors the asymmetry of identity formation whereby group leaders have a greatest effect.

![Figure 2.2: Relationship Between Foreign Policy Actors and Gray Variables](image)

The presented research questions also correspond to this dynamic. Consider research question one and two: \textit{How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan's foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time?} These questions are primarily concerned with the interaction between state elite and the international system. This relationship includes the two neoclassical realist elements highlighted by Figure 2.1: the goals of state elite and the international system. Research question three: \textit{What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?} - focuses on the relationship between the state and the state elite. The gray variables described above, i.e. the filtering and intervening factors, define the boundaries of this relationship by engaging with intergroup relations and the perception of group leaders. Research question three thereby highlights the significance of constructivism to the subsequent analysis.

### 2.2 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

To supplement the lack of preciseness present in gray variables, this thesis utilizes SIT to analyze the the filtering level between a state's political elite and the international system with SIT. This section will include a brief overview of SIT that serves builds upon the review of Chapter 1. SIT is a well established social psychology theory developed by Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner that examines the relationship between
social groups and the identity of its members. All individuals are members of various social groups, ranging from those they are born into, a nation or an ethnicity, to those they choose, a political party or an occupation. SIT posits that membership within these groups helps define oneself and shapes an individual’s perception of self-esteem. According to the theory, people derive a positive self-identity from a positive group-identity. To gauge this positivity, members compare their in-group’s qualities or accomplishments with those of an out-group referent group. This desire for positive self-esteem can be derived through positive evaluation of an in-group (in-group favoritism) and/or by discrediting an out-group (out-group discrimination).

Tajfel and Turner advanced the theory to explain the preference for relative over absolute gains observed during minimum group experiments. Minimum group experiments have two parts. First, participants are divided into groups through an arbitrary distinction. Second, participants are asked to distribute a reward to these arbitrary groups. In one experiment, participants were asked to estimate the amount of dots on a page. Researchers then ostensibly divide the participants into two groups based upon overestimation or underestimation, although in reality all participants are placed in the same group. Participants are privately told to which group they belong. Participants do not interact with one another and remain unaware as to the members of their in-group or the members of the opposing out-group. After establishing a

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group division, each participant is asked to distribute a reward or points to other individuals. Participants are not allowed to allocate points to themselves, and they are informed that regardless of how the points are allocated, their decisions will not effect their personal gain or loss.\textsuperscript{115} Jonathan Mercer specifies that participants ‘understand that how they allocate rewards has no bearing on their own gain or loss, so there is no rational link between economic self-interest and in-group favoritism’.\textsuperscript{116} Participants must next elect one of several presented distribution strategies, such as mutual gain, relative gain, and absolute gain.\textsuperscript{117}

Despite the wealth of options, participants consistently favor outcomes that maximize the difference between in-group and out-group members, even when given the option to pursue mutual gain strategies that would net a greater overall in-group gain. It is a result that has been replicated across various ethnic, cultural, and gender groups indicating an innate aspect of intergroup dynamics that privileges in-group members even if the basis of said group is entirely arbitrary.\textsuperscript{118} The group distinctions of the minimum group experiments are meaningless, and each group is equal in status and power. However, SIT researchers have noted similar in-group favoritism in everyday distinctions, be it based upon gender, occupation, or region.\textsuperscript{119}

SIT explores the relationship between in-group favoritism and social interaction. Turner argues that “‘group-defined self-perception produces psychologically distinctive effects in social behavior’”.\textsuperscript{120} It is a group-centric approach that focuses upon the unique characteristics of group behavior, rather than assuming a group is merely the sum of its member parts. SIT is composed of three interrelated components: social categorization, social comparison, and social identity.


\textsuperscript{116} Mercer 1995, 239.

\textsuperscript{117} Hornsey 2008, 205-6.


Categorization is the necessary phenomena of simplifying the social world by divided it into categories. This categorization not only assists in making sense of a complex environment, but also defines the environment’s associated components and thereby fulfills a similar function to our previous discussion of the self-other distinction. Moreover, categorization requires comparison. According to SIT, individuals derive part of their positive self-image from the social identity of the groups to which they belong. Individuals therefore prefer to view their group positively in comparison to an out-group through some evaluative dimension.\[121\]

The prevalence of in-group favoritism and intergroup comparison is essential to understanding how state elites formulate foreign policy strategies. States are themselves a type of group, and the leaders of state-groups are the policy elites charged with fortifying state security. However, the perception of those leaders determines how security is conceptualized and the foreign policy strategy pursued. These factors are built upon in the following section, but a clear connection between SIT and international relations theory is evident. Neoclassical realist notions of self-help correlate with in-group favoritism. Constructivist appeals to group identity and norms roughly equates to the process of categorization.

It should be noted that there is considerable disagreement between SIT researchers regarding the relationship between identification within a social group and in-group favoritism. While some contest that discrimination is inherent to in-group behavior,\[122\] others hold that this discrimination occurs only under circumstances that stress intergroup comparison.\[123\] Given that the domain of this thesis is limited to

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the interaction of states within an anarchical system, it can be safely assumed that the preconditions for intergroup comparison exist.

Since groups seek a distinct social identity that is viewed favorably in comparison with a referent group, status supplies a vehicle for this desired positive distinction.\textsuperscript{124} Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shevchenko, who employ SIT within international relations studies, maintain:

Status is based on a group’s standing on some trait valued by society. Status is a positional good, meaning that one group’s status can improve only if another’s declines. SIT introduces an important modification to [the] prevailing zero-sum conception of status by pointing out that groups have multiple traits on which to be evaluated, so that comparisons among them need not be competitive.\textsuperscript{125}

The outcome of this ongoing comparison is the establishment of a status hierarchy, that confers a positive or negative identity upon a group.\textsuperscript{126} If a group perceives itself to possess a negative identity, it may pursue one of three strategies to enhance its status:

- \textit{Social mobility} is the belief a group can increase its position by mirroring the practices of a dominant group, and thereby attain status comparable to a chosen referent group.\textsuperscript{127}

- \textit{Social competition} occurs when a group attempts to equal or eclipse a dominant group by challenging their claim to superiority.\textsuperscript{128}

- \textit{Social creativity} is a re-imagining of the status hierarchy by a subordinate group with the intent of achieving recognition for excelling in an alternate domain that does not directly challenge the dominate group.\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{124} Tajfel and Turner 1979, 43.

\textsuperscript{125} Larson and Shevchenko 2010, 69.


\textsuperscript{127} Hogg and Abrams 1988, 25-6, 50-2.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid.
The strategy chosen by a particular group depends on internal factors, such as the group's core beliefs or norms, and the group's perception of external pressures, in particular the permeability of the established status hierarchy. These three dimensions constitute the primary terminology and conceptualization of strategies used within this thesis to analyze Japanese foreign policy.

2.3 Integrating SIT within International Relations

Although rooted in social psychology, SIT can be applied to international relations. Notable constructivist scholars Alexander Wendt, Jeffery T. Checkel, and Peter J. Katzenstein have proposed complementing international relations scholarship with social psychology theory. Taliaferro et al. suggest that neoclassical realist literature would also benefit from incorporating social psychology research. SIT is geared to this purpose. It is a group-centric theory that is sensitive to external forces and yields considerable insight on the gray variables that affect foreign policy, and has been successfully utilized within some international relations publications.

If states are considered groups within the status hierarchy of the international system, the three modes of social behavior (social mobility, social competition, and social creativity) can be refashioned to suggest ‘that states may improve their status by joining elite clubs, trying to best the dominant states, or achieve preeminence outside the area of geopolitical competition’. Examples of social mobility include states seeking entry into the EU or Japan and Germany's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Japanese efforts to mirror the behavior of the imperial Western powers during the late 19th century (covered in Chapters 3 and 4) also conforms to the tenets of social mobility. The bilateral competition between America and the Soviet

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Union during the Cold War constitutes a classic example of social competition. Concurrently, Japanese foreign policy during the Cold War (discussed in chapters 6 and 7), which was contingent upon privileging economic factors and maintaining a low diplomatic stance, is representative of social creativity. Social mobility and social competition have a clear connection with realism and can be easily reframed within the more conventional status quo vs. revisionist state paradigm. Likewise, social creativity mirrors the constructivist emphasis on defining identity though social and historical parameters rather than simply privileging material variables. The vocabulary of SIT is deployed throughout this thesis, as it provides the most consistent means of grouping foreign policy strategies. This vocabulary has been refined to suit the specific purposes of this thesis.

Despite the overlap between SIT and international relations literature, some theoretical obstacles must be noted before expanding upon these empirical examples. A significant challenge arises from the realist assumption that anarchy generates self-interested behavior. Conversely, Wendt argues that self-help is not an inherent feature of international politics but rather a consequence of the socially constructed environment. These realist and constructivist assumptions can be harmonized through appeals to Wendt’s notions of anarchy as a socially constructed institution. However, SIT demonstrates that in-group biases may generate behavioral preferences prior to the social construction of identity and interests. Such factors help explain the ready acceptance of modernization in Meiji Japan. Although modernization required Japanese leaders to abandon much of what was considered part of traditional Japanese society, they were motivated primarily to enhance the power of the Japanese state (an in-group bias) rather than perpetuating historical factors (collective identity and cultural norms). This nuance is thoroughly explored in Chapters 3 and 4.

It could be argued that this critical insight of SIT undermines the constructivist notion that a socially interaction need not be competitive. Nevertheless, two conditions must be considered. First, the outcomes of the minimum group experiments have been replicated across several cultural divides, indicating that simply belonging to a group fundamentally changes an individual’s social actions. SIT

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135 Wendt 1992, 400.

136 Mercer makes this suggestion: Mercer 1995, 229-36.
researches have, however, found variations in the levels to which participants practice in-group bias. Although in-group favoritism is ever present, the degree to which it is exercised varies in relation to factors such as socio-historic factors and group norms. As noted above, competitive behavior between groups may be dependent upon environments that stress intergroup comparison. This thesis adopts a neoclassical realist perspective that the international system is both anarchic and conflictual, and thus sufficient cause for intergroup competition. This is particularly evident when considering how external factors have shaped Japanese foreign policy. The arrival of the Western imperialist powers conditioned Japanese leaders to modernize (Chapters 3-4), the isolation of Japan following the First World War shifted policy objectives to those of a revisionist power (Chapters 5-6), and the emergence of the Cold War coerced Japanese leaders to accept the status quo of the American-led regional order (Chapters 6-7).

Second, although minimum group experiments strive to reduce the impact of social variables, such as identity and interests, it is impossible to truly remove all social influences from an inherently social environment. Thus, arguing whether self-interested behavior follows from a socially created anarchical environment or whether biases towards in-members of a socially created group generates the anarchical environment is the theoretical equivalent of the chicken-egg paradox. It is an intriguing conundrum, but it offers little utility outside of a purely theoretical application. SIT demonstrates that in-group favoritism does not require antagonism by in-group members towards out-groups.

It has been argued throughout this framework that intergroup conflict is dependent upon the preferences of state elite (neoclassical realism) and upon ideational factors (constructivism). This premise is supported by SIT, which does not equate out-group distinction and discrimination to intergroup conflict. This dynamic offers tremendous analytical advantages to this thesis. For example, Meiji leaders held a considerably high opinion of the Western imperialist states, which in addition to

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forming the dominant out-group for Meiji leaders also constituted their referent group for a strategy of social mobility whereby Western norms were imported into Japan. Lastly, only the most salient out-groups are relevant to in-group favoritism, with many other out-groups being largely ignored. This holds with historical evidence, as Western imperialist states were the most prominent out-group to Meiji leaders.

External constraints of the international system must also be discussed. The existence of an established power hierarchy and the permeability of that power hierarchy will influence how states navigate in-group/out-group distinctions. Donald Horowitz notes that “unranked groups” outside of a clear power hierarchy more negatively discriminate against out-groups and have an increased tendency for intergroup conflict. When applied to international relations, this factor is predicted by realist theory, whereby a state’s relative power (its position within the international status hierarchy) constrains its foreign policy options. The permeability of the status hierarchy, i.e. how easily a state can join the ranks of elite states, therefore constitutes a primary norm of the international system. The interaction between the established power hierarchy and Japanese foreign policy is explored throughout this thesis. It should be noted that structure of the power hierarchy must also be considered. For example, greater permeability existed for a relatively small state like Japan during the multipolar international system of the late nineteenth century than during bipolarity of the Cold War. Additionally, the prevalence of imperialist norms during the nineteenth century enabled Japan to overcome its geographical limitations to enhance state power through the exploitation of peripheral regions. No such means existed during the Cold War, forcing Japan into a fixed position as a secondary power that could not challenge either superpower (a period of extremely low permeability).

Finally, the process of identity formation must be reviewed. Identity is a central element of both SIT and constructivism, but the role of agency in identity formation differs significantly between the theories. Constructivists assert that identity results from the interaction of multiple parties, who through their interaction create a shared view each party’s identity. SIT rejects the necessity of an outside party accepting a group’s identity, and thus ‘allows for the possibility of misperception of the other’s

139 Tajfel and Turner 1979, 40-1.

identity claims’. This is an important distinction because states, whose identity is derived from history, geography, culture, and political leaders, may not accept how their identity is perceived by others and may pursue internally motivated policies to change their social identity or challenge the perception of other states. For example, there was considerable difference between internal (domestic) and international perceptions of Imperial Japan during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Although significant, the necessity of a referent group within SIT does in part fulfill the social interaction inherent to constructivist notions of identity formation by providing both a distinct out-group and by forming part of the external pressures of the status hierarchy. Since both theories require an external referent group to define in-group boundaries and rely upon the subjective interpretation of in-group leaders, SIT and constructivism will be assumed to be compatible.

Notwithstanding these theoretical obstacles, this amalgamated framework is advantageous when answering the research questions of this thesis. That said, it must be noted that other approaches could provide complementary insights to those offered by the above framework. In their survey of foreign policy analysis literature, Mark Webber and Michael Smith contest that three “images” of foreign policy making exist. They are: (1) ‘rational actor’ images, which utilize a means-end analysis and views the state as a unitary actor; (2) ‘political’ images that hold the state is not a unitary actor and that foreign policy is the outcome of political bargaining; (3) and ‘psychological’ images that suggest the perceptions of policy makers can distort or bias policy outcomes.

Strong similarities exist between the categories identified by Webber and Smith and the offered framework. Neoclassical realism parallels the means-end analysis of the rational actor image, but the theory’s emphasis on the perceptions of state elites deviates from the view of the state as a unitary actor. Although the bureaucratic aspects of political images of foreign policy analysis do not directly match the variables of the thesis’ framework, there is overlap in regard to the contestation


142 Webber and Smith, Foreign Policy in a Transformed World (Taylor & Francis, 2002), 51-74.

143 Ibid., 75.
between domestic political groups found within neoclassical realism and SIT. Aspects of the psychological model are evident in all three theories foundational to this thesis, specifically constructivism’s insights into norms and identity.

These parallels demonstrate the comprehensiveness of the framework developed within this chapter. Yet despite these overlaps, it proved most effective to employ international relations and social psychology theories. This decision was driven by identifying the theories best suited to answer the research questions posed in the introduction. For instance, the rational image could be useful in identifying the ‘concerns over national security and other external pressures’ impacting Japanese foreign policy (Question 1), but examining the ‘ideological continuities’ between generations of Japanese elites (Question 3) necessitates an approach that deviates from the unitary state model present within the rational image. While this ideological component could be addressed by utilizing the psychological image, this aspect of foreign policy analysis does not offer the necessary insights into the ‘competing groups’ within the domestic sphere (Question 3), which would be best answered by political images noted by Webber and Smith. Furthermore, when delving into the historical nuance behind the shifts in Japan’s policy direction (Question 2), it is necessary to balance the structural components of the rational image with the agent-driven, subjective insights of the psychological image.

It may be possible to develop a complementary approach that draws from all three images. However, appeals to the underlying concept of groupism found in neoclassical realism, constructivism, and SIT provided a unifying variable that bridged all three theoretical traditions, enabling a thorough evaluation of each research question. This synthesis proved less feasible when considering often divergent images of foreign policy analysis.

2.4 Theory in Use
A briefly overview of empirical evidence will clarify the benefits of drawing analysis from neoclassical realism, constructivism, and SIT. As covered in Chapter 3, premodern Japan was thrust onto the international stage by external factors. For over two hundred years Japan remained isolated from the outside world. The arrival of Western powers in the mid-nineteenth century ushered in an era of gunboat diplomacy that forever changed Japanese society. Early Meiji leaders soon acknowledged that modernization would enhance state power and afford the means to reverse the unequal treaties that were thrust upon them. Japan’s leaders thus became obsessed with enhancing national strength through rapid industrialization and militarization, opting at times to abandon traditional Japanese customs in favor of Western norms that facilitated progress.

The decision by Meiji leaders to cultivate national power through modernization can be explained through the offered framework. The international system of the period was governed by a balance of power dictated by the Western industrialized states. Japanese leaders aspired to join the ranks of the elite nations, and thus initiated policies that imitated the practices of these states. This transitional period in Japan is an example of social mobility, whereby a group seeks to enhance its status by mirroring the practices of a referent group, and is discussed at length in Chapters 3 - 5. In this example, the referent group may constitute one dominant group within a multipolar status hierarchy. In bipolar or unipolar hierarchies, a referent group could constitute one of many secondary powers subordinate to the hegemonic dominant group. This latter structural constraint is prevalent in the period following the Pacific War, where America has remained the dominant power within the region. A strategy of social mobility within this context requires a delineation between the dominant power and referent secondary powers. For geopolitical reasons, it would be impossible for Japan (a small island state) to pursue social mobility with the hopes of mirroring the behavior of a superpower. The resources within Japan simply do not exist. Consequently, a secondary referent power with which Japan could compare itself, such as Britain, would be required. This factor is detailed in Chapters 6 and 7.

Social mobility is therefore founded upon a perceived permeability of the existing status hierarchy by the Japan’s political elite. During the late nineteenth century, this permeability was in part constituted by a multipolar international system
though which elite states balanced one another. By fortifying its national strength through a Western metric and embracing Western cultural norms, Japanese leaders assumed that Japan would eventually achieve parity with the modernized nations.

The intersection of the existing power hierarchy within the international system and the direction of foreign policy warrants further consideration. Had Japan’s isolation ended within a bipolar or unipolar international system, Meiji leaders would have confronted a less permeable power hierarchy, resulting in a potentially different direction in foreign policy. Table 2.1 examines possible Japanese foreign policy outcomes within the late nineteenth century multipolar environment as perceived by Meiji leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Foreign Policy Direction</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Mobility</td>
<td>Attempt to join the great powers by adopting an imperialist foreign policy.</td>
<td>Provides Meiji leaders an avenue for strengthening Japan and reversing the unequal treaties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Competition</td>
<td>Resist encroachment of the industrialized great powers.</td>
<td>Japanese sovereignty was already compromised by gunboat diplomacy. Continued antagonism would further erode Japanese sovereignty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Creativity</td>
<td>Develop alternative strategy that does not compromise the imperialist world order.</td>
<td>Might preserve traditional Japanese culture, but offered little option for reversing the unequal treaties.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1: Possible Foreign Policy Directions in Meiji Japan (1860s - 1870s)

By combining the strategies of SIT with an attentiveness to neoclassical realist and constructivist principles, possible directions in foreign policy can be simplified and analyzed. While it is possible for a multipolar system to maintain an impermeable power hierarchy, this is not the reality that confronted Meiji leaders. The existing international order privileged imperialist norms, offering Meiji leaders an opportunity to address Japan’s power imbalance by adopting an imperialist foreign policy. Furthermore, Japan’s unique geopolitical factors must also be understood. The core Japanese islands are not particularly rich in natural resources and must support a relatively large population. Competition over material resources is a prototypical cause of intergroup conflict. Within a multipolar imperialist system, however, there is considerable leverage for Japanese leaders to confront these inadequacies while not challenging the existing power hierarchy.
From this example, the following external pressures can be identified: the structure of the international system, the dominant norms of the international system, and the permeability of the existing power hierarchy with regard to relative power distributions. These interrelated variables will be considered in each of the following chapters. Domestic gray variables, i.e. Japanese cultural norms and collective identity, intersect with these external forces in the filtering level between Japan and the international system and must be interpreted by Japanese leaders. SIT is then utilized to determine the nature of this interaction and the resulting direction in foreign policy. By considering these variables through the language of SIT, shifts in the direction of Japanese foreign policy can be identified and analyzed with consistency.

To clarify, the inherent comparative aspect of SIT is witnessed on two distinct, yet interrelated levels. Firstly, SIT provides insight into the domestic contestation for authority within states. Competition between political groups often determines the trajectory of foreign policy. For the purposes of this thesis, this domestic aspect is discussed insofar as it concerns overarching trends in Japanese foreign policy. One such example occurs within Chapter 3, where domestic groups were galvanized into conflict over incompatible views of how Japan should react to Western encroachment. In the language of SIT, these conflicts are evidence of domestic social creativity.

Secondly, SIT clarifies the relationship between the dominant domestic group, i.e. the state elites, and the international system. State elites are charged with interpreting the pressures of the international system, and crafting policies suited towards their perceived goals. These policies may fall into strategies of social mobility, social competition, or social creativity. As this thesis is focused on trends in Japanese foreign policy, this second level often forms the cornerstone of the offered analysis.

It should also be noted that state elites must mediate the relationship between levels. How this balance is accomplished depends heavily upon historical context, as the prevailing international norms and structure of the international system narrow policy options both within and outside of the state. Continuing with the example from Chapter 3, Western encroachment during the Nineteenth century catalyzed a domestic struggle for power. Pro-modernization groups proved victorious, and the leaders of these groups built Japan’s foreign policy apparatus by instituting a strategy of social mobility. Group elites thus became state elites charged with determining
Japan’s foreign policy strategy, and group norms formed the basis of the said strategy. Similar turning points can be noted by the Imperial Army seizing power during the 1930s (Chapter 5), Prime Minister Yoshida’s emergence following the political purges instituted by the Allied Occupation of Japan (Chapter 6), and Prime Minister Koizumi’s reinterpretation of the Japanese constitution in the wake of 9/11 (Chapter 7). This dynamic is highlighted by the *domestic identity hierarchy* discussed below. Figure 2.3 presents a refinement to the one offered Figure 2.2, and features the relationship between the aforementioned factors.

![Figure 2.3: Relationship Between Foreign Policy Actors, Gray Variables, and Framework](image)

By examining how SIT interacts with international relations the following variables can be defined.

- The international system is constrained by a *power hierarchy* that distinguishes between elite states, secondary states, and periphery states. The number of elite states changes with time. Within a multipolar system there could be any number of elite states, a bipolar system results when there are two elite states, and a unipolar system occurs when there is only one elite state. The elite states of bipolar and unipolar systems are referred to as *superpowers*.

- The structure of the international power hierarchy determines *permeability*, or the ability of a state to ascend to the elite stratum of states. Within a multipolar system there exists greater opportunity for a state to become elite, as power is diluted across several poles. Within bipolar or unipolar systems, a state must possess a tremendous concentration of resources to be elite. As a relatively small state with limited access to resources, modern Japan has only been an elite state during the multipolar imperialist period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It has been a secondary power from the mid-twentieth century to the present.
Within each state there is a **domestic identity hierarchy**. Competition between groups representing different sets of norms defines the order of this hierarchy, with one group most often emerging (for a limited period of time) as dominant. Consequently, the foreign policy strategy of a state results from the policy preferences of the dominant domestic group. Periods where there is no dominant group are marked by political ambiguity. Over time a funneling effect occurs, whereby the norms of dominant groups are repeatedly reinforced and thus become part of a state’s collective identity.

How **power** is conceptualized by the hierarchy of states depends upon international norms. During the imperialist period, international norms centered on aggressive expansionism and military prowess. Following WWI, the Versailles-Washington System emerged, and stressed economic openness and a commitment to international peace. Ascension to elite status and maintenance of the status quo must be understood within the changing nature of international norms. In general terms, power can be understood as the ability of states acquire the resources they desire. What this acquisition entails and what resources are desired hinges upon the perspective of state elites and international norms. **Prestige** is a corollary of power. Prestige is a state’s reputation for power, or how a state’s power is perceived by other states.

When operationalizing SIT to categorize foreign policy options, three possible strategies can be identified: (1) **social mobility**, where a state seeks to emulate the practices of a status quo power with the existing power hierarchy; (2) **social competition**, where a state seeks to challenge the existing power hierarchy; and (3) **social creativity**, where a state defines original parameters for success (through adopting new norms) that does not challenge the existing power hierarchy. Each of these strategies necessitates the identification of a **referent group**. Under social mobility, a state imitates the policies of a chosen referent group. Under social competition, a state challenges the referent group. Under social creativity, the referent group refers back to the state in question and is therefore self-referential. Within bipolar and unipolar international systems,
there is often a difference between a state’s chosen referent group and the 
*dominant group* or superpower that is the regional hegemon.

Using both Figure 2.3 and the outline above, the primary objects of analysis for this thesis have been identified. Table 2.2 provides a visual reference for these variables as determined by the proceeding example, i.e. Meiji Japan’s foreign policy. Note: the group denoted with a bold font weight under the “domestic identity hierarchy” is the dominant group of this period. In this example, it is the “modernist” group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868-1894</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Modernist</td>
<td>Western Powers</td>
<td>Social Mobility: Westernization generally accepted for short period before giving way to more nuanced modernization modeled after Europe and America.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.3: Objects of Analysis

Variants of this table are deployed in each chapter to clarify how these factors have changed through modern Japanese history, and to assure each object of analysis is adequately discussed within this thesis. A composite chart that spans from 1868 to the present is presented in the conclusion.

The order of the columns in Table 2.3 correlate to research interests of this thesis. The columns titled “Structure of the International System” and “Permeability of the Power Hierarchy” are crucial in answering research one: *How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy?* By limiting the timeframe of these factors, transitions within the international system are identified, assisting in the answering of research question two: *How have these factors changed with time?* The “Domestic Identity Hierarchy” elucidates the key groups of research question three: *What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?* Having looked at these variables, SIT clarifies the “Referent Group” and “Policy Outcome” of a particular historical period.
2.5 Framework in Review

This chapter developed the theoretical framework through which this thesis addresses its research questions. The framework draws from neoclassical realism, constructivism, and SIT. Salient elements from each theoretical tradition have been identified, and potential obstacles to this approach have been examined. The realist assumptions of statism, survivalism, and self-help constitute the core assumptions of this framework. However, the strategies chosen to pursue these goals must be determined by the subjective interpretation of political elites charged with establishing foreign policy. Neoclassical realism identifies these intervening variables, namely the perception of political leaders, as a crucial element in analyzing foreign policy. Despite this, but the theory itself is limited in analyzing these variables.

Constructivism is useful in resolving this gap. Constructivist insights into identities and norms have thus been deployed to supplement neoclassical realism’s discussion of political elites. The relationship between neoclassical realism and constructivism within this thesis is complementary. Neoclassical realist assumptions regarding the state and the international system provide a foundation upon which ideational factors can be engaged. It is argued that the norms of a state’s collective identity condition behavior and restrain political leaders, while providing elites with a method to communicate with the domestic population. International norms similarly restrict the foreign policy strategies of state elite.

Finally, SIT is explored as a tool for expanding upon neoclassical realist and constructivist understandings of group behavior. SIT refines assumptions derived out of international relations theory and illuminates how identity and norms translate into policy. SIT contends that an individual’s understanding of self and his sense of self-worth are determined by the status of the groups to which (s)he belongs. When applied to international relations, SIT provides a useful mechanism for conceptualizing potential foreign policy strategies and the constraints acting upon state elites. Similar to the relationship between neoclassical realism and constructivism, SIT is an additional filter that focuses the offered analysis.

These stacking theoretical layers act as a methodological funnel that enables a concise reading of history geared specifically to answer the proposed research
questions. Each of the following chapters will utilize this framework over a specific time period. In this manner, a consistent theoretical approach is employed to trace Japan's foreign policy evolution and reveal how the aforementioned objects of analysis influence policy output.
Chapter 3

The Unraveling of Sakoku, 1804 - 1868

Sumo Wrestler Throwing a Foreigner at Yokohama
Utagawa Yoshifuji - 1861
Any attempt on our part to cling to tradition, making difficulties over the merest trifles and so eventually provoking the foreigners to anger would be impolitic in the extreme.

- Hotta Masayoshi, 1857

Under the excuse of keeping the peace, too much compromise has been made at the sacrifice of national honour; too much fear has been shown for the foreigners’ threats.

- Excerpt from manifesto carried by assassins of Ii Naosuke, 1860

‘[I]f there be any sign of the Bakufu pursuing a policy of peace, moral will never rise...and the gunbatteries and other preparations will accordingly be so much ornament, never put to effective use.’

- Tokugawa Nariaki, 1863-4
Japan is a rather unique case study. Unlike other states, there is a clear delineation between the premodern and modern periods in Japanese history. This chapter details the internal and external factors which brought about the collapse of premodern feudal Japan, thereby engaging with the first research question - *How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy?* Such historical depth is necessary. The strategic preferences outlined in this chapter reappear in varying degrees throughout this thesis, providing a basis for answering - *How have these factors changed with time?* Furthermore, the struggle to preserve sovereignty and fortify national strength defined the domestic struggle for power during the closing days of feudal Japan, and prioritized pro-modernization norms among Japanese leaders. Tracing the ascendancy and persistence of these norms is crucial to answering the third research question - *What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?*

This chapter begins with a brief discussion of Tokugawa rule in Japan and the policies of isolation enacted by Japanese leaders (Section 3.1). Numerous attempts were made by foreign nationals to subvert Japanese isolation, but it was not until the emergence of industrialization that Japan’s isolation was truly threatened. The domestic struggle between traditionalists that supported isolation and reformists that favored varying degrees of engagement with the Western powers is then considered (Section 3.2). Japan’s ongoing attempts to placate Western demands, namely American insistence on opening Japan to trade is then detailed (Section 3.3). The domestic unrest resulting from efforts to compromise with the West afforded the dissent Satsuma and Chōshū clans an opportunity to challenge the bakufu, the central government of Japan (Section 3.4). The chapter concludes by examining the Boshin War, the civil conflict that displaced the shōgun and restored the emperor to power. This transition is known as the “Meiji Restoration” (Section 3.5).

By examining these empirical factors, this chapter provides both a historical and theoretical starting point for this thesis. The encroachment of foreign powers catalyzed domestic unrest, out of which modern Japan emerged. Surveying this period also highlights the significance of the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2.
Gunboat diplomacy brought the core variables of statehood (neoclassical realism), the norms and identities surrounding modernization (constructivism), and status seeking behavior within group dynamics (SIT) to the forefront of the political discourse in Japan.

A few caveats must be noted. First, this chapter deals predominantly with domestic factors. Japanese isolation crippled its foreign policy, resulting in a plethora of political competition once the Western powers arrived. In short, Japan lacked an effective foreign policy apparatus. The theoretical framework is deployed to determine the identities and norms that eventually formed the foundation of Meiji Japan’s foreign policy. The conclusions of this chapter are built upon in Chapters 4 and 5, where the research questions are further explored. Second, some historical figures are out of necessity referred to by their given names. For example, to distinguish between members of the Tokugawa clan, such as Tokugawa Iemitsu and Tokugawa Nariaki, it is necessary to use their given names (Iemitsu and Nariaki respectively). This is done in accordance with the standards of historical sources.

3.1 Tokugawa Peace and Isolation (1633 - 1804)

The final years of feudal Japan, or the bakumatsu, were politically and socially turbulent, a marked departure from the preceding two centuries of peace under Tokugawa rule. The Tokugawa bakufu was established by Tokugawa Ieyasu following the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600. The battle pitted Ieyasu against Ishida Mitsunari and represented the final stage in the military unification of Japan begun by Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. As shōgun, the hereditary military dictator of Japan, Ieyasu fathered a dynasty that brought 250 years of peace and prosperity to Japan. Under the Tokugawa bakufu, Japan was organized under a structured social hierarchy. The bakuhan taisei system divided Japan into a centralized feudal community ruled by members of the samurai class.

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In the early years of unification under Nobunaga, Japan openly engaged with foreigners, including Europeans. Nobunaga was especially interested in spreading Western influence through Christianity, in the hopes of undermining the efforts of his Buddhist rivals. Anti-European sentiment began under Hideyoshi, who viewed the superior firepower of the Europeans and the Spanish conquest of the Philippines as harbingers of doom for Japan. Tokugawa Iemitsu, the grandson to Ieyasu and the third Tokugawa shōgun, instituted sakoku, or the official closing of Japan through a series of edicts enacted from 1633 - 1639. Under sakoku, Japanese nationals were prohibited from leaving Japan and European entry into Japan was extremely limited. Dutch merchants were restricted to the Deshima Island in Nagasaki Bay. Proxy trade with China was conducted through the Ryūkyū Kingdom, and Christianity was actively persecuted. The policies of national isolation initiated by Iemitsu would prevail until the arrival of Europeans some two hundred years later. As demonstrated below, centuries of seclusion left Japan at the mercy of foreign powers and ultimately spelled disaster for the Tokugawa bakufu.

Tokugawa Japan’s isolation should be understood as a period of social creativity where Tokugawa leaders forwent interstate relations and distanced themselves from the Sino-centric regional power hierarchy. Japan, therefore, formed its own referent group, and the permeability of the external power hierarchy does not need to be considered. Table 3.1 summarizes these factors within the previously established framework. Although not the principal time period examined by this research, conceptualizing premodern Japan in this consistent manner enhances the validity of the framework. It also demonstrates that future research projects, dealing with both historical and contemporary periods, could draw from this approach.

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Table 3.1: Policies of the Sakoku Period (1633-1804)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1633-1804</td>
<td>Unipolar</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Traditionalist</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Social Creativity. Policies of sakoku isolate Japan. Chinese hegemony results in regional unipolarity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Seas of Change (1804 - 1854)

The formalization of sakoku through the edicts of Tokugawa Iemitsu set the parameters for Japan’s national isolation. The centralized power of feudal Japan granted the bakufu the necessary means to uphold the strict restrictions upon the Japanese public. However, bakufu authority did not extend to seaborne foreigners. Prior to the nineteenth century, the majority of the Japan’s interactions with the West were limited to Deshima Island in Nagasaki Bay. Deshima was an artificial island built in 1634 that served as the location of trade between Japan and foreign nations during the Edo period. The trading port was designed to limit foreign access into Japan proper, as outlined by sakoku. Deshima was originally built for Portuguese traders, but from 1641 to 1853 it was used by Chinese and Dutch traders.\(^{149}\)

Growing trade with China and expanding whaling practices in the nineteenth century increased the presence of Western shipping in the seas surrounding Japan. Given Japan’s proximity to these sites, several foreign ships sought resupply and safe harbor in Japan’s ports. While these requests were often out of necessity, not all foreign incursions were innocuous. Tensions arose between Japan and Russia in 1804 over the actions of two rogue lieutenants serving under Captain Nikolai Rezanov. Rezanov was sent to Nagasaki harbor to formally request trade on behalf of Alexander I, but his request was ultimately denied.\(^{150}\) In retaliation, the lieutenants raided the Japanese coast. Japan did mobilize troops in its Northern provinces, but the actions of Rezanov did not reflect official Russian policy and the issue was resolved with a

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149 Ibid., 159-68.

hostage exchange. The Rezanov affair neatly encapsulates Japan’s sakoku policy. Other foreign incursions did occur, but isolated incidents such as the Rezanov affair did not pose a significant external threat to the bakufu.

What did threaten the bakufu were the peripheral consequences of the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815). News of the French revolution and the French invasion of Holland were conveniently underplayed by the administrative head of Deshima. Seeking to maintain the bakufu’s favor and Japanese trade, the Dutch presented a minimized account of the rampant disorder in Europe. Meanwhile, war attrition required the Dutch to lease American ships to service their trade. From 1797 to 1807 American ships sailing under the Dutch flag visited Deshima nine times. Upon being questioned by Japanese officials who noted the curious tongue of these “Dutch” sailors, Dutch representatives were compelled to admit to their deception.

A similar tactic was deployed by the British to exploit Japanese ignorance of external affairs. Raiding Dutch shipping was a mainstay of the British strategy against Napoleon. In 1808, the HMS Phaeton entered Nagasaki harbor to prey upon Dutch trading ships set to arrive in the coming days. To evade suspicion, the Phaeton hoisted the Dutch colors upon its mast. The subterfuge surprised the Dutch. As was customary at Deshima, representatives from the enclave rowed out to welcome their assumed compatriots. The Phaeton’s captain, Fleetwood Pellew, ordered the Dutch to be taken prisoner and demanded resupply in exchange for their release. To press his demands, Pellew offered a display of the firepower under his command and threatened to direct the Phaeton’s cannons at Japanese and Chinese trading junks if his demands were not met. The Japanese were unable to mobilize a sufficient defense, and the Nagasaki magistrate (who in the aftermath of the crisis committed seppuku) caved to Pellew’s requests. Upon learning the Dutch trading vessels would not be

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152 Ibid., 97-8.


arriving, the *Phaeton* withdrew from the harbor, but left in its wake the impetus for anti-*sakoku* sentiment.  

The violent stratagem of Pellew shocked the *bakufu*, and prompted a strengthening of Japan’s coastal defenses and a special report on world affairs. Japanese officials questioned Hendrik Doeff, who had served as the Dutch director at Deshima since 1803. Doeff explained the Napoleonic Wars to provide a context to the earlier leasing of American vessels and the British aggression in Nagasaki harbor. More surprisingly, Doeff was obliged to correct Japanese officials who believed America was still a British colony, thereby allaying their fears that the formidable British Navy had been calling at Deshima. This ignorance on behalf of Japanese leaders has tremendous theoretical implications. This episode demonstrates the limitations of theoretical approaches that underplay the significance of ideational or domestic factors. Japanese elites were restricted by *sakoku*, a domestic policy, which resulted in a lack of awareness regarding regional power dynamics. Such a minimal understanding of the external environment limited the capability of the Japanese elite to correctly interpret external pressures. While this thesis focuses primarily on later historical events, it is evident at this early stage that ideational constraints also act upon state elites and must be appropriately considered.

Doeff’s report also fueled suspicions that Tokugawa policies had undermined Japan’s warrior heritage. In 1807, scholar Sugita Gempaku expressed his concern that Japan had departed from the traditions of its past. Sugita had previously argued that Western principles (mainly medical science) were compatible with Japanese culture, but his tone changed in the wake of Captain Nikolai Rezanov’s ambitious lieutenants. He argued that the long peace of the Tokugawa Era had eroded the fighting capacity of Japan, complaining that “seven or eight out of every ten *Bakufu* retainers look like women and think like merchants”. Pushing aside Sugita’s

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156 Jansen 1989, 98.

157 Ibid., 100.

misogyny, this statement is an early indicator of the coming ideological tension that challenged the norms of the Tokugawa period.

To Sugita, Russia posed a serious threat to Japan and he called for a restoration of pre-Tokugawa political and social norms. Sugita’s concern derived from fear of Russian reciprocation should Japan reject the Russian trade demands. “Our first priority is to save our world”, he argued, “if we are forced to permit trade for now, we must, even though it is a disgrace; at a later time we will be able to redeem our honor”. Although these fears never materialized, Sugita’s calls for restoration through revitalizing the institutional principles of Japan’s past marks the beginning of the debate that would eventually see the bakufu stripped of power.

The bakufu chose to combat the growing Western encroachment in 1825 by issuing the Edict to Repel Foreign Vessels, which stated that any foreign ship approaching Japan’s shore should be driven off by force. Earlier edicts had permitted provisions to be given to peaceful foreigners, but such leniency was deemed impossible. The “no second thoughts” edict prohibited, under penalty of death, any non-sanctioned contact with foreigners. The edict proved ineffectual and was a source of criticism from both within and beyond Japan. In 1837, the American merchant ship Morrison sailed to Japan with seven shipwrecked Japanese and three Christian missionaries onboard. It was hoped the repatriation of the Japanese nationals would curry favor with the bakufu and provide the basis of a fruitful trading relationship. When the Morrison arrived, the shore batteries at Edo and Kagoshima opened fire, driving the Morrison out of Japanese waters. A year afterward, the Morrison’s mission was revealed to the bakufu by the Dutch at Deshima. In response

159 Jansen 1989, 100-1.

160 Ibid., 101.

161 Several minor incursions occurred during the interim, but nothing close in scale to the Phaeton affair.


to this information, Takano Chōei, a prominent scholar of Western learning, circulated a pamphlet lambasting the *bakufu* for its doctrinaire mindset.\(^{164}\) He wrote:

[If the bakufu resorts to expelling them by force, Japan will be regarded as a brutal country incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong. The word will spread that we are an unjust country, and Japan will lose its good name as a country which respects propriety and courtesy. What disasters might befall us as a result are difficult to predict.]\(^{165}\)

Strategic considerations further eroded the edict’s practicality. China’s disastrous showing during the First Opium War (1839-1842) confirmed to many within Japan that traditional methods of war could not match Western technology. The edict was repealed in 1841. In the same year, respected military engineer Takashima Shūhan demonstrated Western firearms to the *bakufu*.\(^{166}\) The controversy surrounding Western technology dominated the political discourse. Egawa Hidetatsu, who had been charged with the defense of Tokyo Bay following the *Morrison* incident, thought it necessary to incorporate Western technology into Japan’s military. Egawa and likeminded officials believed that Western knowledge represented yet another foreign element, like Confucianism and Buddhism before, that could be successfully integrated into Japanese society.\(^{167}\) Other pragmatic politicians advanced a position of “controlling the barbarians with their own methods”.\(^{168}\) However, traditionalists who favored established Japanese norms of warfare and isolation prevailed, and accusations of treason were levied against several prominent progressives, including Takashima and Takano.\(^{169}\)

Tension between these groups constitutes the primary competition within the domestic identity hierarchy. As per the theoretical framework, competition between

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\(^{164}\) Although circulated after the *Morrison* incident, Takano was under the impression the ship would be returning, thereby explaining the use of present tense. Furthermore, Takano had been misinformed as to the identity of the crewmen, thinking them British and commanded by missionary Robert Morrison.

\(^{165}\) Quoted in Ibid., 108.

\(^{166}\) Jansen 2002, 287; Totman 1995, 534.


\(^{168}\) Ibid., 241.

\(^{169}\) Ibid., 242.
groups (which represent different sets of norms) defines the order of this hierarchy. The direction of the state results from the policy preference of the dominant domestic group, which during this period was the traditionalists. Table 3.2 presents these competing domestic identities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View of Modernization</th>
<th>Reformists</th>
<th>Traditionalists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pragmatists</td>
<td>Progressives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View of Western Nations</td>
<td>Necessary</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in National Isolation</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absolute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Competing Domestic Identities (1800s - 1830s)

Competition between domestic identities is a consistent factor throughout modern Japanese history, but it holds additional significance during this period. The ongoing ideological struggle was at its core a confrontation between old and new ways of understanding Japan's position within the international system. Traditionalists favored status-quo isolationism derived out of premodern Japanese norms, which preserved Japanese sovereignty. The reformists were primarily concerned with enhancing the material power of Japan within their new, outward looking perspective. Competing approaches to Japanese security (the competition between groups privileging sovereignty vs. groups privileging power) remains a consistent feature of modern Japan's foreign policy evolution.

Despite the traditionalist victory, pro-modernization norms within Japan had already begun to take root. Britain's handling of China during the First Opium War cannot be understated. For centuries China sat at the head of the East Asian regional order, and served as a beacon of culture, civility, and technology for its neighbors. The very foundations of Japanese society, its philosophy and language, were derived out of
the corresponding Chinese tradition. Yet centuries of success had blinded the Chinese when confronted by the West. Assuming the superiority of its cultural heritage would prevail over those of the European barbarians, China retreated into its institutionalized traditions. For a time Japan followed suit, inheriting one last cultural feature from China.

With the edict repealed and the Opium War opening more Chinese ports to trade, some Americans assumed Japan was primed for trade. In 1845, American representatives in China organized an expedition to test this prospect. Commodore James Biddle sailed into Edo Bay in 1846, only to find the Japanese still fervently opposed to engagement. Biddle was under orders to avoid any resort to violence, and his subsequent withdrawal from Edo Bay reaffirmed Japan’s policy of seclusion and strengthened the traditionalist cause.

Nevertheless, the Americans remained open to another expedition. Opportunity surfaced when news reached the American East India Squadron that eighteen shipwrecked American sailors were imprisoned in Japan. Commander James Glynn of the USS Preble was sent to Nagasaki in 1849 to secure the release of the shipwrecked Americans. The Japanese attempted to block the Preble’s entry, but Glynn navigated his way into the bay. From his anchored position, Glynn requested the release of the prisoners, and with Dutch assistance, his demand was met. Although the repatriation of foreign nations is expected of interstate relations, Glynn’s expedition marked the first successful negotiation by an American with sakoku Japan. Upon returning to America in 1851, Glynn proposed additional measures be taken to open Japan. Backed by shipping interests, Glynn argued that Japan’s supplies of coal could fuel trans-Pacific steamers en route to Shanghai. Furthermore, news that the shipwrecked sailors had been systematically mistreated by their captors became a

171 Beasley 1989, 268.
highly politicized national sensation. Secretary of State Daniel Webster found Glynn’s proposal agreeable, and approved another expedition.\footnote{Beasley 1989, 269.}

On 8 July 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in Edo Bay with orders to negotiate with the Japanese through threat of force if necessary. Perry was charged with securing access to coal for American steamers, negotiating a guarantee of protection for shipwrecked American sailors, and enabling American ships to dispose cargo at Japanese ports. To this end, Perry devised a strategy whereby he was “to demand as a right, and not as a favor, those acts of courtesy which are due from one civilized nation to another”.\footnote{Hawks, Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, Performed in the Years 1852, 1853 and 1854, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Beverley Tucker, Senate Printer, 1856).} Perry insisted on handing over a formal letter from President Millard Fillmore to the emperor at Kurihama in the shadow of his gunboats. He likewise refused to travel to Nagasaki to receive a reply as was customary. In his own letter he informed the Japanese he had brought only a small squadron to demonstrate his ‘friendly intentions [and] should it become necessary [he would] return to Yedo in the ensuing spring with a much larger force’.\footnote{Ibid., 256–9.}

Rather than afford the Japanese the occasion to keep him waiting for a reply, Perry withdrew to China and returned in February 1854 with the additional ships he promised. Perry’s tactics reignited the debate within Japan over sakoku. Abe Masahiro, a senior member of the Tokugawa council, lead the team of Japanese negotiators. With Perry’s arrival in 1853, Abe devised a strategy that would afford Japan the necessary time to bolster its coastal defenses. Abe circulated translations of Perry’s letters to the daimyō, feudal Japan’s regional samurai rulers, asking for recommendations on how Perry should be addressed.\footnote{Bolitho, "Abe Masahiro and the New Japan," in The Bakufu in Japanese History, ed. Jeffery P. Mass and Willian B. Hauser (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1985), 179-83.} Abe aimed to form a consensus among prominent Japanese leaders, but alternatively uncovered irreconcilable norms between the reformists and traditionalists of the Japanese elite.

\footnote{Beasley 1989, 269.}

\footnote{Hawks, Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, Performed in the Years 1852, 1853 and 1854, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Beverley Tucker, Senate Printer, 1856).}

\footnote{Ibid., 256–9.}

The majority of the daimyō supported sakoku, but recognized it was in Japan’s best interest to avoid hostilities until it could strengthen its position (placing them in the pragmatist group). However, this perspective offered little in the way of political maneuverability, as avoiding hostilities required a degree of compromise regarding sakoku with the Western powers. Others led by Hotta Masayoshi and Ii Naosuke forwarded a pro-modernization and fairly pro-Western (by Tokugawa standards) position. Hotta and Ii believed Japan’s sovereignty could only be defended by modernizing its military through Western technology. To this end, the pair supported fostering relationships with Western states to gain access to their knowledge of advanced warfare.\footnote{177 Beasley 1989, 275.} According to Ii, “it is impossible in the crisis we now face to ensure the safety and tranquility of our country merely by an insistence on the national isolation laws as we did in former times”.\footnote{178 Ibid., 274.} In the interim, they believed the Americans had to be granted access to Japan’s ports for fuel and supplies. They fervently opposed opening Japan to foreign traders, suggesting alternatively that Japan construct a merchant fleet to conduct trade oversees and away from Japan proper. This fleet, they argued, could form the basis of an eventual navy.\footnote{179 Ibid., 274-5.} This progressive perspective is representative of the struggle by bakufu leaders to balance between attempts to protect Japanese sovereignty and fortify national strength. For Hotta and Ii, temporarily compromising Japanese sovereignty in the hopes of gaining the necessary strength to resist future encroachment was an acceptable avenue for addressing foreign demands.

Opposition to Hotta and Ii was led by Tokugawa Nariaki. Nariaki acknowledged that Western technology must be part of Japan’s defense, but he firmly rejected any calls for acquiescence to foreign demands. Nariaki believed that maintaining morale was more valuable than pragmatic considerations. He argued “if there be any sign of the Bakufu pursuing a policy of peace, morale will never rise...and the gunbatteries and other preparations will accordingly be so much ornament, never
put to effective use”.

Japan’s defense, Nariaki believed, lay in directly and immediately confronting the West before they could establish a foothold in Japan. Sovereignty, therefore, must be maintained at all cost, even if it forced Japanese leaders to fend off foreigners with the limited means (power) available to them. Competing views on sovereignty and power constitute the two primary ideological variables considered. Table 3.3 visualizes the contending views of these three groups with regard to trade, modernization, their view of Western states, and seclusion. The table expands the information offered by Table 3.2 and offers a further refinement to defining the domestic identity hierarchy of the period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reformists</th>
<th>Traditionalists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pragmatists</td>
<td>Progressives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position on Expanded Trade</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View of Modernization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Necessary</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View of Western Nations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belief in National Isolation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abe Masahiro</td>
<td>Hotta Masayoshi/i Naosuke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tokugawa Nariaki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The significance of the domestic competition between identities, as understood through SIT, cannot be understated. A strict realist interpretation may misrepresent the variables at play, focusing primarily on external pressures. The external pressures challenging the status-quo isolationism of Japan were tremendous. Many within the traditionalist group rather dogmatically rejected the reality of this threat. A constructivist interpretation could account for the continuity of the established isolationist norms. Nevertheless, it falls short in explaining the swiftness with which the old established norms were sidelined, as evidenced in Sections 3.5 and 3.6.

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180 Ibid., 274.
It fell to Abe to balance these competing groups and the external pressures embodied by the demands of Perry. Under orders from the bakufu to avoid hostilities with the Americans, but likewise prohibit opening Japan to trade, he opted for compromise with Perry while making military preparations at home. An agreement with the Americans was reached on 31 March 1864. The Treaty of Peace and Amity opened Shimoda and Hakodate as ports of call for American ships needing supplies, granted America a permanent consul at Shimoda, and required Japan to provide aid to shipwrecked American sailors. The treaty also included a most-favored nation clause.181

While the substance of the treaty was more political than commercial, Perry’s arrival presented an unprecedented threat to Japanese sovereignty. Abe had been charged with not only preserving Japan’s autonomy, but also balancing the anti-Western emperor and the war seeking daimyō. The Treaty of Peace and Amity may have facilitated only marginal interaction between the West and Japan, but this slight opening undermined the spirit of sakoku and provided the foundation for similar treaties with Britain and Russia. Abe himself noted the tempestuous domestic environment in 1955: “there is now a greater danger of internal rebellion than of a foreign attack”.182 The need for modernization became evident to several within Japan, revitalizing the earlier debate, and numbering the days that Japanese leaders could reasonably expect to utilize sakoku as its dominant foreign policy strategy.

The ideological struggle must also be theoretically conceptualized. The divide between reformists and traditionalists corresponds to strategies of social mobility and social competition. Reformists valued state power over unassailable sovereignty. It was a long-term strategy designed to facilitate the adoption of Western norms (namely modernization) in order to bolster Japan’s national strength and ultimately reassert Japanese sovereignty. By mirroring the successful practices of Western states, reformists hoped to prevent a disaster comparable to the Opium War from erupting within Japan. On the other hand, traditionalists privileged sovereignty above power, even if such a position undermined attempts to increase Japan’s national strength

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181 Bolitho 1985, 175.
182 Ibid., 185.
through the adoption of Western technology. It was a short-term strategy designed to prevent Japanese sovereignty from being compromised. While not the finest example of social competition, traditionalists did seek to challenge the dominant Western states and diminish their claims on Japan. Although there was little hope of equaling or eclipsing Western powers, traditionalists wished only to subvert foreign incursions into Japan and thus challenge Western superiority within Japan. Table 3.4 specifies the competition within the domestic identity hierarchy, with particular reference to group strategies for status seeking behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>SIT Strategy</th>
<th>Group Norms</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Salient Security Variable</th>
<th>FP desire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reformists</td>
<td>Social Mobility</td>
<td>Pro-Modemist, Anti-sakoku, Pro-Western</td>
<td>Western States</td>
<td>State power</td>
<td>Embrace Western contact as necessary in order to maximized state power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditionalists</td>
<td>Social Competition</td>
<td>Anti-Modemist, Pro-sakoku, Anti-Western</td>
<td>Self (isolation)</td>
<td>Sovereignty</td>
<td>Outright reject compromise with West, defend sovereignty at all costs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4: Theoretical Representation of Reformists and Traditionalists (1840s - 1850s)

Table 3.5 provides a reference point for this period within the larger framework. Note that Japanese foreign policy remains non-existent and the emergence of a second group within the domestic identity hierarchy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1804-1854</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Traditionalist • Reformist</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Social Creativity. Isolation maintained, but tenets of sakoku challenged by arrival of Western powers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5: Policies and Groups of the Bakumatsu (1840s - 1850s)
3.3 Domestic Reaction and the Harris Treaty (1854 - 1858)

Abe’s compromise assured that Japan remained (in letter at least) closed to trade, but his efforts also revealed Japan’s impotence. Japan’s deference to foreign coercion compromised the authority of the bakufu, as did Abe’s strategy of consulting daimyō outside of the bakufu. Furthermore, Shōgun Tokugawa Iesada proved politically ineffectual amidst the domestic unrest. In response to the bakufu’s weakness and the mounting criticism of the treaty, Abe enhanced his fortification efforts. He ordered warships and arms from the Dutch, and constructed new port defenses. Western-style military schools were founded at Nagasaki and Edo, and the government began translating Western books in earnest. Despite his efforts to strengthen Japan’s war capabilities, Abe could not fortify his own position and was replaced by Hotta in 1855.

Hotta’s tenure as senior minister was marked by his acute awareness of the Second Opium War (1856-60), and his hesitancy towards the West. His caution was not lost on the Dutch. Dutch representatives at Nagasaki advanced a letter to the bakufu in which they stated the British would soon arrive and demand a full commercial treaty with Japan. In lieu of being caught unprepared, the Dutch suggested Japan sign a trade agreement with Holland to serve as a model for the impending warships upon the horizon. Hotta and his advisors concluded that it was impossible to hold the West at bay indefinitely, and that a strategy for treaty negotiation must be developed.

Debate over the nature of these concessions continued into the fall of 1857. The expected pragmatist (those who wished Japan to advance slowly in any negotiations), progressive (those more realistic about Western demands), and traditionalist (draconian isolationists) elements emerged within the debate. Nariaki led the group of traditionalist dissenters and opposed caving to Western demands. The gravity of Nariaki’s position was, however, lessened by the prospect of conflict. As Hotta stated:

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85 Beasley 1989, 275.
“Any attempt on our part to cling to tradition, making difficulties over the merest trifles and so eventually provoking the foreigners to anger would be impolitic in the extreme.”

Inaccurately reported news of the impeding British arrival forced the issue. While debate continued within the bakufu, the Dutch compelled the Japanese officials at Nagasaki. In September 1857, the officials at Nagasaki took the unprecedented step of signing an agreement with the Dutch without the approval of the bakufu. Although the agreement was only a marginal modification of Japan’s two century old agreement with the Dutch, the nature of the accord stirred the ire of many within the bakufu. Yet the response it prompted from America was more distressing for Japan.

From his office at the American consul in Shimoda, consul general Townsend Harris carefully observed the Dutch advancements. Since Harris’ arrival in 1856 he had been charged with establishing a commercial treaty with Japan. While the Dutch were pushing their position at Nagasaki, he renewed his request for an audience with the shōgun. His request was finally approved in late September. Harris’ visit to Edo in November was a watershed event. In the presence of the shōgun, Harris submitted to Hotta an official letter from the president.

Hotta and Harris engaged in a series of negotiations in the subsequent weeks. Harris declared that Japan would be brought into the international financial community, either through peaceful negotiations or by force. Remaining a closed country was no longer a viable option. It was a position well known by Hotta. Several of his trusted subordinates called for the negotiation of commercial treaties. Others within Hotta’s camp called for only a minimal and temporary opening until Japan had the strength to defend itself. The division among Hotta’s advisors refined debate over sovereignty and power, as it became clear that absolute sovereignty comparable to that exercised during sakoku was now impossible.

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186 Beasley 1955, 130-1.
188 Ibid., 278.
189 Ibid., 279-81.
In the following months, a consensus was reached and by late February an agreement was penned. Six ports (Yokohama, Nagasaki, Niigata, Kobe, Edo, Osaka) were opened to American trade. Additionally, the existing ports of call for American ships at Shimoda and Hakodate were formally opened. These openings were accompanied by lax tariffs and extraterritorial privileges for Americans. The concessions granted to Americans went far beyond the early agreement with the Dutch, but the Japanese officials were unfamiliar with expectations of diplomatic relations with the West.\(^{190}\)

Domestically, Hotta faced another challenge. He needed formal approval for the treaty. Although the debate continued between \textit{daimyō}, Japan had no practical option other than to concede, and even Nariaki acknowledged that resisting foreign trade was no longer an option.\(^{191}\) While several of Japan’s most powerful leaders accepted that trade was inevitable, gaining formal approval for the treaty remained elusive. \textit{Shōgun} Iesada was both childless and perceived as ill-equipped to quell the unrest that was likely follow the treaty’s ratification, bringing questions of succession to the forefront. There were two viable candidates, Tokugawa Iemochi and Tokugawa Yoshinobu. Iemochi was young but closest in blood to the sitting \textit{shōgun}. He was the favorite of traditionalists in Edo. Yoshinobu was older and more accomplished. As son to Nariaki, he was supported by those seeking reform.\(^{192}\)

Hotta avoided the succession issue by devising a radical plan. He traveled to Kyoto and put the treaty before the imperial court. With imperial approval, Hotta hoped to coerce the \textit{bakufu} while silencing his opposition. It was a bold move that rebuffed centuries of tradition. In Tokugawa Japan, the emperor was little more than a political figurehead. While the emperor was legally powerless, an imperial decree in favor of the treaty would have subverted the traditionalists who clung to national isolation. Unfortunately for Hotta, the court refused. Any decree, Hotta was informed,

\(^{190}\) Cullen 2003, 180.

\(^{191}\) Beasley 1989, 281.

\(^{192}\) Cullen 2003, 181.
could only be issued after he had secured a consensus among the daimyō. Hotta’s failed gambit proved too much for the traditionalist within the bakufu, and he was replaced in June 1858 by Ii Naosuke.

Serving as regent, Ii was charged with quickly resolving the succession problem, as to focus his attention to the more salient issue of Harris’ growing impatience. Ii named Iemochi as successor, providing the traditionalists an important victory. Attention soon returned to the issue of trade. News that Britain had reached an accord with China was accompanied by a more sinister rumor that the British fleet was preparing to steam to Japan. Harris played up the rumor, forcing Ii to sign the treaty even though opinion among the daimyō remained divided. One of Harris’ informants described the situation, “taking 10 persons in authority, three would be in favour of opening the country at once, two would be in favour but with delay, three would refuse, so long as force is not used...and two would fight to the last”. The British heralded their arrival in Edo Bay with a single ship. In the following weeks the Dutch, Russians, the British, and the French all signed treaties of similar content and with respective most-favored-nation clauses.

The political fallout was vast. Ii had isolated the traditionalists by not only kneeling to the West, but by doing so without imperial approval. His choice of Iemochi over Yoshinobu severed the support of the reformist daimyō. Ii sought compromise between the factions, but his efforts undermined his position. To strengthen the bakufu’s position, Ii purged the opposition. Nariaki and his supporters were placed under house arrest. Senior members of the imperial court were either replaced or bribed into compliance. Other detractors of lesser standing were

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94 Ibid.

95 Ibid., 283.

96 Cullen 2003, 182.


98 Beasley 1989, 284.
executed. The purge bought Ii only temporary relief. Ii was assassinated at the gate of Edo Castle on a snowy March day in 1860. The assailants were led by by Arimura Jisaemon, a samurai from Satsuma. The conspirators carried with them their manifesto. A quote from the manifesto opened this chapter. An expanded excerpt is provided below.

While fully aware of the necessity for some change in policy since the coming of the Americans at Uraga, it is entirely against the interest of the country and a stain on the national honour to open up commercial relations with foreigners, to admit foreigners into the Castle, to conclude treaties with them, (...) to allow foreigners to build places of worship for the evil religion, and to allow the three Foreign Ministers to reside in the land. Under the excuse of keeping the peace, too much compromise has been made at the sacrifice of national honour; too much fear has been shown for the foreigners' threats. Therefore, we have consecrated ourselves to be the instruments of Heaven to punish this wicked man, and we have taken on ourselves the duty of ending a serious evil, by killing this atrocious autocrat.

3.4 Sonnō Jōi (1858 - 1864)

The assassination of Ii transformed the nature of bakumatsu political dissent. Before Ii's death, the contestation within the domestic identity hierarchy occurred between traditionalists concerned with Japanese sovereignty and reformists seeking to enhance the state power through cooperation with the West. Bloody years followed the assassination, with regular attacks on foreigners. Amid the turmoil, two groups emerged to challenge the bakufu. The ascendency of these two groups shifted the competition between domestic identities from that of foreign policy (isolationism vs. engagement) to that of political legitimacy.

The first group was comprised of reactionary loyalists, who were often loosely organized and lacked structured goals beyond their guiding slogan “honor the emperor, expel the barbarian (sonnō jōi)”. From the loyalist perspective, Ii had betrayed the emperor by signing commercial treaties without imperial approval. The treaties, they reasoned, had flooded the country with barbarians and compromised

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999 Jansen 1989, 318.

200 Ibid., 319.

Japan’s collective identity as a closed state. While these treaties did open Japan to foreigners, the loyalists had a limited appreciation of the external constraints acting upon to Ii. The loyalists were mostly composed of lower ranking samurai and politicized commoners who lacked a political voice in Japan’s highly structured society. With no means to affect change, they turned to terror tactics. Although their xenophobic reaction reflected a minimal understanding of international affairs, their actions were not solely bullheaded. In July 1861, a group of loyalists attacked the British legation at Tōzenji. The target was political as was the objective: to destroy the bakufu’s nascent relationship with the British.

The loyalists were mainly a fringe political group. The second group, however, possessed considerable political resources. The turmoil following Japan’s opening had weakened the authority of the bakufu, providing an opportunity for some daimyō to position themselves for greater power within Japan. The movement was led by Shimazu Hisamitsu of the Satsuma clan, who supported fostering relations with the West. Satsuma leaders were some of the earliest adopters of Western technology in Japan, and the weakened bakufu was a golden opportunity to exercise this new firepower.

Satsuma defiance came to a head in September 1862. While Shimazu was en route to Kyoto, a quarrel broke out between his escort and a group of foreigners, leaving a British merchant named Richardson dead. The affair quickly became an international crisis. The British demanded indemnities from the bakufu and Satsuma, as well as those responsible being turned over to British authorities. The bakufu offered the British a portion of the indemnity, but Satsuma leaders rejected the demands. In response, the British squadron steamed into the Satsuma waters outside Kagoshima, and attempted to seize anchored Satsuma vessels as random until the indemnity was paid. In the battle that followed, much of Kagoshima was shelled and several British vessels were damaged. The outcome was indecisive, but the two sides

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203 Jansen 1989, 322.
204 Beasley 1989, 288.
205 Ravina 2004, 93-104.
came to terms in December 1863.\textsuperscript{206} Through the negotiations the Satsuma and British established a working relationship, which provided Satsuma leaders access to Western military technology. Technology that would prove pivotal in the eventual toppling of the bakufu.

The Richardson Affair was but the beginning of defiance in Japan’s southern provinces. Controversy also arose in the domain of Chōshū, a neighbor and longtime rival to Satsuma. In the wake of Ii’s assassination, Satsuma and Chōshū vied for political control in the bakufu and the imperial court.\textsuperscript{207} During a shōgunal visit to Kyoto in April 1863, bakufu officials came under pressure from a violent loyalist group demanding a return to isolation.\textsuperscript{208} In breaking with centuries of tradition, Emperor Komei issued a public “order to expel the barbarians” (jōi). Seizing the moment, the Chōshū began publicly defying the bakufu. Clan leader Mori Takachika ordered foreign ships traveling through the Shimonoseki Strait to be fired upon.\textsuperscript{209} On 25 June 1863, Chōshū shore batteries opened fire upon the USS Pembroke. In the following months American, French, and Dutch warships all tried in vain to bring Chōshū to heel, the Shimonoseki Straits remained closed to trade.\textsuperscript{210} Figure 3.6 visualizes the distinction between the Satsuma and Chōshū clans, and the loyalist faction.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{206} Beasley 1989, 291-2.
\item \textsuperscript{207} Craig, Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2000), 167-207.
\item \textsuperscript{208} Beasley 1989, 292.
\item \textsuperscript{209} Ibid., 293-4.
\item \textsuperscript{210} Keene, Emperor of Japan: Meiji and His World, 1852-1912 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 83-4.
\end{itemize}
Table 3.6: Domestic Factions following the Harris Treaty (1858 - 1864) 211

The Chōshū situation continued to deteriorate. On 20 August 1864 Chōshū forces moved on the imperial palace in Kyoto in an attempted coup that would have seen power restored to the emperor. In response, a multinational fleet under British command steamed to the Shimonoseki Strait. The fleet destroyed the Chōshū navy and its shore artillery, forcing Chōshū leaders to surrender. The bakufu organized a complementary land response. Seeking to weaken their traditional enemy, Satsuma initially backed the bakufu initiative, but soon became convinced the bakufu was using Chōshū as a staging ground to move against Satsuma. Consequently, Satsuma brokered a deal that saw the leaders of the coup turned over to the bakufu in exchange for bakufu withdrawal. In the end, the First Chōshū Expedition ended without a shot fired.212

The failed Chōshū coup was accompanied by domestic uprisings, including the Mito Rebellion led by pro-imperial, anti-Western samurai. Rebel leaders were brutally punished for their actions with hundreds being executed.213 With the containment of

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211 While Shimazu Hisamitsu did not embrace loyalist ideology, he was an apt strategist not above manipulating Satsuma loyalists and others loyalists in Kyoto to further his political agenda. For more details see: Ravina 2004, 93-104.

212 Craig 2000, 236-50.

Satsuma and Chōshū to the South and the pacification of domestic uprisings elsewhere, the bakufu position was for a time secure. However, the show of force by Western warships and the Western enthusiasm in participating in the domestic struggle effectively eliminated the sonnō jōi movement and any illusion that Japan could return to isolation. Sovereignty and national power remained key variables during this transition, but the lines of the reformist and loyalist became more politicized. Loyalist support for the restoration of imperial rule was co-opted by the reformist Satsuma and rebellious Chōshū as a mechanism for garnering popular support and delegitimizing Tokugawa supremacy.

Satsuma and Chōshū defiance signaled yet another transformation of bakumatsu political dissent. Domestic groups in Japan had previously formed around ideological principles. The first divide emerged in response to Western encroachment, with political groups arguing over isolationism. Then opposition to the bakufu brought concepts of legitimacy to the forefront of the political debate. While the loyalists remained ideologically driven, the high-level of political organization within the Satsuma and Chōshū domains posed a more serious threat. The domestic struggle for power then moved towards greater political factionalism, as the Satsuma and Chōshū challenged Tokugawa rule.

The offered theoretical framework is designed for analysis of foreign policy, but the insights of SIT remain valid for conceptualizing this struggle between domestic groups. The Satsuma, Chōshū, and loyalists rebuffed Tokugawa hegemony and through a strategy of social competition rejected the existing hierarchical distribution of power. Given this interpretation, the bakufu constituted the referent group was outwardly challenged by each group. Furthermore, the Satsuma and Chōshū domains represented semi-autonomous political units. Premodern Japan was largely decentralized, affording clan leaders a high level of authority within their domains. As bakufu legitimacy deteriorated, this autonomy enabled Satsuma and Chōshū leaders to act as proto-states, each engaging in military confrontations and foreign policy with Western powers. Although not the research focus of this thesis, conceptualizing groups through SIT provides an avenue for analyzing both international and domestic intergroup conflicts. Future research could build upon this approach, as it is clear that
ideological groups (the loyalists), political separatists (the Satsuma and Chōshū), and states (bakumatsu Japan) act upon similar desires to improve their group’s relative position. Such theoretical robustness may be difficult from a strict realist or constructivist perspective, which does not draw from SIT’s insights into group dynamics.

3.5 From Bakufu to Boshin (1865 - 1868)

The bakufu remained handicapped by internal conflicts and external constraints. As the bakufu renewed its modernization efforts, tensions with the anti-Western imperial court remained high. Bakufu-imperial tensions grew more strained when the insolvent bakufu was unable to pay the indemnities demanded after Shimonoseki, and Western nations again turned to gunboat diplomacy. In exchange for reducing the indemnity, the Western nations demanded the emperor ratify the Harris Treaty. A squadron of warships moved into Hyōgo harbor, and remained there until the emperor relinquished negotiation authority to the shōgun.214

The First Chōshū Expedition also provided hardliners an opportunity to reassert themselves in the bakufu. Hawkish sentiments varied from those seeking a complete severing from Japan’s former seclusion and traditionalists who felt threatened by the growing influence of the Satsuma and Chōshū. A consensus to affirm bakufu authority through a second punitive campaign against the Chōshū formed in late 1865.215 The emperor himself had grown tired of the Chōshū and issued a command to “begin a punitive expedition at once”.216 Hostilities broke out the following summer. Although the bakufu had utilized its relationship with the West to supply new arms, the bakufu army remained an amalgam of poorly organized feudal and modern units. Conversely, the Chōshū military benefited from half a decade of


training with Western arms, and its newly formed alliance with Satsuma. The relevant groups, their goals and norms are represented in Figure 3.7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>FP Strategy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Group Norms</th>
<th>External Ally</th>
<th>Most Salient Variable</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reformist (Satsuma and Chōshū)</td>
<td>Social Competition</td>
<td>bakufu</td>
<td>Pro-Modernist, Pro-Restoration, Pro-Western</td>
<td>Britain, America</td>
<td>State power</td>
<td>Embrace Western contact as necessary to overthrow bakufu to enhance autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakufu and supporters</td>
<td>Marginal Social Mobility</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Pro-Modernist, Anti-Restoration, Pro-Western</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>State power</td>
<td>Embrace Western contact as necessary to uphold bakufu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalists (marginalized Sonnō Jōi movement)</td>
<td>Social Competition</td>
<td>bakufu</td>
<td>Anti-Modernist, Pro-Restoration, Anti-Western</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Sovereignty</td>
<td>Reject compromise with West, overthrow bakufu in response to its acquiescence to Western demands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.7: Groups during Boshin Conflict (1868 - 1869)

The campaign was a disaster for the bakufu. Its army was roundly defeated. Its prestige was shattered. The Chōshū even seized several of bakufu’s traditional land holdings. The bakufu responded with enhanced modernization efforts. Japanese students were sent abroad. Ships and armaments were purchased en masse from Western powers. Anti-Western sentiment fell silent, as the feudal system was dead in all but name. The bakufu’s weakness also compromised its position with Western powers, who had until then recognized the bakufu as Japan’s legitimate ruling body. The coming showdown soon became less a battle to preserve the bakufu, and more an initiative to preserve Tokugawa dominance amidst the bakufu’s inevitable collapse.

Tokugawa authority also faced friction from within. Shōgun Iemochi had died in the waning stages of the Second Chōshū Expedition. Tokugawa Yoshinobu succeeded Iemochi, but he lacked the support of his predecessor. Several daimyō demanded the bakufu return political power to the emperor. Seeking to avoid conflict Yoshinobu conceded some authority to the emperor, but the death of Emperor

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Kōmei in 1867 left Yoshinobu with few allies in the imperial court. Satsuma and Chōshū armies advanced on Kyoto, demanding the emperor revoke the shōgun’s remaining power. Meanwhile, anti-bakufu rebels (backed by Satsuma and Chōshū) terrorized Edo. Seeking to consolidate his power base, Yoshinobu resigned his office and titles. Once his resignation was formally accepted by the imperial court, the 267 years of Tokugawa rule came to its official end.

Following Yoshinobu’s resignation, the Satsuma, Chōshū and their allies seized control of the imperial palace and purged the lingering Tokugawa elements of the old government. On 3 January 1868 they announced the restoration of the emperor. Although Yoshinobu had nominally accepted the restoration through his abdication, his compliance threatened his position within the Tokugawa house. He soon called for the imperial court to rescind its endorsement of the restoration, and returned to Kyoto to remonstrate with a contingent of Tokugawa and allied troops.

The confrontation between Tokugawa and Satsuma-Chōshū forces over the next several months constituted the majority of hostilities in the Boshin civil war (1868-9). Both sides boasted victories, but the highly structured and modernized pro-imperial armies of the Satsuma-Chōshū alliance prevailed. Foreign powers also played their part. The British remained close to Satsuma leaders following the shelling of Kagoshima in 1862, suppling the Satsuma army with British arms. In its modernization efforts the bakufu developed a strong relationship with the French, so strong that French representatives personally urged Yoshinobu to maintain his resistance in Edo.

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222 Ibid., 199-202.
223 Ibid., 211-5.
224 Jansen 1989, 357-8.
225 Medzini 1971, 134-43.
With the fall of Edo in the summer of 1868, Tokugawa authority was supplanted by Satsuma and Chōshū, and the imperial restoration was affirmed.\textsuperscript{226} Figure 3.8 summarizes the key variables at play. Considering the period was marked by considerable domestic unrest, no referent group is identified. Similarly, the policy outcome of the period centered around political legitimacy rather than foreign policy. It should also be noted that although the reformist group is bolded to indicate its dominance, it was not until the Boshin War concluded that the groups preeminence was solidified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1854-1868</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Reformist</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Ambiguous. Western encroachment undermines sakoku, domestic conflict over direction of Japan results in the Meiji Restoration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.8: Pre-Restoration Foreign Policy Groups (1853-1868)

3.6 The End of Tokugawa Japan

Japan’s transition from feudalism to imperialism is often given only cursory treatment in international relations literature. The above chapter expounds the leading historical events during these tumultuous years as a vehicle for identifying the norms that would define Japan in the coming era. Returning to the research questions driving this thesis, the following conclusions can be derived. Since this chapter represents the historical starting point for this thesis, research questions one and two are be answered together.

1. How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time?

\textsuperscript{226} Following Yoshinobu’s surrender, hostilities continue into 1869 as a league of northern daimyō rose to gainsay the authority of the South. The North was soon subdued by Satsuma-Chōshū forces.
• It has been demonstrated that Western encroachment prioritized neoclassical realist variables of sovereignty and power in the minds of Japanese leaders. Through the subsequent political struggles - the contestation between reformists and traditionalists, the violent sonnō jōi movement, and the Satsuma-Chōshū victory in the Boshin War - pro-modernist, pro-Western, and pro-restoration norms emerged dominant within Japan. These norms provided the basis for the Meiji Restoration and Japan’s industrialization, the latter of which are discussed in the following chapter.

• The emergence of Satsuma-Chōshū dominance narrowed Japan’s choice for a referent group. Satsuma leaders cultivated a working relationship with the British following their confrontation in the Shimonoseki Straits. The modern arms provided by the British were essential to the Satsuma-Chōshū victory. Meiji leaders inherited an appreciation for Western technology and formed strong relations with the British. As Meiji leaders solidified their foreign policy strategy of social mobility, they settled upon the British as a referent group. The modernization efforts of the Satsuma and Chōshū must therefore be understood as the roots of Meiji’s Japan’s foreign policy strategy.

2. What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?

• It is not sufficient to attribute Japan’s adoption of Western industrial and imperial practices (a process discussed in detail in Chapters 4 and 5) as simply a response to the gunboat diplomacy. The domestic conflict of competing norms and identities must also be contextualized to trace the ascendency of the pro-modernization norms. These norms are rooted in the political struggles outlined in this chapter, and in the coming decades were institutionalized by the new Meiji government. Furthermore, the balance between protecting sovereignty and enhancing state power defined much of the political discourse during the bakumatsu, and instilled within Japanese leaders a sensitivity to the core concepts of statehood that likewise resurfaces throughout this thesis. These factors narrowed the foreign policy discourse, leading to less division between
groups. Marginalized groups were either co-opted into other groups or became politically insignificant. Therefore, this chapter provides an ideological starting point for the political divisions discussed in following chapters.

These conclusions form the foundation of Chapter 4, where the foreign and domestic policies of the new Meiji government are examined. Although roughly conterminous to one another, premodern and modern Japan are two distinct political entities with different governments, state elites, and norms. Understanding the historical context of Japan's transition from isolation to an outward looking state preoccupied with sovereignty and power is essential; without it later analysis would be prone to shortsighted conjecture.
Chapter 4

The Emergence of Modern Japan, 1868 - 1895

JAP THE GIANT-KILLER.

Depiction of First Sino-Japanese War
Punch magazine - 1895
Nothing has more urgency for us than schools ... unless we establish an unshakable national foundation we will not be able to elevate our country’s prestige in a thousand years ... Our people are no different from the Americans or Europeans of today; it is all a matter of education or lack of education.

- Kido Takayoshi, 1872

If it is decided to send an envoy officially, I feel sure he will be murdered. I therefore beseech you to send me. I cannot claim to make a splendid envoy ... but if it is a question of dying, that, I assure you, I am prepared to do.

- Saigō Takamori, 1873

The English export opium, a poisonous drug, to China. The Chinese lose money, injure their health, and year by year their national strength is sapped....This depends solely on the fact that one country is stronger and one weaker.

- Fukuzawa Yukichi, early 1880s

A terrible lesson has been administered to China ... she has lost her prestige which was nothing but the shadow of a great name; that she lies exposed as a carcass in the neighbourhood of which a cloud of eagles is hovering.

- The North China Herald, 1895
Japan did not enter the international arena as a willing and equal partner. For centuries, Japan practiced an isolationist foreign policy. The technological advancements of the industrial revolution in Western countries and the emergence of new imperialist norms that privileged global military and economic objectives negated the geopolitical factors that enabled Japan’s isolation and ushered in a new era in East Asia. This chapter discusses Japan’s transition into an outward looking modern state between 1868 - 1895.

The origins of the Western imperialist international system, which constituted the primary external constraints that triggered Japan’s domestic unrest, are explored with particular reference to the impact of industrialization on government and foreign policy (Section 4.1). These elements are essential to understanding Japan’s evolving foreign policy strategy of social mobility, as the Western powers provided Meiji leaders with a blueprint for modernization. The adoption of modernization norms - such as the centralization of state power, the industrialization of the economy, and delimitation of national boundaries - within Japan occurred first though observing Western institutions and determining which practices were most beneficial to enhancing state power (Section 4.2). These norms were soon assimilated into the Japanese collective identity, and in the process they developed distinctly Japanese features (Section 4.3). This chapter concludes with a discussion of Meiji foreign policy; including Japan’s increasingly antagonistic relationship with Russia, Japanese exploitation of Korea, and the First Sino-Japanese War (Section 4.4). It is argued that the defeat of China between 1894-5 propelled Japan to unprecedented heights as the primer Asian power, but the conflict also put Japan on a collision course with Russia.

The considerable focus on domestic factors noted in Chapter 3 continues to a limited extent in this chapter, before shifting to examine Meiji Japan’s foreign policy. Conceptually, Chapters 3 and 4 outline the internal constraints and external factors upon which modern Japan was founded. When considering research questions one and two - *How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time?* - it is essential to consider the links between Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 3 detailed the end of premodern Japan. Chapter 4
examines the Meiji Japan and the establishment of a foreign policy strategy. This tight linkage also extends to the third research question: *What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?* Chapter 3 highlighted the struggle between groups seeking to reinforce Japan’s sovereignty vs. groups concerned with enhancing state power, and the emergence of modernization norms. Chapter 4 builds upon these factors, specifically discussing how modernization norms permeated throughout Japanese society and how they evolved into foreign policy.

Considerable theoretical overlap exists between these elements. The external pressures acting upon Meiji leaders, namely concerns over power and sovereignty, harken to neoclassical realist understandings of the relationship between states and the international system. The surge of modernization norms within Japan reinforces the constructivist emphasis on domestic variables. SIT unifies these elements by identifying their recursive relationship. Meiji leaders adopted modernization norms to enhance the power and prestige of the state, thereby establishing a foreign policy strategy of social mobility. Social mobility enables states to increase their position within the established power hierarchy by mirroring the practices of successful states (in this context the Western powers). As is made evident throughout this chapter, social mobility greatly enhanced Japanese power and prestige thus reinforcing the modernization norms.

### 4.1 The World Japan Entered

The external pressures that catalyzed Japan’s domestic restructuring resulted from new tensions within the international system. Under gunboat diplomacy, the Sinocentric hierarchical order atrophied. As the Western powers established their regional dominance, Japanese leaders looked to Western institutions as a model for a new Japanese state. This section therefore reviews the dominant norms driving Western expansionism into Asia, as it was these factors that Meiji leaders sought to emulate through a strategy of social mobility.
The wave of rapid expansionism by the Western powers during the late nineteenth century diverged sharply from the colonialism of the previous three centuries. “Colonialism” should be understood as a process of resettlement which transplanted European peoples from their mother country to the overseas territories of their home government. This gradual process supported the expanding mercantilist interests of the maritime powers: Spain and Portugal in the sixteenth century, and Holland, Britain, and France in the seventieth and eighteenth centuries. The piecemeal evolution of colonialism and the diversity of peoples engaged in the process resulted in variances in the structure and character of colonial holdings.227

Although colonialism necessitated an imperialist agenda, the imperialism of the late nineteenth century to early twentieth century (approximately 1860s - 1918) lacked both longevity and diversity. This distinction is noted by Mark R. Peattie who defines “new imperialism” as the ‘surge of aggrandizement by the older European powers [that was] remarkable for its global dimensions and its brief duration’.228 Peattie contests that ‘the industrial West...created modern colonial systems notable for the rapidity with which they were assembled and the degree to which they were similar in arrangement, structure, and evolution’.229 In practice, the colonies of this new imperialism often operated on the ‘fringe of national interests,’ but with the full support of their home governments that justified imperialism through appeals to prestige, economic and strategic considerations, and ‘comparative advantage vis-à-vis some other colonial power’.230

Throughout the next two chapters, discussions of imperialism are consistent with the definition of new imperialism offered by Peattie. It should be noted that use of “new imperialism” to describe this epoch in imperialism is not exclusive to Peattie. W.G. Beasley makes a complementary case, arguing that new imperialism diverged from “co-operative imperialism” where ‘treaty signatories shared their privileges


228 Ibid., 3.

229 Ibid.

230 Ibid., 4-5.
through the most-favoured-nation clause', and was alternatively marked by ‘fierce imperialist rivalries’ driven onward by conflicting territorial and economic pursuits.\textsuperscript{231} The distinction between colonialism and imperialism is represented by Table 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colonialism</th>
<th>The establishment and maintenance of colonial holdings outside of state borders with unequal relationships between colonial power and colony. Permanent resettlement of nationals into colonies. Varied methods of control (occupation vs indirect)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperialism</td>
<td>Aggressive expansion whereby indigenous populations are subjugated for purposes of establishing an empire and expanding state power and prestige. Motivated by notions of cultural superiority and marked by technological inequality between empire and targeted population.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Colonialism vs Imperialism

Understanding this difference is key to determining the external pressures acting upon Japan during its emergence into the international community. Modernization norms had already taken root in Japan. This evolution translated into a strategy of social mobility, which required Meiji leaders to observe the successful practices of the imperialist Western powers. It is these practices (norms) that once incorporated by Meiji leaders formed the basis of Meiji foreign policy.

This global foreign policy agenda resulted from the modernization of Western powers following the industrial revolution. Modernization evolved differently in each of the imperialist states, but generalized features (i.e. domestic norms) can be identified. During this period, the Western powers made significant efforts to centralize state authority and to incorporate the masses into the economy and polity. Combined with the formal development of national boundaries, these factors initiated the emergence of what Akira Iriye describes as “modern states”.\textsuperscript{232}

As with any development in international politics, the modern state placed new tensions upon the international system. The norms embodied in the foreign policy of these states represent the core norms that incentivized state imperialism. Akira identifies four variables therein: (1) the growth of the state’s military apparatus, (2) an

\textsuperscript{231} Beasley 1987, 70-1. Beasley also offers an excellent survey (pages 2-13) of the political and economic theories related to new imperialism.

emphasis on military alliances, (3) rapid economic development, and (4) the establishment of overseas spheres of influence.233 These measures were undertaken by state elites who perceived that these norms improved national security, however, this practice was reciprocated concurrently by several states within the anarchical international system. Resultantly, a security dilemma surfaced with each modern state seeking to outpace their rivals’ economic expansion and development of technology and arms.

A global security perspective materialized, with states seeking to not only balance the armed forces of perceived adversaries, but with securing the logistical networks necessary for supporting a global security and economic strategy.234 The evolving relationship between armaments and economics provides the basis for Akira’s understanding of imperialism, which he defines as ‘the incorporation of overseas possessions and spheres of influence into the domestic economic and strategic system’.235 It was within this globalized system that Japan’s self-imposed isolation became impossible.236 Through the strategy of social mobility instituted by Meiji leaders, Japan quickly adopted the norms of a modern state. For example, Meiji leaders expanded Japan’s strategic interests. They did so with a stated purpose of demonstrating to Western powers that Japan was itself a modern state and should no longer be subject to the unequal treaties levied against it (See Section 4.2).

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233 Ibid., 724-7.
234 Ibid., 725.
235 Ibid., 727.
236 The impact of this economic growth on the manifestation of new imperialism is open to theoretical interpretations. Classical political and economic interpretations of imperialism center on the motivations of the imperialist states, arguing that imperialism was driven either by illusions of prestige and grandeur or by industrial overproduction. Marxist-Leninist interpretations of industrial overproduction are somewhat convincing when applied to the West, but are wholly inadequate at explaining Japanese imperialism. Japan’s imperial thrust began prior to the maturation of its capitalist economy, negating claims that imperialism resulted primarily from a capitalist need for market expansion. Other theoretical approaches highlight the ideological and nationalist roots of new imperialism, offering some additional insight to the interplay of modernization and the foreign policy of modern industrial states. Further reading: Duus, "Economic Dimensions of Meiji Imperialism: The Case of Korea, 1895-1910," in The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945, ed. Ramon Hawley Myers; Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 128-9; Fieldhouse, The Theory of Capitalist Imperialism (London: Longmans, 1967), 174-85; Mommsen, Theories of Imperialism (Longon: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), 3-28.
The inclusion of a global perspective into national security required states to reconsider the role of interstate relations. Since these developments occurred in several states at roughly the same time, the modern states maintained a level of power equivalency. The power hierarchy of the international system was therefore divided between modern states with industrialized militaries and global economies and pre-industrial, non-modern states. Comparable military capacity between modern states resulted in a multipolar international system. As states sought to maintain parity with perceived threats and offset the burden of global military and economic objectives, alliances became a hallmark of the modern state. Through alliances states could pool their national resources and simultaneously augment state security and reduce some of the uncertainty present within the anarchical international system.

The status hierarchy remained permeable. The division in power was dependent upon industrialization, enabling other states to join the ranks of elite states should they embrace industrialization. Alliances were a key feature of imperial power politics, as they provided states with less power capabilities a means of elevating their status. When considering the foreign policy options available to Japan in the following sections, it will be shown that Japanese leaders utilized both of these dynamics to enhance state power via a strategy of social mobility.

The advancements of the imperialist powers provided a means to systematically dominate the less developed regions of the world. This hierarchical division between the proverbial haves and have-nots was not unique to interstate relations (whether those “states” be city-states, empires, or nation-states). Competition over scarce resources is a pronounced feature of of intergroup relations. However, the state adopted two new roles within this division. First, states more aggressively supported opportunities to maximize profits through the consumption of overseas raw materials by the industrialized markets of their home territories. During this period of imperialism, economic and military expansionism became synonymous with state power and prestige. Expansionism surfaced as a dominate norm within the international system, with the modern states assuming ongoing expansion was the

238 Ibid.
hallmark of a successful state. Second, modern states expended tremendous resources to push their economic and military expansionism to the farthest reaches of the globe. Akira argues that these areas represented the ‘fringes of the modern states’ and where never ‘fully integrated into the polity’. Nevertheless, spheres of influence provided both dependable markets and compelling symbols of power and prestige for the imperialist powers.

When applied to the framework of this research, the structure of the international system must be considered. This period featured a number of great powers vying for dominance within a multipolar international power hierarchy. Within this context, the great powers were engaged in strategies of social competition against each other. The norms of new imperialism provided an evaluative metric. For example, the expansion into Central Asia (a peripheral region) by Britain and Russia provided a means of countering the influence of one another. These same norms offered for an avenue for status seeking behavior, whereby Meiji leaders enhanced state power through social mobility, with the long-term goal of joining the ranks of the elite states.

4.2 Japan’s Turn to the West (1861 - 1890)

In less than forty years, Japan was transformed from a technologically backward isolationist island state into a world power. Despite the rapidity and breadth of Japan’s transformation, early Meiji leaders maintained a high level of internal stability. Japan’s modernization was conditioned by a changing international environment dominated by modern states seeking to impinge upon Japanese sovereignty. These external pressures were facilitated by industrialization within modern states, and it was this element that Japanese leaders first sought to emulate through social mobility.

Japan’s “turn to the West” was not simply a process of supplanting of traditional Japanese norms (e.g. isolationism, strict class hierarchy, and decentralized

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239 Ibid., 727.

240 Ibid.
power) with those of modern states, but a deliberate process orchestrated by the skilled statesmen of Meiji Japan. Japan’s modernization had two distinct phases. First, Japanese leaders observed the practices, technologies, and institutions of the Western powers, and subsequently imported those elements perceived as the most beneficial into Japan. Second, Meiji leaders refashioned the Japanese collective identity by adapting Japan’s traditional culture to serve the necessities of modern statehood.

The systematic observation and assimilation of foreign norms in Japan was not novel. During the Edo period (1603 - 1867), there were three accepted schools of learning within Japan: Confucianism, Japanese learning, and Dutch studies. Japan’s cultural borrowing from China was a recognized element of the Japanese collective identity. During the sixth and seventh centuries, Japanese embassies established political and cultural links with the Chinese court that would persist thereafter. This relationship introduced Chinese philosophy (namely Confucianism), political institutions, and art into Japanese society and Chinese characters into the Japanese language (kanji).

The link between Chinese thought and Japanese culture was exceedingly verbose. During Japan’s isolation, Confucian scholarship maintained a high level of prestige. Japanese learning emerged mainly as a reaction to the Sino-centric focus of knowledge within Japan during the mid-Tokugawa period. Lastly, Dutch studies surfaced from the interaction of Dutch nationals concentrated around Deshima Island and curious Japanese scholars who sought to translate Dutch books (namely those addressing science and anatomy) into Japanese. Although Dutch studies did not hold the same prestige as Confucianism, these two schools constitute an underlying norm that predates the Meiji Restoration. That is, foreign learning was already an accepted norm of Japanese society.

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242 Ibid., 434-5.

243 Paine 2003, 81.

244 Mehl 2003, 13-31.
The initial stage of Japan’s learning from the West occurred during the *bakumatsu*, and was led by scholars of Dutch learning who desired to directly experience the Western culture. The arrival of Commodore Perry revealed to these scholars that Japan’s isolation had crippled its political and intellectual capacity. To a limited degree late *bakufu* leaders acknowledged a similar disadvantage, as evident from their numerous diplomatic missions to America from 1861 until 1868, but their lack of knowledge regarding international affairs undermined their fruitfulness. For example, Japanese students were sent to Holland during the 1860s, only to learn that Holland had fallen behind the ranks of great powers. Terashima Munenori, a prominent Meiji diplomat, noted in a letter sent in 1862 that “Many scholars in England and France raised their eyebrows when they heard that we read Dutch books ... even the Hollanders themselves all read their books in French or German ... [b]eyond the borders no one knows Dutch. I must honestly say that the country is so small and mean as to startle one.”

The most notable mission was the voyage of the *Kanrin maru* in 1861 from the Uraga channel at the southern end of Edo Bay to San Francisco, which marked only the second official trans-Pacific crossing of Japanese officers. Writing in response to these evolving conditions, famed author and philosopher Miyake Setsurei noted that “there is no more pressing need in our defense against the barbarians at present than knowing the enemy”. Nevertheless, these missions reflected more the political necessities of state following the treaties imposed by the Americans rather than a fundamental shift in ideology, as Japanese nationals remained prohibited from traveling to the West without *bakufu* approval.

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245 Sukehiro 1989, 448.

246 Jansen 2002, 93.


The first transatlantic voyage occurring 250 years prior by Hasekura Tsunenaga aboard the San Juan Bautista en route to Mexico in 1614.

248 Sukehiro 1989, 449.
The additional freedoms afforded to Japanese academics and diplomats following the Meiji Restoration sparked a new wave of Western learning that coincided with the modernization strategies adopted by Meiji leaders. In 1871, Iwakura Tomomi was dispatched to America and Europe as the leader of a massive delegation of statesmen and scholars by the Japanese government. The stated purpose of the Iwakura Mission was threefold. Firstly, to formally present the post-Restoration government of Japan and secure Western recognition of Meiji legitimacy. Secondly, to observe Western military, political, economic, and social institutions. Lastly, to renegotiate the unequal treaties that had been ratified by the bakufu during the previous decades. See Map 4.1 for the route followed by the Iwakura Mission.

Map 4.1: Route of Iwakura Embassy (1871 - 1873)


251 Jansen 2002, 357.
The Iwakura Mission failed in its endeavor to revise the unequal treaties, but through their observation of Western practices, Meiji leaders realized that Japan’s future lay in modernizing its domestic infrastructure. A level of parity with the Western powers would need to be achieved in order for Japan to reverse the treaties imposed upon them and reaffirm Japanese sovereignty. Specifically, they determined that Japan needed to align its legal and political systems with what from a Western perspective was expected of a modern state. Successful incorporation of these Western norms within Japan provided the Meiji leaders with the necessary footing to renegotiate their diplomatic standing with the West.252

Kume Kunitake, who served as the private secretary to Iwakura and de facto historian of the mission, suggested the tremendous wealth and knowledge which enabled Europe’s international success was a relatively new phenomenon brought upon by the industrial revolution. Kume reasoned that “the remarkable wealth and prosperity to be seen in Europe today dates to a large extent from 1800, and took a mere forty years to create.”253 Renowned Meiji statesman Kido Takayoshi was so impressed by the school system in America that he believed “[n]othing has more urgency for us than schools … unless we establish an unshakable national foundation we will not be able to elevate our country’s prestige in a thousand years … Our people are no different from the Americans or Europeans of today; it is all a matter of education or lack of education”.254 Likeminded sentiments echoed throughout the delegation. Even the more pessimistic members (who for example argued Britain’s success was the result of accumulated knowledge over the centuries) agreed that by harnessing industrialization Japan could not only equal, but overtake the Western powers.255

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252 Paine 2003, 81.
253 Swale 1998, 44.
Accordingly, Japanese scholars deliberated upon the relative success of the modern states, and ranked each state according to their superiority or inferiority vis-à-vis other modern states. This hierarchical ordering provided the Meiji leaders with a framework from which they could determine the best attributes of each state to assimilate into Japan. Meiji leaders ultimately modeled Japan’s industrial and naval development after England and their military organization after Prussia. From France, Japan incorporated a system of centralized educational, legal, and police systems, and from America they integrated advanced agricultural technologies.256

Even at this early stage, Meiji leaders’ emphasis on enhancing state power in order to reassert Japanese sovereignty is identifiable. The arrival of the modern states in East Asia fundamentally challenged Japanese statehood, as the treaties imposed by the Western powers undermined the internal and external sovereignty of Japan. Japan’s compromised internal sovereignty provided the Satsuma-Chōshū alliance the necessary political traction to effect a regime change. The new Meiji government faced the immediate challenge of securing their internal sovereignty by establishing formal relations with foreign powers (the Iwakura Mission’s first objective) and reestablishing Japan’s external sovereignty by reversing the existing unequal treaties (the mission’s third objective).

By determining that modernization was the most effective method for increasing power and protecting sovereignty (fulfilling the mission’s second objective), Japanese leaders began developing a strategy of social mobility. Social mobility holds that a group seeks to enhance its status by mirroring the practices of a referent group. Japanese leaders had yet to solidify their foreign policy agenda, but the Western powers formed a rough referent group for their emerging strategy. Although a specific referent group remained temporarily undecided, the preeminence of the British navy and relationship forged during the bakumatsu between the British and Japanese leaders would eventually lead to the selection of Britain as a referent group. Table 4.2 distinguishes between the political norms embodied by premodern Japan and those of Meiji Japan.

256 Ibid., 464-5. More depth on Japan’s efforts to modernize its military through mainly Prussian but also French norms can be found in Beasley 1987, 31-5.
Table 4.2: Political Norms of Premodern and Modern Japan

It must also be noted that the process of modernization that began in earnest following the Iwakura Mission occurred through cultural borrowing, an established practice within Japan. Although this undertaking required Japanese leaders to privilege modernization norms, the process of assimilation was not itself indicative of a fundamental shift in the Japanese identity. Dutch learning had fostered an ongoing interest in Western medicine and technology in Japan during the Tokugawa era, and this norm was refitted by the Meiji government to suit the imperialist regional order. Of particular concern to Meiji leaders was China’s ongoing exploitation by Western powers. Fukuzawa Yukichi noted in the early 1880s: “The English export opium, a poisonous drug, to China. The Chinese lose money, injure their health, and year by year their national strength is sapped….This depends solely on the fact that one country is stronger and one weaker.”

Consequently, much of this Western learning was directed at the enhancing the military capacity of Japan. Nuances within Japanese society provided additional traction for the privileging of the military strength by Meiji leaders. For centuries the samurai, Japan’s warrior class, held an esteemed position with Japan. Japanese society as a whole was hierarchically structured around the military dictatorship of the

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257 Samuels 2007, 3.
*bakufu*. Those who had lead the charge for the restoration and those now importing modernization norms into Japan were often members of the samurai class.

4.3 Japanification (1890 - 1904)

Modern states owed their success not only to industrialization, but to centralized state authority and the successful incorporation of the masses into the economy and polity. The latter objective required a significant reorientation of state rhetoric. The legitimacy of Meiji leaders was contingent upon reversing the unequal treaties that undermined Japanese sovereignty. Meiji leaders believed the most effective method for reversing the treaties was by demonstrating to the international community that Japan was itself a modern state. Modernization through social mobility undermined the Western justification for the treaties, that Japan was a backwards state in need of civilizing.

Meiji leaders were determined to adopt Western legal, political and economic institutions, but these perceived necessities were at odds with the nationalistic spirit of the *sonnô jôi* movement, which had united the domestic opposition against the *bakufu*. To bridge the gap between the ideology of *sonnô jôi* and the emerging strategy of social mobility, Meiji leaders disseminated new pro-modernization slogans. The language of ‘expel the barbarian’ was replaced with statements such as ‘open the country, establish friendly relations’. Similarly, nationalism was channeled into new endeavors to bring ‘civilization’ and ‘enlightenment’ to Japan (*bunmei kaika*), to ‘enrich the country, strengthen the army’ (*fukoku kyôhei*), and to ‘revise the (unequal) treaties’ (*jôyaku kaisei*).

A consensus quickly formed around ‘enrich the country, strengthen the army,’ diminished competition between the domestic identity hierarchy. This “Meiji

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260 Paine 2003, 81.
261 Sukehiro 1989, 467.
262 Samuels 2007, 6.
Consensus” was partially the result of the pro-modernist victory outlined in Chapter 3. However, the ready acceptance of this ideological reorientation reveals two underlying considerations. First, the motivations behind pro-imperial forces during the restoration transcended the convenient slogan of ‘revere the emperor, expel the barbarians’ utilized by revolutionary leaders to mobilize support. Second, Japanese leaders and the general public were primarily interested in fortifying state sovereignty and less concerned with the means to this end.

This latter element is demonstrated from the evolution of one particular slogan. During the mid-seventh century Japan’s extensive cultural borrowing from China was justified under the slogan ‘Japanese spirit and Chinese learning’. Chinese culture maintained a vaunted position within Japan for centuries, but when the Sino-centric regional order collapsed, Japanese leaders turned to Western ideology. A new slogan emerged advocating ‘Eastern virtue, Western technology’, but as Japan continued its modernization the slogan ‘Japanese spirit and Western learning’ became dominate.

This ideological flexibility is difficult to account for from a strictly constructivist perspective. Although constructivism addresses competition between identities, and fluidity among identities given a particular set of circumstances, it does not offer the insights of SIT. Meiji leaders determined that social mobility through modernization was the most effective method for improving Japan’s position within the existing status hierarchy. Social mobility therefore improved the position of the “Japanese” group vis-à-vis other people groups, but this strategy required a reorientation of domestic norms.

The substitution of ‘Chinese learning’ with ‘Western learning’ also demonstrates a sensitivity to concepts of sovereignty present during the early Meiji period. All states desire the necessary power to assure their sovereignty (neoclassical realist core variables), but contestation between groups as to how to achieve this end is expected (the domestic identity hierarchy). During the bakumatsu, there was

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263 Sukehiro 1989, 495.
264 Paine 2003, 81-2.
considerable division between groups concerned primarily with sovereignty and other groups seeking to enhance state power with Western technology. The Meiji Restoration filtered much of the expected domestic plurality into a generally unified group (the Meiji Consensus) that supported modernization. These objectives are consistent with the emerging strategy of social mobility, whereby Japanese leaders sought to elevate Japan’s position within the international status hierarchy and thus reverse the unequal treaties. Table 4.3 visualizes these nuances in relation to the framework of this thesis. Note that Japan’s choice of referent group remained somewhat unfixed. This factor is addressed in the following section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868-1894</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Modernist, Traditionalist</td>
<td>Western Powers</td>
<td>Social Mobility. Westernization generally accepted for short period before giving way to more nuanced modernization modeled after Europe and America.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Meiji Foreign Policy Strategy (1868 - 1894)

Meiji leaders relied heavily upon foreign advisors to promote Japan’s transformation into a modern state. The employment of foreign nationals was not exclusive to the Meiji period. French advisors had a significant role in crafting late Tokugawa policy, and the working relationship between Satsuma and the British provided the very means for the Restoration. During the early Meiji period, foreign advisors did rise to new positions of prominence.265 Foreign advisors provided the nascent state with the bureaucrats, engineers, and educators to drive modernization forward, but their role was temporary.

State elites, such as Minister of Industry Itō Hirobumi, recognized that transforming Japan into a ‘great civilization’ required the government to educate “high and low alike [so that] Japan could take its rightful place among the nations of the world”.266 Educational development required Japanese leaders to rely upon

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265 Sukehiro 1989, 468.

foreigners only until a generation of Japanese had been trained within a modernized educational system. Resultantly, the employment of foreign nationals coincided with efforts to absorb foreign knowledge. Japanese nationals were sent to apprenticeships in Europe and America. Japanese students were sent to study abroad. At the opening of what would later become the Department of Engineering of Tokyo Imperial University, Itō proclaimed:

I urge all ambitious youths ... to study assiduously, to perfect their talents, and to serve in their various posts with dedication. If this is done ... we will be able to do without foreigners. We ourselves will fill the realm with railroads and other technological wonders that will form the basis for further developments to continue for a myriad generations. The glory of our Imperial Land will shine forth to radiate upon foreign shores, while at home, high and low will share in the benefits of a great civilization.267

The provisional status of foreign employees is evident from the use of language within the education system. Owing much to the preeminence of the British Empire, English became the language of higher learning. After all, there were no modern textbooks written in Japanese. Natsume Sōseki, the first Japanese lecturer of English literature in Japan, notes that his generation “had so much English training outside regular English classes, [that] our ability to read, write and speak [in English] developed naturally.”268

The preference for the English language and the high esteem Meiji leaders held for the British Empire was in no small part a result of geopolitical similarities (both states are island nations) and the working relationship cultivated by the Satsuma clan over the preceding decades. As modernization continued in Japan, its leaders became better suited to refine their foreign policy strategy. The utilization of predominately English resources signals the adoption of Britain as Japan’s primary referent group for its strategy of social mobility, a distinction that was reinforced through a political alliance in the coming decades.

While the use of English was undoubtably necessary from both an academic and civil standpoint (to communicate with foreign nationals), the dominance of

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268 Sukehiro 1989, 493.
English over Japanese was “in a sense, a disgrace” to Natsume who felt it challenged Japan’s “independence as a nation.” Natsume’s observation is particularly salient when considering the goal of Meiji leaders was to use modernization to fortify Japanese sovereignty. A realist interpretation may suggest that sovereignty is contingent upon purely material factors, but to Natsume, sovereignty (‘independence as a nation’) was inextricably linked to language. Blind acceptance of Western practices, language included, would therefore undermine sovereignty by eroding the Japanese collective identity. It is therefore necessary to explore this formative period in modern Japanese history with a framework that accounts for both material and ideological considerations.

Although English persisted within certain aspects of Japanese academia for decades, the rise of native Japanese teachers and availability of Japanese textbooks eventually supplanted the English. According to Natsume, “[t]he declining use of English [was] natural and to be expected.” This process was accelerated by the Japanese Minister of Education, Inoue Kowashi, sought to revive interest in non-Western pursuits such as Japanese literature and classical Chinese studies. The move from English to Japanese within Meiji education reveals the dynamism of Japan’s modernization.

This period where Japanese culture was both directly and indirectly suppressed can be classified under the heading of “Westernization”. Given the isolated nature of Japanese society prior to Perry’s arrival, the recent political revolution, and the technological marvels of the industrial era, the exuberance with which some Japanese embraced Westernization is unsurprising. Japan’s cultural borrowing extended beyond the pragmatic pursuits of state and surfaced through the adoption of Western aesthetics and manners. Nevertheless, the Western elements imported into Japan were limited. Meiji society strongly resisted Christianity, frustrating European leaders

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269 Ibid.

270 Ibid.


272 Mita and Suloway, Social Psychology of Modern Japan (Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 141-58.
who believed Christianity was fundamental for modern states. Bullheaded French officials, who repeatedly failed to force their Catholic heritage onto Japanese diplomats, suggested that the adoption of a Christian belief system by the Japanese would evoke “behavior more befitting to a nation which wished to have itself counted among civilized nations”.  

State power expanded through modernization, causing patriotism to surge. Characteristics of the Japanese collective identity reemerged, and supplanted cultural elements that borrowed from the West, such as the language of higher learning. Westernization thus gave way to a more generalized “modernization” through a process of “Japanification” whereby Western norms (political, economic, military, and cultural) were assimilated into the Japanese society. Domestic institutions adopted from their Western counterparts became Japanese institutions, a distinction reinforced by the rise of a new generation of technocratic leaders educated in a Western-style-but-still-Japanese educational system. This shift was recognized in first issue of the newspaper Nihon: “We recognize the excellence of Western civilization. We value the Western theories of rights, liberty, and equality; and we respect Western philosophy and morals...These, however, ought not to be adopted simply because they are Western; they ought to be adopted only if they contribute to Japan’s welfare”.  

Although Japanese leaders were primarily interested in emulating the Western norms that bolstered state power, some Western cultural elements persisted and merged with Japanese cultural norms. For example, geisha remained an important element of Japanese society throughout the Meiji period, often entertaining Japanese men donning Western suits and hairstyles. Another common marriage of Japanese and Western cultural norms is witnessed by photographs of Meiji men with bowler

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274 Beasley 1987, 32.

hats, kimonos, and wooden clogs. This hybridization of Western and Japanese norms is consistent with the theoretical underpinnings of this research. Individuals and groups switch between multiple identities based upon context, i.e. the identity and norms best suited to status seeking behavior. Although this research focuses on foreign policy, future research could examine the domestic competition between Western and Japanese cultural norms. It is possible that the widespread but temporary exuberance regarding Western cultural norms was borne out of a political crisis, with individuals and groups distancing themselves from norms of Tokugawa society until modern Japanese cultural norms emerged.

Japanification occurred through two methods. Some argued that the features of modernization embodied an innate Japanese quality. Through appeals to the spiritual characteristics of Japan, it was believed that Meiji reforms, although heavily reliant upon the West, were decidedly Japanese. On the other hand, some thinkers asserted that the norms of modernization where not simply Western or Japanese but indicative of the universality of civilization. Saionji Kinmochi, a member of the Iwakura Mission and twice Prime Minister of Japan, was dismissive of interpretations derived from the particularities of certain nations. Saionji’s criticisms extend not only to the West but to Japan, arguing that “[m]ost traits that present-day educators in Japan babble about as being distinctively Japanese would distress men of learning”. Both sides of this debate reflect the self-other complex highlighted in Chapters 1 and 2. Despite the influx of Western political and cultural norms, Japanese leaders still distinguished themselves (the self) from the Western nations (the others). Furthermore, SIT indicates that the process of othering clarifies potential referent groups. In other words, the selection of a referent group necessitates a self-other divide. Through social mobility, Meiji leaders identified a successful out-group they wished to emulate.

The transition from Westernization to modernization can be substantiated by examining two seminal proclamations of the Meiji government. Promulgated in 1868 at the enthronement of Emperor Meiji, the Charter Oath outlined the main

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276 Jansen 2002, 455.

277 Sukehiro 1989, 477.

278 Ibid., 495.
objectives of the Meiji leaders.\textsuperscript{279} Clauses four and five of the oath are remarkably revealing, and state:

IV. Evil customs of the past shall be broken off and everything based upon the just laws of Nature.
V. Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world so as to strengthen the foundation of imperial rule.\textsuperscript{280}

These two clauses indicate that early Meiji leaders believed that if Japan was to survive it must acknowledge the superiority position of Western powers in the international power hierarchy, and adopt norms (namely those concerning modernization) to match Western prowess.

Some twenty years later, the cultural acquiescence that occurred throughout this process had begun to disappear. In 1890, the Imperial Rescript on Education was issued. The rescript forwarded the Meiji government’s guiding policies on education, but it also embodied a more refined understanding of modernization derived from a Japanese historical perspective. The rescript proscribes morality though an emphasis on family and house by encouraging Japanese peoples to ‘[b]e filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends be true...extend your benevolence to all’. \textsuperscript{281} The rescript then continues by linking this morality directly to the state:

[P]ursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State, and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth.\textsuperscript{281}

The impact of the rescript on Japanese society was outstanding. While the Charter Oath had represented the best intentions of the new government, the rescript embodied a synthesis of both the practical (modernization) and the ideological (Japanese cultural norms). When the Rescript on Education was presented to teachers and students throughout the Japanese educational system, they were instructed by

\textsuperscript{279} Keene 2002, 137.

\textsuperscript{280} De Bary et al., Sources of Japanese Tradition (New York; Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2006), 8.

\textsuperscript{281} Sukehiro 1989, 496.

\textsuperscript{282} Jansen 2002, 411.
state officials to bow before the imperial signature affixed to the rescript “in the manner we used to bow before our ancestral relics as prescribed in Buddhist and Shintō ceremonies”. This merging of traditional Japanese practices, nationalism, and the norms of modernization demonstrates that Japanification was a political tool for promoting a strategy of social mobility. Both material and ideological factors played a significant role. Focusing entirely upon realist material calculations neglects the sensitivity to the Japanese collective identity witnessed by the actions of Meiji leaders. Solely emphasizing identity and norms likewise inhibits analysis by failing to account for state elites seeking to bolster sovereignty. It is therefore necessary to approach this formative period in Japanese history with a framework robust enough to consider both angles.

4.4 Meiji Foreign Policy (1868 - 1895)

The foreign policy of early Meiji Japan was defined by several international conflicts which propelled Japan into the ranks of the imperialist powers. Given the notorious warmongering of the Empire of Japan in the twentieth century, it could be assumed that the modern Japanese state was at its core jingoistic. However, such simplified reasoning does not provide adequate coverage of the external pressures acting upon Japan nor examine the character of late nineteenth century international system. In this section, the offered framework is deployed to conceptualize Japan’s ascension within the imperialist power hierarchy. Two foundational characteristics of a modern state are clearly demarcated national boundaries and expanded national security interests. Japan’s foray into the imperialist world order was defined by these considerations and its noted concerns over sovereignty and power. The permeability of the multipolar power hierarchy and the strategy of social mobility adopted by Japanese leaders must also be considered.

During the late nineteenth century the borders of several Western states, including America, Italy, and Germany were more clearly defined. As the process of territorial delimitation progressed, geographical ambiguities - such as those existing in Alsace and Lorraine and in the Balkans - became political land mines. The ethnic homogeneity and geographically defined character of Japan’s core islands reduced this

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283 Keene 2002, 440.
factor, but ambiguities still existed. Sakhalin island and the smaller islands of the Kuril chain are situated north of Hokkaidō. During the late nineteenth century, these islands were sparsely populated by Japanese and Russian nationals.²⁸⁴

Meiji leaders found the ambiguity regarding these islands unacceptable for a modern state (a belief inherited from adoption of Western political norms), and reasoned it was the government’s responsibility to offer legal and physical protection to all its citizens. At the same time, Japan’s leaders did not wish to damage its international prestige by demanding its nationals return to Hokkaidō, as they feared the move would be interpreted as acquiesce to Russian pressure.²⁸⁵ Ultimately, a compromise was negotiated in 1875 that granted the Russians jurisdiction over Sakhalin and the Japanese jurisdiction over the Kurils.²⁸⁶

The Ryūkyū Kingdom centered on Okinawa was another territorial challenge facing Meiji leaders. Traditionally, the islands held by the Ryūkyū were ostensibly governed as part of Satsuma, but Ryūkyū rulers enjoyed relative autonomy and conducted formal relations with China. Seeking to buttress its political centralization, Meiji leaders placed the kingdom under the jurisdiction of Kagoshima Prefecture. The move was designed to established direct legal authority over the Ryūkyū, but it soon prompted a national crisis. In 1871, over fifty Ryūkyū fisherman were shipwrecked on Taiwan (a Chinese province) and massacred by the indigenous population.²⁸⁷

The incident brought Meiji legitimacy into question. If Japan was to transform into a modern state, it needed to respond on behalf of the slaughtered fishermen,

²⁸⁴ Kennedy 1963, 159.
²⁸⁵ Akira 1989, 741.
²⁸⁶ March, Eastern Destiny : Russia in Asia and the North Pacific (Westport, Conn. [u.a.]: Praeger, 1996), 90-1.

These negotiations are but one example of the Meiji consensus. Meiji leaders turned to Enomoto Takeaki to lead the negotiations. Enomoto had been one of most fervent bakufu supporters. In the closing stages of the Boshin War he abscond to Hokkaidō with other Tokugawa loyalists. It was only a couple years prior to these negotiations that Enomoto was released from prison.
whose protection was guaranteed by the Japanese government.\textsuperscript{288} Furthermore, the legitimacy of Japanese jurisdiction over the Ryūkyū islands would be undermined should Japanese leaders not obtain compensation from China. Negotiations with China proved ineffectual. From the Chinese perspective, Taiwan was a peripheral territory beyond Chinese cultural enlightenment. The Chinese government contended it was not responsible for the incident and offered no concessions. Chinese adherence to its traditional philosophy left the Japanese with few options. For two years the incident tested the resolve of the Meiji leaders. The discourse from both government leaders and the population at large mirrored that of Westerners who just decades before called for swift action in retaliation for attacks on their nationals by xenophobic Japanese (e.g. the Richardson affair of 1862). A consensus that Japan must ‘punish’ the ‘uncivilized’ people of Taiwan materialized, and in 1873 Japan sent a unilateral punitive expedition to Taiwan.\textsuperscript{289}

In less than four months, the Japanese military established complete control over the aboriginal territories of Taiwan. Japan’s show of force sent a clear signal to the international community that its efforts to modernize domestically was to be matched by an imperialist agenda abroad. Following the expedition, Japan re-engaged with China, whose leaders had no means to counter Japanese assertiveness. The Chinese court was forced to validate the expedition and accept the legitimacy of Japan’s tenuous jurisdiction over the Ryūkyū Kingdom. The post-expedition negotiations between Japan and China had a tremendous impact on their respective prestige.\textsuperscript{290} The crisis elevated the Japanese position within the regional hierarchy, affording the new Japanese state a tremendous boost in prestige that came at the expense of waning Chinese power. Any assumption of equality between the two states began to vanish, as Japan had for the first time in its history successfully supplanted Chinese regional authority.

\textsuperscript{288} This episode indicates a significant departure from the norms of isolationism that dominated the Edo period. As discussed in Chapter 3, attempts by the Morrison to repatriate shipwrecked Japanese fishermen was met with hostilities.

\textsuperscript{289} Ibid., 741-3.

\textsuperscript{290} Jansen 2002, 423-4.
Sino-Japanese tensions continue to mount throughout the 1870s. Japanese efforts to tighten its control over the Ryūkyū islands alarmed a number of vocal Chinese officials, prompting the Japanese elite to redefine their strategic interests vis-à-vis China. This interplay between broader security interests and the demarcation of national boundaries was characteristic of modern states. As Akira concludes, the ‘transformation of China [in the] Japanese perception ... from friendly neighbor of equal status to a potential adversary [illustrates] the way in which a modern state stressed power considerations in its external affairs’.  

Meiji leaders were generally unified in believing that modernization would enable Japan to recapture the elements of its sovereignty compromised by Western encroachment. However, the means of achieving this modernization and the structure of modern Japan’s domestic leadership was subject to debate. In no area was this tension more salient than in Japan’s foreign policy toward Korea. Historically, Korea had privileged its relations with China over Japan. Meiji leaders were cognizant of the Korean perspective, and asserted the Korean preference for China undermined Japanese aspirations to elevate its regional standing through social mobility.  

Redefining the parameters of Japanese-Korean relations also provided Meiji leaders with a means to solidify the centralization of its authority. Kido Takayoshi, an esteemed statesmen of both the Tokugawa and Meiji periods, noted that a vigorous stance towards Korea would “instantly change Japan’s outmoded customs, set its objectives abroad, [and] promote industry and technology”. Kido’s stance was consistent with the imperialist philosophy of a modern state, and thus indicative of social mobility. As the Western powers continued to expand their interests in Asia and Africa, Meiji leaders feared the weak peninsular kingdom may soon fall under the sway of another power.

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291 Akira 1989, 744.
292 Paine 2003, 89.
293 Akira 1989, 744.
294 Beasley 1987, 71.
Divergent opinions arose between political groups as to what policies should be adopted towards Korea, with some leaders favoring diplomatic solutions others opting for a militaristic path. These disagreements intensified as Korean leaders continually refused diplomatic appeals to realign the Japanese-Korean relationship. Saigō Takamori, a samurai and military leader from Satsuma, was disturbed by the marginalization of the old warrior class by modernization efforts. Saigō cautioned that excess modernization would undermine traditional values, and he wished to elevate the position of samurai within Meiji society by improving Japan’s military situation. Convinced that control over Korea and China would bulwark against further Western encroachment, Saigō suggested an ambassador be sent to Korea. The outward hostility of the Korean government meant almost certain death for the said ambassador, providing sufficient pretext for war. In a motion fitting a samurai, Saigō wrote: ‘If it is decided to send an envoy officially, I feel sure he will be murdered. I therefore beseech you to send me. I cannot claim to make a splendid envoy ... but if it is a question of dying, that, I assure you, I am prepared to do.’

Upon returning to Japan, members of the Iwakura Mission learned of the growing support for Saigō’s plan. Noting the vulnerable position of Japan in the international system, members of the mission halted the invasion, and refocused the government towards domestic reforms. Ōkubo Toshimichi led those opposing Saigō. He argued that Japan should adhere to a policy of peace and domestic reform while the ‘government’s present undertakings intended to enrich and strengthen the country must await many years for their fulfillment’. Ōkubo shared Kido’s vision for expanding Japanese interests, but favored a tempered approach that did not antagonize the Western powers.

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295 Akira 1989, 745.
297 Notehelfer 2006, 19.
299 Notehelfer 2006, 22.
300 Ibid., 20-1.
The domestic debate devolved into the unsuccessful Satsuma Rebellion of 1877 that was led somewhat begrudgingly by Saigō, who had been content to retire from political life, but was forced into action by his bellicose allies. The uprising marks the largest of a half dozen fruitless samurai uprisings between 1874 - 1877, which challenged the Meiji legitimacy. Conceptually, Saigō was the leader of a dissonant group that embodied the last vestiges of Tokugawa Japan. It should be noted that his enthusiasm for subjugating Korea was in-line with the norms of new imperialism, specifically state expansionism. Furthermore, Meiji leaders would in the coming years adopt an aggressive stance towards Korea that was reminiscent of the position Saigō forwarded. The challenge Saigō posed to the Meiji consensus was therefore not a challenge to modernization, but a reaction to the domestic reorientation of the former samurai class.

Under the auspices of surveying the Korean coastline, Meiji leaders dispatched three gunboats into Korean waters. On 20 September 1875, one of the gunboats reached Ganghwa Island. The island had been the site of conflict between Korean and Western forces, and when the Japanese sent a small detail to explore the island, the Korean shore batteries opened fire. The Japanese responded and the superior firepower of their gunboats quickly silenced the Korean guns. The Ganghwa Island incident provided the pretext for the Japanese to press the Korean government to sign the Korea-Japanese Treaty of Amity of 1876. The treaty formally ended Korea’s status as a tributary state of China, it opened three ports to Japanese trade, and it extended extraterritorial privileges to Japan. Japan’s use of gunboat diplomacy and its issuing of an unequal treaty with Korea is strikingly similar to the tactics utilized by Commodore Perry just a few decades before. This parallel was not lost on the Meiji

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leadership, who believed Japan could reassert its sovereignty by mirroring the practices of the Western powers through social mobility. By acting within the norms of the imperialist power hierarchy, Japanese leaders expanded their influence in Korea and improved Japan’s international prestige. Nevertheless, Japanese action in Korea also intensified its already perilous relationship with China.

Tensions came to a head in 1882. A severe drought led to widespread food shortages and the deteriorating economic situation forced the Korean government to withhold payment from its military. In late July, soldiers stationed in Seoul mutinied and rebels seized control of several rice granaries. The next morning the mob attacked the royal palace, before turning their attention against the Japanese legation. The surviving members of the legation fled to Japan, prompting Meiji leaders to send four warships and a troop regiment to Seoul. The Chinese countered the Japanese by deploying their own troops, but a diplomatic solution was reached before the hostilities escalated.

A series of coups in 1884 further strained Sino-Japanese relations. Pro-Japanese reformers temporarily overthrew the conservative Korean government, but their success was short-lived. With the assistance of the Chinese military, a pro-Chinese faction soon regained control of the Korean government. In an undertaking to avoid all out war, the Japanese and Chinese again brokered a diplomatic solution. At the Convention of Tientsin in 1885, both sides agreed to withdraw their expeditionary forces and military advisors from Korea and to notify one other beforehand of any future deployments in Korea.

The treaty only delayed the inevitable. Asserting Japanese authority over Korea remained at the heart of Meiji foreign policy. Yamagata Aritomo, one of the architects of the modern Japanese military and future Prime Minister, believed expansionism was essential to Japanese security. Yamagata noted in the 1890s that “the heritages and resources of the East are like so many pieces of meat about to be devoured by

305 Akira 1989, 746.
307 Ibid., 56-61.
In response, he advocated an aggressive foreign policy that extended beyond Japan’s line of sovereignty (shukensen) towards its line of advantage (riekisen) that included Korea and Manchuria, believing it the best method for enhancing state power and fortifying Japanese sovereignty.

Domestic unrest in Korea provided Japanese elite with the pretext for war. In 1894, the King of Korea sent a request to China for assistance in subduing the growing Tonghak Rebellion. The Chinese responded by sending troops to Korea, and in accordance with the Treaty of Tientsin informed Japan of its intentions to support Korea, which it described as a Chinese ‘protectorate and dependency’. Japan rejected this justification and seized the opportunity to exercise its long sought plans to intervene. Japanese soldiers were deployed to Seoul, with orders to seize replace the Korean government with a pro-Japanese faction. The new puppet government then authorized the Japanese army to forcibly expel Chinese forces from Korea. The resulting political fallout precipitated the First Sino-Japanese War.

The ensuing military confrontation was by no means a contest between equals. Japan’s military professionalism and advanced technology translated into a definitive victory for the Japanese, who within a matter of months had destroyed Chinese naval power, seized control of several strategic locations including China’s most viable ports, and undermined the authority of the Chinese court. The Treaty of Shimonoseki (17 April 1895) ended the hostilities, and forced China to recognize the independence of Korea, cede the Liaodong Peninsula and Taiwan (including the surrounding islands) to Japan, and pay an enormous war indemnity to Tokyo. The extent of Japan’s

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308 Samuels 2007, 3.
311 Kennedy 1963, 184.
312 Paine 2003, 113.
313 Kennedy 1963, 184-5.
success troubled many in the West who worried that Japan’s growing regional influence may inhibit their own imperialist pursuits. Russia, in particular, was troubled by the consequences of Japanese possession of the Liaodong Peninsula.\(^{315}\)

Since the early 1870s, Russia had been strengthening its influence in China to counter British and increasingly Japanese interests in East Asia.\(^{316}\) Russia’s East Asian strategy hinged upon the construction of the Trans-Siberian railroad and access to an Eastern warm water port.\(^{317}\) Port Arthur on the Southern tip of Liaodong Peninsula was geographically ideal and the target of Russian expansionist desires. When China conceded the peninsula to Japan, Russia intervened with an ad hoc collation supported by France and Germany.\(^{318}\) This Triple Intervention pressured the Japanese government to return Liaodong to China in exchange for an additional indemnity. Russia presented its demands as a peaceful suggestion to maintain the status quo, but private correspondences between Japanese ministers reveals that ‘the real motive of the Russian Government in opposing our territorial claim...owes to the fear that’ Japanese influence ‘would not be limited’ to the Liaotung Peninsula, but ‘extend in time over Korea' and over the ‘fertile district of Northern Manchuria’.\(^{319}\) Although initially reluctant, Japan could not risk entering a war with three great powers and relinquished the province.\(^{320}\)

Following the withdrawal of Japanese troops, Russia occupied the peninsula under the pretense of protecting Chinese sovereignty and extorted a lease of the province from Chinese officials. Other European powers followed the Russian example and exploited Chinese weakness to expanded their regional influence.\(^{321}\) Ruthless political maneuvering was by no means a novelty to Japan’s leaders, who in the

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316 Ibid., 183.
320 Ibid., 293-7, 339-40.
preceding decades had manufactured claims on Korea and exploited China’s weakness to penetrate deeper into the Asian continent.

Although Russia’s actions were not altogether unsurprising to Japanese leaders, it highlighted Japan’s tenuous position within the international system. On the verge of great power status, Meiji leaders acknowledged that continued self strengthening (national power) was necessary if it was to fully exert itself in the international system. Furthermore, the intervention cemented the conflictual nature of great power politics to Japanese elites. As is detailed in Chapter 5, the Triple Intervention also conditioned Japanese leaders to shift their foreign policy strategy away from China and towards Russia. While from a geopolitical perspective such a shift may seem minor, Russian embodied the modern imperial norms that Japan sought to emulate. Resultantly, Japan’s attention was now centered towards imperialist rivalry.

The Triple Intervention also has several theoretical considerations. Following the Meiji Restoration, all of the Western powers had in some part formed a referent group for the Japanese. For example, the ranking of Western nations by members of the Iwakura Mission indicated that Meiji leaders sought to import only the most successful modernization norms, regardless of where those norms had first been institutionalized. Nevertheless, Meiji leaders remained closely tied to the British. Satsuma-British relations were essential during the Boshin War, the two states shared geopolitical similarities, and English was the preferred language of Western learning. Although the British did not intercede during the Triple Intervention, as some Japanese leaders had hoped, both sides shared a common foe in Russia. The Triple Intervention therefore elevated Britain to a position as Japan’s primary referent group. Table 4.4 distills these factors within the framework of this thesis by building those introduced in Table 4.3. The strategy outlined below is continued beyond the timeframe of this chapter, requiring the timeline to remain open-ended. Also note, that following the Satsuma uprising of 1877, the subordinate identity group within the domestic identity hierarchy shifted from “traditionalist” to “nationalist”.

322 Ibid., 189.
Despite Russia’s interference, the First Sino-Japanese War nullified the justification for the unequal treaties levied against Japan, affording Meiji leaders the leverage to reassert it rights as a sovereign state. The shift in power that began with Japan challenging Chinese suzerainty over Korea materialized with a visible reversal of East Asia’s traditional hierarchical order. Among Asian nations, regional power dynamics now Japan, a reality reflected in the quote from *The North China Herald* which opened this chapter.

A terrible lesson has been administered to China ... she has lost her prestige which was nothing but the shadow of a great name; that she lies exposed as a carcass in the neighbourhood of which a cloud of eagles is hovering; that her independence is gone for the moment, and that on pain of permanent extinction as an autonomous Power she must submit to a prolonged tutelage.\(^{324}\)

The prestige gain catapulted Japan to the head of the balance of power between Asian states and sent shockwaves throughout the Western world. Japan could no longer be ignored as a periphery state, and Western powers could no longer assume they were the lone stewards of international affairs.\(^{325}\)

### 4.5 The Burgeoning Regional Power

This chapter detailed Japan’s transition from a state on the cusp of industrialization to a recognized world power. Japan’s adoption of an imperialist foreign policy has been linked to the characteristics of modern states, which for reasons of solidifying its sovereignty, Japan sought to emulate. Japan’s transformation occurred first as a process of cultural borrowing, and later evolved into a more judicial incorporation of

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\(^{324}\) "The Problem of China’s Fall," *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*, 5 April 1895.

\(^{325}\) Paine 2003, 3-7.
Western norms into Japan’s collective identity. Through this process, Meiji leaders set the stage for Japan’s development into a regional power while retaining distinct elements of the Japanese collective identity. This chapter concluded with a discussion of the Meiji government’s foreign policy strategies of social mobility, focusing heavily on the shifting power between China and Japan.

Following its victory during the First Sino-Japanese War, Japan was primed to exert its regional authority, but external pressures constrained Japanese leaders. Russian-led interference hindered Japan’s emergence as East Asia’s dominate power and had longstanding consequences on regional security. The Triple Intervention pushed Japan closer to Britain (establishing Britain as Japan’s referent group) and loss of face resulting from the Triple Intervention fostered a revanchism towards Russia that materialized in the coming decade (explored in Chapter 5).

By applying a consistent frame of analysis, two objectives have been fulfilled. First, the robustness of this thesis’ framework has been demonstrated. The transition in foreign policy trajectory from isolationism to new imperialism (the first of three shifts covered in this research) was analyzed by exploring policy strategies derived from SIT. The presented analysis improves the conclusions that could be drawn from either a realist or constructivist framework. Neoclassical realism’s attentiveness to concepts of statehood are essential but the theory offers limited means for tracing the ascendency of modernization norms. Similarly, constructivism provides key insights into the role of norms in identity formation, but struggles to account for the rapid abandonment of sonnō jōi and the emergence of the Meiji consensus.

Second, this chapter answers the questions driving this research with the first period in modern Japan (1868 - 1895). See summaries below.

1. How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy?

   • It was demonstrated in Chapter 3 that encroachment of the Western powers undermined Japanese sovereignty. This crisis of national security catalyzed the
Meiji Restoration. Following the domestic shift in power, Meiji leaders reoriented the state towards modernization through a strategy of social mobility. This process first occurred through the cultural borrowing of Western norms and then into a more general process of modernization.

2. *How have these factors changed with time?*

- Japanese leaders were initially coerced into trade agreements with Western powers, but soon found that cooperation with the West enhanced Japan’s regional position. During this period, the imperialist power hierarchy established by the Western powers constitutes the primary external constrain acting upon Japanese leaders. The decision to cooperate rather than challenge Western regional supremacy resulted in a strategy of social mobility that enabled dramatic improvements in Japanese power and sovereignty. Notably, this strategy provided Meiji leaders with the necessary leverage to reverse the unequal treaties that undermined Japanese sovereignty.

3. *What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?*

- Meiji leaders maintained a strategy of social mobility that was underwritten by the norms of modernization. This outward looking perspective transcended the divide between premodern and modern Japan. Additionally, the concepts of power and sovereignty that divided competing groups during the *bakumatsu* continued to drive debates regarding the direction of Meiji foreign policy.

Chapter 5 builds upon these conclusions and explores Japanese efforts to distance itself from the Western-centric status quo following the First World War. The strategy of social mobility fostered by early Meiji leaders is essential to understanding this frequently cited but often misinterpreted shift. Furthermore, ideological consistencies, such as the privileging of power and sovereignty, are explored as mechanisms for establishing a link between the political developments of the early Meiji period with the rise of the Empire of Japan.
Chapter 5

Great Power Politics and Japan, 1895 - 1931

Tsar Nicholas II waking from a nightmare of the battered and wounded Russian forces returning from battle.

-Kiyochika Kobayashi, 1904 - 1905
'The Japanese are beating us with machine-guns, but never mind: we’ll beat them with icons!’

  - Russian General Dragomirov, 1905

‘If political upheavals should reach Manchuria and Mongolia, disturbing public order there, and threaten Japan’s special positions and interests in these regions, the Japanese government will protect them no matter where the threat comes from.’

  - Tanaka Giichi, 1927

‘If ... one takes a broader view of the future well-being of both China and Japan, one will be satisfied that there is no other course open to the two nations than to pursue the path of mutual accord and cooperation in all their relations, political and economic’

  - Shidehara Kijūrō, 1930

‘Although the Chinese seem to believe Manchuria belongs to China, as far as I can tell it was Russian territory. After the Boxer Rebellion, the Japanese government had to obtain Russia’s permission to appoint a consul in Yinkou. And it was Japan that expelled Russia from Manchuria. There is no doubt that, if left unattended, Manchuria would have been lost from Chinese territory.’

  - Shidehara Kijūrō, 1931
The Japanese victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) catapulted the island state to the forefront of East Asian power politics. Although China’s power had been waning for decades, Japan’s victory left no doubt that the regional order now centered on Japan. The successes of Japan’s modernization and the ongoing broadening of its security interests, stirred concern among the Western powers that Japanese expansionism would soon become a threat to their perceived monopoly on imperialism.\footnote{Akira 1989, 768.}

This chapter examines Japanese foreign policy from the aftermath of the First Sino-Japanese War through the 1920s. The geopolitical rivalry between Japan and Russia, made apparent by the Triple Intervention, culminated with the Japanese victory during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), which further elevated Japan’s prestige and signaled to the international community that Japan had arrived as a great power (Section 5.1). This newfound position required Japanese leaders to reevaluate Japan’s position within the international power hierarchy, and to seek foreign policy objectives that reinforced the new status quo that featured Japan as one of the premier power players (Section 5.2). The outbreak of the First World War provided Japanese leaders additional opportunities to recommit to the existing power hierarchy, in particular its alliance with Britain, and further its imperialist agenda in China (Section 5.3).

However, changing international norms following World War I required Japanese leaders to temper their foreign policy agenda. The Versailles-Washington System stressed economic openness and a commitment to international peace, two elements that contrasted sharply from the norms of new imperialism that Japanese leaders had so aptly deployed. The efforts to address these evolving external pressures by Japanese policy makers rounds out this chapter (Section 5.4). This shift in international norms constitutes a prime external pressure acting upon Japan during the early twentieth century, and corresponds with the first pair of research questions - How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time? Tracing the interplay of Japan’s established
new imperialist foreign policy and the Versailles-Washington System is a key object of analysis in this chapter.

This period is thus marked by two major conflicts that had a considerable impact on the direction of Japanese foreign policy, the Russo-Japanese War and the First World War. The events and the era covered in this chapter highlight Japan’s continued commitment to its strategy of social mobility, whereby a group seeks to increase its position by mirroring the practices of a referent group. This commitment is particularly significant as Japan’s growing military strength during the early twentieth century is often oversimplified by literature seeking to connect this period with the rampant expansionism of the 1930s. Although the Japanese military did push for continued expansion in the period following World War I, it will be demonstrated the Japanese political leaders also explored options for incorporating the norms of internationalism into the Japanese polity. Surveying the consistent strategy of social mobility (outlined in Chapters 4 and 5) is essential for answering the third research question - What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?

5.1 The Russo-Japanese War (1904 - 1905)

Japan’s emergence as a potential adversary to the West was no more salient than in Russia, whose Eastern frontier had already been the source of territorial disputes with Japan. These tensions intensified as Japan expanded first into the Korean peninsula and then into the Chinese mainland. The Sino-Japanese War concluded with the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which forced China to formally terminate its influence in Korea, pay a vast war indemnity to Japan, and cede the Liaodong Peninsula and Taiwan to the Japanese. Japan’s acquisition of the Liaodong Peninsula and the subsequent Triple Intervention proved the most controversial.

In the wake of Russia’s check against Japanese imperial expansion in the Chinese mainland, Tokyo realigned its foreign policy strategies. In the immediacy, Japanese policy returned to the cautious conservatism that marked its pre-1894 agenda. Japan proceeded by focusing on rearmament and exerting its imperial muscle into areas where it had already established a foothold, mainly Korea and Taiwan, two territorial possessions where Japan hoped to proceed free of Western interference.\(^{328}\) Despite these efforts, the Russo-Japanese imperial rivalry only intensified.

The reorientation of foreign policy objectives corresponded with the further establishment of expansionism norms (albeit with refined strategies that avoid confrontation with other great powers) within Japan’s foreign policy making apparatus. Yamagata began his second term as Prime Minister in November 1898. During his tenure, he granted the military control over the formation of the cabinet by ruling that only an active military officer could serve as War Minister or Navy Minister. Additional laws were passed to further restrict political party members from holding key posts in the bureaucracy, effectively making the military independent and granting Yamagata the ability to dissolve the cabinet. Yamagata also actively opposed Itō Hirobumi, leader of the civilian party, and exercised tremendous influence through his protégés Katsura Tarō and Tanaka Giichi.\(^{329}\)

Despite the outward contestation over foreign policy between Yamagata and Itō, they often coordinated efforts (especially in the early days of the restoration) to maintain domestic stability and improve Japan’s national strength. Writing to Itō in 1879 regarding the democratic movement in Japan, Yamagata stated: “Every day we wait the evil poison will spread more and more over the provinces, penetrate the mind of the young, and inevitably produce unfathomable evils.”\(^{330}\) Itō listened to Yamagata’s advice and together they reinforced the political oligarchy to counter what Itō referred to as the “onslaught of of extremely democratic ideas”.\(^{331}\)

\(^{328}\) Beasley 1987, 71.

\(^{329}\) Samuels 2005, 50-62.

\(^{330}\) Ibid., 52.

\(^{331}\) Ibid., 51.
Imperial strategy concerning the direction of Japanese expansionism was divided between two fronts. Those favoring northward expansion reasoned that Korea should serve as a base for advancing Japanese interests into Manchuria, a contentious region the Russians considered fundamental for their Eastern sphere of influence. To the south, imperial strategy followed a similar line of reasoning. Much like Korea, Taiwan was understood as a potential staging point for expansion into the Southern Chinese mainland. The debate over the direction of Japanese expansion continued until the Second World War, and indicates a broader acceptance of Yamagata’s strategic thinking by Japanese policy elites.

The First Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) provided the necessary political traction of Japanese leaders to reverse the unequal treaties that were levied against Japan during the late nineteenth century. This reassertion of Japanese sovereignty corresponded with a shift in strategic thinking away from Yamagata’s line of sovereignty (shukensen) towards his line of advantage (riekisen) that included Korea and Manchuria as assets for enhancing state power and prestige. It must be noted that this shift does not correlate with a change in policy strategy, rather with a refocusing of policy objectives commensurate with Japan’s elevated position within the power hierarchy. Social mobility through imperialism was in practice reinforced. Japan’s success as an imperialist power enabled its leaders to explore avenues to enhance its prestige rather than focusing on reclaiming sovereignty - as had been the case prior to the First Sino-Japanese War.

Following the Triple Intervention, Japanese leaders tested expansionism in both directions. Japan’s long-held desire to transform Korea into a formal protectorate of the empire had been met with resistance from within Korea and from Russia. In 1895, Japan’s leading resident minister in Korea became involved in a mismanaged coup d’état that witnessed the Korean royal palace seized, the anti-Japanese Queen Min brutally murdered, and the King of Korea’s retreat from Seoul to take refuge among

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Eye witness accounts communicated through the Russian legation reveal the horror: ‘more than thirty Japanese, in civilian dress, carrying swords at their sides [and] former Korean soldiers, twenty or thirty, also in civilian dress carrying swords...entered the Palace of the Queen...drew out the women, and dragged them along the ground to the garden, and killed them with their swords’.334

When Japan’s involvement in the affair became public, Tokyo replaced its Korean ministers with seasoned diplomats charged with repairing Korean-Japanese relations and countering the growing Russian influence.335 Furthermore, some high ranking Japanese officials called for ‘all the persons involved in the incident except Government officials’ to leave ‘Korea quickly and to punish them after their return to Japan’.336 Despite the concerns of Japanese leaders, their Russian counterparts remained primarily concerned with the emerging rivalry with Britain, allowing significant diplomatic progress between Russia and Japan. The two empires negotiated railroad contracts, economic and banking rights, and the boundaries for their respective spheres of influence. Russian leaders accommodated several of Japan’s primary concerns, but it proved nearly impossible for Japan to completely counter Russian influence.337

The acquisition of Taiwan in 1895 provided Japanese strategists with a gateway for Japan’s ‘southward advance theory’ (nanshin-ron) into the Chinese mainland. The southern advance contrasted the ‘northward advance theory’ (hokushin-ron), and focused on Japanese efforts in Manchuria.338 Of particular concern to Japan were Chinese coastal possessions, namely the province of Fukien. With the support of


334 Kajima and Kajima Heiwa 1976, 393.


337 Beasley 1987, 73-5.

338 Iwamoto, Australian National University, Division Of, and Asian, Nanshin : Japanese Settlers in Papua and New Guinea 1890-1949 (Canberra: Journal of Pacific History, Australian National University, 1999), 64.
several Japanese ministers stationed in Taiwan, Japan sought special concessions from China with regard to territorial access and railroad contracts in Fukien. On both accounts the Japanese were initially unsuccessful.\(^{339}\) Table 5.1 represents these opposing strategies that are further examined in the following section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Operating Base</th>
<th>Expansion Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>southward advance theory (nanshin-ron)</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Fukien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>northward advance theory (hokushin-ron)</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Manchuria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Southern vs Northern Expansionism Strategies

The norms of new imperialism framed the political discourse. Given Japan’s strategy of social mobility within an international power hierarchy defined by imperialist norms, it was not a question if Japan should expand, but a question of where.

The Boxer Rebellion (1898 - 1901) renewed Japanese optimism. At the request of the British, Yamagata sent a massive contingent of over 20,000 troops (double that of the British) to support the Eight-Nation Alliance that intervened to pacify the uprising. The affair provided an opportunity for Japan to pressure the already strained Chinese government. In the summer of 1901, the Japanese presented the Chinese with proposals for railroad concessions in Fukien and the neighboring provinces. Despite modeling the proposals after Germany’s successful securement of railroad rights in Shantung, the Japanese proposals were rejected.\(^{340}\) Japanese leaders responded by developing plans to forcibly seize Amoy, the primary port of Fukien. These plans, however, never came to fruition.\(^{341}\) The expedition could have brought the Japanese into conflict with either the British or the Russians.\(^{342}\) The British had significant economic concerns in China, and British endorsement of the American Open Door Policy assured a degree of protestation.\(^{343}\) In the north, the Boxer crisis intensified

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339 Beasley 1987, 75-6.
340 Ibid., 76.
342 Beasley 1987, 76.
343 Duus 1998, 171.
Russo-Japanese relations, and Japanese leaders did not wish to further complicate the already contentious Korea-Manchuria issue.

The prospect of balancing British and Russian interference in Japan's imperial agenda was debated by policy elites in 1901. From the perspective of the Japanese leaders, placating both powers would have handicapped any future expansion. Yamagata believed Russia was “intent on the permanent occupation” of Manchuria, and pushed the government to temporarily halt its southern advance strategies and focus its efforts on defending the north.344 The salience of this debate reveals several factors constraining Japanese foreign policy. With Japanese sovereignty reaffirmed following the First Sino-Japanese War, policy objectives shifted both in relation to Yamagata (from securing sovereignty to expansionism) but also in terms of modern state strategic preferences. As discussed in Chapter 4, alliances were a hallmark of modern states and Japan’s elevated international standing in the early twentieth century provided the means to negotiate an alliance beneficial to its expansionist desires.

As a result of these two factors, Japan’s elites explored policies designed to enhance state power and prestige, and the division between groups favoring sovereignty-based strategies and power-based strategies, as exhibited in the previous two chapters, shifted to differing strategies on expansionism (i.e. northern advance vs. southern advance theory). The ongoing focus on power calculations by state elites indicates strong ideological consistencies with the early Meiji period, where Japanese leaders addressed deficiencies in state sovereignty resulting from unequal treaties. Furthermore, the success of social mobility in improving Japan’s prestige continually reinforced the norms of new imperialism to Japanese leaders. In terms of SIT, social mobility supported the status seeking behavior of Japanese leaders.

While Japan achieved substantial success through social mobility, its efforts to emerge as a great power remained dependent upon the approval of the other modern states.345 The Triple Intervention demonstrated that Japan had yet to be fully accepted

344 Beasley 1987, 76-7.
345 Ibid., 76.
into the dominant group of elite great powers. Given its chosen strategy of social mobility, Japanese leaders proceeded cautiously. In other words, Japanese leaders sought to successfully navigate the constraints of multipolar great power politics while maintaining efforts to enhance its position within the existing power hierarchy. This move should not be mistaken for the deference to Western authority Japan exhibited following the Meiji Restoration. Japan’s deliberateness resulted from its efforts to avoid any future resistance reminiscent of the Triple Intervention, and indicates an increasing level appreciation for international norms by Japanese policy makers.

Japanese leaders settled on a hedging strategy. Policy elites concluded that the British agenda in China was driven mainly by economic concerns, providing significantly more flexibility than the territorially driven Russo-Japanese rivalry. Russia’s behavior during the Boxer uprising was also cause for concern among the Japanese. In response to Boxer attacks on Russian targets in Manchuria, Russia deployed some 100,000 troops into the region. Despite Russian assurances to the contrary, the troops remained stationed in Manchuria even after the Chinese government had regained control of the region. 346

Regardless of the growing tensions, some Japanese leaders sought a diplomatic solution. Itō Hirobumi proclaimed that “Manchuria is in no respect Japanese territory,” and suggested the two countries establish borders for their respective spheres of influence.347 Itō proposed to scale back Japanese pursuits in Manchuria in exchange for Russian recognition of Japanese control over Northern Korea.348 Negotiations continued into 1904, with neither side willing to concede what they perceived as contradictory ambitions. Notwithstanding the impasse, it should be noted that Japanese negotiators displayed at least some level of cooperation, whereas their Russian counterparts were unresponsive. By February 1904, the Russians had

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346 Paine 2003, 320.
347 Samuels 2005, 60.
348 Beasley 1987, 77.

As early as 1901, Japanese leaders had expressed their concern over Russia permanently occupying Manchuria. Similarly, the British had grown concerned over other powers, Russian included, infringing upon their economic considerations in China.\footnote{Nish, \textit{The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1894-1907} (Athlone P., 1966), 101-16.} Prime Minister Katsura Tarō argued that Russian possession of Manchuria was a precursor of their encroachment into Korea. According to Katsura, Russia “will inevitably extend into Korea and will not end until there is on room left for us”\footnote{Beasley 1987, 77.} The Japanese solution came in the form of an alliance with the British that provided Japan with much needed support to defend its northern interests.\footnote{Nish 1966, 378-85.} The Anglo-Japanese alliance was signed in 1902, and in addition to guaranteeing the economic and political considerations of Japan and Britain in China, it assured that Britain would come to Japan’s aid should it find itself at war with more than one adversary. This effectively handicapped Russia’s ability to call upon its European allies should conflict with Japan arise.\footnote{Beasley 1987, 78.} The alliance also provided the British with much needed naval relief in protecting its Far East possessions.\footnote{Paine 2003, 320.}

Conceptually, the Anglo-Japanese alliance represents the institutionalization of social mobility adopted by Japanese leaders. As previously discussed, alliances were notable features of modern states. The political leverage afforded to Japanese leaders following the First Sino-Japanese War facilitated the alliance, which solidified Japan’s position as a major player within the international power hierarchy. Furthermore, the choice of Britain as a military partner corresponds with the decision to establish a foreign policy strategy that utilized Britain as the referent group for the Japanese elite.
Figure 5.2 reinforces this dynamic by presenting the variables relevant to the analyzing Japanese foreign policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868-1894</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Modernist • Traditionalist</td>
<td>Western Powers</td>
<td>Social Mobility. Westernization generally accepted for short period before giving way to more nuanced modernization modeled after Europe and America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894-1918</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Imperialist • Nationalist</td>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>Social Mobility. With modernization in full swing, Japanese leaders shift focus from domestic to international interests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Japanese Foreign Policy Strategy (1868 - 1918)

Unlike previous iterations of this table, two periods in Japan's foreign policy history are displayed. This presentation clarifies two conceptual factors: (1) the narrowing of referent group selection mentioned above; and (2) the evolution of norms within the domestic identity hierarchy. This latter factor requires further explication. The early Meiji period was marked by fervent modernization that transformed the domestic institutions of Japan (Chapter 4). Once these domestic institutions were in place, Meiji leaders were charged with crafting a foreign policy strategy. In the process, the modernization norms present in the domestic sphere were transformed into imperialist norms in the international sphere.

The conceptual linkages between Chapters 3 - 5 have been designed to trace the interplay between domestic modernization and international imperialism, where it is demonstrated that Western norms were first imported into Japan, transformed by the Japanese people, and then translated into foreign policy. As such, theoretical flexibility that accounts for both external and internal variables is necessary. A neorealist analysis might have expected Japanese leaders to immediately adopt an assertive foreign policy to bolster Japan against further encroachment from external pressures, but this approach neglects the domestic transformation of those pressures into a
foreign policy strategy. Likewise, strict ideational interpretations cannot convincingly account for the security imperatives that drove Japanese leaders to mimic the very behavior (imperialist norms) that had undermined Japanese sovereignty.

Brewing hostilities with Russia erupted on 8 February 1904 with a Japanese surprise attack by on the Russian stronghold at Port Arthur. Over the next year and a half, Japanese forces decimated the Russian Navy. By the end of the war, Russia had lost much of its Pacific and Baltic fleets, reducing Russian naval strength to that of a second tier power.\textsuperscript{355} Japanese strategy on land hinged upon massed infantry assaults against Russian fortifications. The tactic proved highly successful in overrunning Russian defensive positions, but at the cost of heavy Japanese casualties.\textsuperscript{356}

Following the decisive Japanese naval victory at the Battle of Tsushima in May 1905, the Japanese army occupied the Sakhalin Islands, thereby forcing the Russians to sue for peace. Russia’s defeat shocked the international system. The Russo-Japanese War marked the first modern victory of an Asian state over a European power.\textsuperscript{357} Furthermore, Japan’s rapid modernization and development into a military powerhouse removed any suspicion that the preeminence of Western Powers resulting from cultural or intellectual superiority.\textsuperscript{358} Through its defeat of China in the previous decade, Japan had established itself as the premier Asian power. A decade later, Japan was a globally recognized great power.

Although both the Japanese political elite and general public had clamored for war, the Emperor Meiji himself greeting the outbreak of hostilities with ambivalence. On the eve of the attack on Port Arthur, he wrote the following poem:

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{357} Ibid., 96.
\end{itemize}
The emperor remained a poignant voice throughout the war, publishing in conjunction with the Imperial Poetry Bureau over seven and a half thousand poems on subjects ranging from duty, sacrifice, political legitimacy and even more abstract concepts such as the nature of war itself. Most surprising is that the emperor had remained quiet a decade earlier during the First Sino-Japanese War. While it is impossible to substantiate the emperor’s true motivation, this inconsistency does parallel the differing roles of sovereignty and power in relation to the two wars. The First Sino-Japanese War reasserted Japanese sovereignty vis-à-vis the other imperialist states (albeit through an aggressive war over Korea) by demonstrating that Japan had successfully modernized. On the other hand, the Russo-Japanese War served to further Japanese power and prestige after Japan had already established itself as a modern state.

The war formally concluded in September 1905 with the signing of The Treaty of Portsmouth. Under its terms, Russia agreed to relinquish its claim in the Liaotung Peninsula, acknowledge Japan’s freedom of action within Korea, and cede the Southern half of Sakhalin to Japan. See Map 5.1 for details. Russian withdrawal from Liaotung facilitated the transfer of principle rights in Manchuria from Russia to Japan, thus reversing the controversial leasing of the province by Russia in 1898 following the Triple Intervention. The victory resulted in a monumental boost to Japan’s international prestige, and a corresponding deterioration of Russia’s position. The

359 Notehelfer 2006, 29.


heavy causalities and crippling financial cost sustained by Japan influenced some Japanese to expect terms comparable to the Treaty of Shimonoseki, and viewed the Portsmouth proceedings as unnecessarily restrained.\footnote{Kennedy 1963, 204.}

Most notable among these concerns was the absence of a war indemnity and underwhelming territorial gains. Japanese leaders justified the terms by arguing that Russians would have continued fighting had Japanese negotiators pressed for more severe concessions.\footnote{Adapted from: \textit{China and Japan} (Source: League of Nations (ed.): Appeal by the Chinese Government. Report of the Commission of Enquiry. Appendix, Map No. 1, Geneva: League of Nations, 1932)} This rationalization is reasonable when considering the cost to human life and the financial burden incurred by the Japanese. Additionally, the Western powers, America in particular, had pressured the Japanese to compromise during the negotiation process. Yet these factors had little impact on the Japanese people. For the five weeks between signing of the treaty and its ratification by the

\footnote{Ibid., 204-5.}
emperor, uprisings erupted across Japan injuring over a thousand people and claiming eleven lives.\footnote{Ibid., 205.}

It is too simplistic to conceptualize this violence as a nascent outpouring of the Japanese jingoism that would surface over the next half century. In little over a decade, Japan had defeated China, the traditional hegemon of Asia, and Russia, a recognized Western great power. Although these victories propelled Japan into the upper echelon of prestige and power within the international system, Japanese gains were suboptimal. Ancillary factors, such as external pressures from the multipolar international system, were the main contributor to these results. In the case of the Sino-Japanese War, this pressure materialized with the Triple Intervention. To a lesser extent, war exhaustion coupled with Western efforts to stabilize their economic interests had likewise impacted Japanese gains.

These factors clarified to the Japanese leadership the necessity of successfully interpreting signals from the international system. This evolution of thought is evident from the differences between the Shimonoseki and Portsmouth Treaties. The Treaty of Shimonoseki demanded a crippling war indemnity from China and the cession of the Laiotung Peninsula and Taiwan. These bold demands were met with resistance by the multipolar international community. Ten years later, the Japanese elite pursued similar ends through more palatable means. Rather than seeking outright territorial possession of the Laiotung Peninsula, Japan negotiated the transference of the Russian lease of Laiotung Peninsula and their principle rights in Manchuria. These measures effectively amounted to greater gains than those negotiated at Shimonoseki, and where in line with the expressed economic interests (norms themselves) of the other great powers in China. With control of both Port Arthur and Dairen, Japan possessed the finest naval port and trading centers in all of Northeast Asia.\footnote{Peattie 1988, 226.} In addition, the Japanese leaders solidified their position in Korea by expanding their sphere of influence into Manchuria. The degree of this victory was obfuscated by a public expecting treasure in the form of territory and indemnities as compensation for their sacrifices. The violent response by the Japanese public must
therefore be understood as the result of a disconnect between the Japanese elite balancing power politics and the expansionist dreams of a growingly nationalist public.

The security driven focus of the Treaty of Portsmouth reinforces the core assumptions of state behavior derived from this thesis’ theoretical framework. Since the Meiji Period, Japanese foreign policy had displayed a fundamental concern in reaffirming Japanese sovereignty and bolstering state power. As detailed in Chapters 3 and 4, this emphasis derived from the early Meiji period where Japanese sovereignty was compromised by Western encroachment. The foreign policy agendas designed to address these security concerns remained dependent upon the perception of Japanese political elite, accounting for the evolution of negotiation agendas between Shimonoseki and Portsmouth and the disconnect between the expectations of the Japanese public and their political leaders. This increased sensitivity to the norms of new imperialism, of which great power balancing was one element, combined with the ongoing successes of social mobility, reinforcing the existing foreign policy strategy to Japanese leaders.

It is also necessary to consider these events with regard to social mobility. The Japanese attack on Russia did not represent a shift in strategy away from social mobility towards that of social competition. The new imperialism of the nineteenth and twentieth century was marked by fierce geopolitical rivalries that frequently culminated in bloodshed. The Russo-Japanese War must be interpreted within these parameters. Japan did not seek to directly challenge the norms of imperialism with its attack on Port Arthur. Conversely, Japan’s actions embodied the very principles imperialism, as they provided the vehicle through which Japan achieved great power status.

5.2 Directions in Foreign Policy (1905 - 1911)

The ramifications of the Russo-Japanese War extended far beyond Northeast Asia. With its defeat of a Western power, Japan had not only solidified its great power status but destroyed the air of invincibility surrounding Western powers. Prior to the
Japanese victory, Asian nationalism had existed as a politically negligible, and often xenophobic, response to Western encroachment. Pockets of politically active nationalist groups did exist throughout Western-held Asian territories, ranging from the Philippines and Dutch East Indies in the East onto the mainland in French Indo-China and across the continent into India, but their activities were kept in check by their imperial possessors. However, the defeat of a Western power by an Asian power reinvigorated the movement.\textsuperscript{367}

Japan had itself been the victim of Western encroachment. At the beginning of the early twentieth century, Japan was the only state to have successfully reversed the trend. Through its incorporation of modernization norms and its skillful diplomatic and domestic leadership, Japan provided Asian nationalists with a model to emulate. Revolutionary nationalists throughout Asia looked to Japan for support, including Indo-Chinese anti-colonialist Phan Boi Chau who lived in Japan from 1905-8.\textsuperscript{368} To a greater extent, Chinese revolutionary Sun Yat-sen’s political career was heavily dependent upon his relationship with Japan, where he received safe haven during his exile and political support during the 1911 and 1913 Revolutions.\textsuperscript{369}

While Japan had successfully resisted the West, it had done so by emulating not rejecting Western imperialism through social mobility. Japan was initially motivated by the desire to redress its compromised sovereignty, but as Japan grew stronger the perceived security concerns of its political elite expanded. The shift in perception is evident in the wide acceptance of Yamagata’s concentric lines of sovereignty and interest that were continually reinforced by his protégés and political allies. This evolution corresponds with Japan’s stated purpose to join the ranks of the great powers. It was not until the aftermath of the First World War that the inherent contradiction of Japanese imperialism became apparent to Asian nationalists.\textsuperscript{370} In the interim, Japanese leaders were successful at utilizing their wealth and status to

\textsuperscript{367} Kennedy 1963, 206-7.

\textsuperscript{368} Duus 1988, 7.


\textsuperscript{370} Duus 1988, 8.
influence nationalists supportive of Japan and thus lay the foundation for the Japanese Empire’s later exploitation of Pan-Asian ideology.

The Russo-Japanese war also uncovered ambiguities in Japan’s imperialist agenda. During the early Meiji years, Japanese leadership had deliberated at length on the Korea question. Ostensibly, their concern laid with the security threat Korea posed to Japan, stated most famously by Prussian advisor Major Klemens Meckel who referred to Korea as “a dagger thrust at the heart of Japan”.371 Once firmly entrenched in Korea, Japan was thrust into a geopolitical rivalry with Russia over their competing spheres of influence in Northern Korea and Manchuria. At the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese war, Japan’s sphere of influence was safely established, facilitating the formal annexation of Korea in 1910, but new vulnerabilities emerged.

Policy leaders were charged with redefining Japan’s security concerns. With the empire’s northern interests secure, the question of where to focus Japan’s imperial drive again surfaced. The Japanese elite revisited army-first vs navy-first strategies, revealing an implicit assumption that only one military branch should primarily be entrusted with the burden of empire, a consideration that may have been inherited from their study of European power politics. While the first two aspects of the postbellum debate presuppose continued expansionism, Japanese leaders also discussed whether Japan should maintain its expansionist drive. Broad overlap between these groups existed, with arguments favoring northern strategies generally focusing on expansionism in Manchuria through the army, while proponents of a southern strategy often favored a naval agenda that maintained the status quo.372

Much of the clamor for continued expansion came from the Japanese military, whose institutional strength within Japan’s political apparatus depended upon an imperial agenda, and which had grown considerably under Yamagata’s efforts to “expand [Japanese] national interests and sovereign rights”.373 Divisions between groups persisted, with the army generally favoring more aggressive continental

371 Peattie 1988, 15.


373 Ibid., 274.
expansion and the navy warning of the geopolitical consequences of an island state over-investing itself on the continent. While these views did favor continued expansionism, their proponents, such as military strategists Colonel Tanaka Giichi and naval Captain Satō Tetsutarō, represented an older generation of Japanese leaders who cautioned against blind aggression. Nevertheless Giichi, who later served as Prime Minister in the 1920s, believed that Japan “should break free from its insular position, become a continental state, and confidently extend its national power.” More aggressive views did exist, such as those of Colonel Matsuishi Yasuji, who favored simultaneous advances to the north and the south (nanboku heishin-ron). The division between these groups expands upon the differing strategies outlined in Table 5.1, and provides further evidence that the norms of new imperialism remained entrenched within the Japanese polity. It was how these norms were translated into policy that remained contentious, and must be considered when examining the ideological consistencies between state elites as outlined by the research questions. The competing viewpoints are represented in Table 5.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Operating Base</th>
<th>Expansion Focus</th>
<th>Leading Figure</th>
<th>Supported By</th>
<th>Range of Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-expansionist</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Katayama Sen</td>
<td>Economists</td>
<td>Status Quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southward advance (nanshin-ron)</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Fukien</td>
<td>Satō Tetsutarō</td>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>Status Quo - Expansionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northward advance (hokushin-ron)</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Manchuria</td>
<td>Tanaka Giichi</td>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Expansionist-Antagonistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance to south and north (nanboku heishin-ron)</td>
<td>Taiwan &amp; Korea</td>
<td>China &amp; South Asia</td>
<td>Matsuishi Yasuji</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Antagonistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Early Twentieth Century Views on Expansionism

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374 Ibid., 274-5.

375 Ibid., 275.

376 Iwamoto, Nanshin: Japanese Settlers in Papua and New Guinea 1890-1949 (Canberra: Journal of Pacific History, Australian National University, 1999), 64.
Although both army-first and navy-first strategies did warrant consideration, it must be noted that much of the debate precipitated from the bureaucratic struggle for power within Japan. For the time, the Japanese government advocated a cautious approach that clearly exemplified Japan’s strategy of social mobility. In July 1908, the Katsura cabinet concluded that “Japan should solidify the alliance with England, strive to maintain the entente with Russia, improve old friendships with Germany, Austria, and Italy while preserving cooperation with the US.”377 Japan’s desire to proceed within the accepted parameters of the international system reveals its efforts to maintain the status quo and assert itself within the international system via a strategy of social mobility. The ideological constraints outlined by this thesis’ framework differ from what might be expected from a neorealist or offensive realist analysis. In the years preceding WWI, there were clear opportunities for Japan to expand its position vis-à-vis the other great powers. This might be considered a missed opportunity if considering only power calculations, but within the framework of SIT, social mobility continued to offer non-confrontational avenues for status seeking behavior.

Over time, this discretion would diminish with the growing political influence of the Japanese armed forces. Following Itō Hirobumi’s death in 1909, Yamagata became the most influential member of the genrō. Genrō or “principle elders” were elder Japanese statesmen who constituted an extraconstitutional oligarchy that dominated the Meiji government. Although Yamagata entered semi-retirement following the Russo-Japanese War, he remained president of the Privy Council from 1909 until 1922. In 1912, Yamagata set the dangerous precedent that the army could dismiss the cabinet, contributing to the already expanding politicization of the military.378 This latter element contributed significantly to the emergence of a young generation of nationalistic Japanese leaders eager to displace the caution of their predecessors.379

377 Hata 1988, 275.
379 Hata 1988, 275.
Diplomatically, Japanese elites focused on solidifying its relationship with the other great powers. The prestige gained from its victory in the Russo-Japanese War provided the context for renegotiating the Anglo-Japanese alliance on terms more favorable to the Japanese.\textsuperscript{380} During this period, the Japanese also established the Russo-Japanese Entente, the Franco-Japanese Entente, and the Root-Takahira Agreement with the US, which buttressed each state’s economic stake in China. Japan’s preference for diplomatic cooperation resulted in part from necessity. The costs of the Russo-Japanese war were tremendous. Establishing ententes provided Japanese leaders with an opportunity to rebuild its strength.\textsuperscript{381} Moreover, these agreements displayed Japan’s methodical commitment to institutionalizing its position within the international power hierarchy.

In 1910, the Japanese and Russians reached a secret agreement that partitioned Manchuria into two separate but equal spheres of influence. This agreement provided the pretext for eventual annexation, and even included contingencies for Russia and Japan to come to each other’s aid should a third party intervene in their plans.\textsuperscript{382} The agreement is rather significant given Japan’s contentious relationship with Russia. Japanese preference for diplomatic solutions suggests that policy elites believed state power and prestige were strengthened through the existing power hierarchy. That is to say, state leaders maintained their strategy of social mobility. It was not until the aftermath of the First World War, when the norms of the international community shifted away from new imperialism, that social mobility was challenged. Nevertheless, it should be noted that following these negotiations with Russia, Yamagata explored revisionist foreign policy options. Yamagata argued that the Anglo-Japanese alliance had outlived its usefulness, and in 1907 he presented his “Basic Plan for National Defense” which listed Russia as a potential adversary.\textsuperscript{383}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{380} Nish 1966, 345-52, 258-64; Nish 1972, 60-4.
\textsuperscript{381} Hata 1988, 277-9.
\textsuperscript{382} Beasley 1987, 98-100. The third party mentioned here could very well be the US, for more details see: Kennedy 1963, 209-15.
\textsuperscript{383} Samuels 2007, 16-8.
\end{flushleft}
5.3 *The First World War (1914 - 1918)*

When hostilities erupted following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on 28 June 1914, Japan was not obligated to join the British war effort. Under the terms of the 1911 revisions to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japanese military commitment was only required in the event that Germany attacked British possessions in the Far East. Germany had wisely not pursued this strategy, but clashes between the British Navy and German armed merchant vessels in Chinese coastal waters prompted the British to seek Japanese assistance.\(^{384}\) The official Japanese response stated that 'hunting out and destroying the armed German merchant cruisers...is no doubt an act of war against Germany. Once a belligerent Power, Japan cannot restrict her action only to the destruction of hostile armed merchant cruisers’ and inquired as to whether the British were agreeable to such a declaration of war.\(^{385}\) The British were initially apprehensive of Japan’s willingness to attack Germany, but eventually accepted the Japanese offer.\(^{386}\)

Japan’s declaration of war came at a time when the Japanese Army was largely pro-German and Japanese strategists believed Germany would be victorious. It is telling then that the Japanese still pursued the warpath. In part, the decision was made to revenge Germany’s role in the Triple Intervention and to expand Japanese claims on the Chinese mainland.\(^{387}\) With the other great powers preoccupied with the European war, the Japanese were afforded an ideal opportunity to expand their continental ambitions.\(^{388}\) Nonetheless, Japanese leaders expressed a genuine interest in confirming Japan’s commitment to the alliance. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was the cornerstone of Japanese foreign policy, described by the Cabinet council as the ‘marrow of imperial diplomacy’, reaffirming that Japanese leaders perceived the British as the primary reference group for their strategy of social mobility.\(^{389}\)

\(^{384}\) Kajima and Kajima Heiwa 1976, 41.

\(^{385}\) Ibid., 43.

\(^{386}\) Ibid., 49-53.

\(^{387}\) Kennedy 1963, 224-6.

\(^{388}\) Hata 1988, 279-80.

\(^{389}\) Ibid., 278.
In August 1914, Japan issued an ultimatum to Germany demanding their withdrawal from Tsingtao and the disarmament of German warships patrolling off the Chinese coast. The Japanese waited eight days for a reply that never came before declaring war. Japanese operations were decisive. The poorly defended German possessions in the Pacific fell almost immediately. After laying siege to Tsingtao for over a month, the final assault was delivered on 6 November. It is worth noting that during the siege of Tsingtao, the British placed a small force of army and navy personnel directly under the control of the Japanese, marking the first time in history that Western soldiers fought under Japanese commanders. Although a minor affair in world history, this rare occurrence reveals just how far Japan had advanced in the eyes of the leading imperial powers.390

The ultimatum issued by Japan included provisions to return German possessions in China proper to the Chinese government. However, following the approximately 1,500 causalities sustained by the Japanese in securing these objectives, the Japanese government believed these territories their rightful spoils.391 Following the expulsion of German forces from Shandong, the Chinese requested that Japan withdraw its troops from the region. The Japanese response was to clandestinely issue the infamous Twenty-one Demands, which if accepted would have transformed China into a protectorate of the Japanese Empire.392

The content of the Twenty-one Demands was soon disclosed to the Allied powers. Several of the provisions undermined British and American economic concerns, including the loosely accepted Open Door Policy, and the secretive manner of Japan’s maneuvering damaged its international standing.393 In the eyes of the West,

390 Kennedy 1963, 224-5.
391 Ibid., 225-6.

Although this thesis has noted a distinction between militarists and diplomats during this era, there is some considerable blurring regarding foreign policy expectations. Yamagata opposed the Twenty-one Demands believing them to be dishonorable. It was ultimately liberal leaning diplomats who pushed forward with the plan.

Japan exploited the war for its own gain. Its hapless attempts to control China shocked even Japan’s closest Western allies, some of whom (Britain and France) had been willing to concede Japan’s claim on the former German possessions. For their part, many within Japan also criticized the move for undermining Japan’s relationship with the West and doing untold damage to their economic future in China.\footnote{Kennedy 1963, 227-9.}

Japan attempted to recover from the diplomatic disaster by renegotiating its demands through the Peking Conferences. Nevertheless, the rift created by the Twenty-one Demands deepened as the war progressed. When America and China formally entered the war in 1917, the Japanese leaders found themselves at a diplomatic disadvantage. As an Allied power, China was entitled to demand concessions to uphold its territorial sovereignty. A claim that was backed by the US, who pressured Japan to lessen their demands at the Peking conferences.\footnote{Hata 1988, 280.}

The Allied response to the October Revolution further complicated Japan’s relationship with the Western powers. The Bolshevik peace with Germany in 1917 presented a monumental challenge to Britain and France. Anxiety over the collapse of the Eastern Front and the advantage it would provide Germany added to concern over the possession of Allied weapon stockpiles in Russia and the 50,000 strong Czech Legion now trapped behind enemy lines. The remaining Entente Powers resolved to intervene into the Russian Civil War, and called upon their allies to join the effort.\footnote{White, The Siberian Intervention (Greenwood Press, 1970), 1-20.} Japanese leaders, particularly those in the military, concluded that the call to arms was an ideal opportunity to maximize its continental gains.\footnote{Jansen 2002, 593-4.} While the British, French, and Americans each deployed contingents of 7,000, the Japanese mobilized some 70,000 men for the Siberian Intervention. Additionally, the Japanese expedition

\footnotesize{394 Kennedy 1963, 227-9. 
395 Hata 1988, 280. 
397 Jansen 2002, 593-4.}
lingered in Siberia after the intervention had formally concluded. Under the guise of bulwarking China against the revolutionary tide, the Japanese negotiated a joint-defense treaty with China. By November 1918, the Japanese had established a massive military operational zone that stretched from Lake Baikal in the north, through Sinkiang Province in the west, and extending in the south to the island territories of Micronesia.

5.4 *The Versailles-Washington System*

As with any multifaceted historical trend, it is difficult to determine the exact moment of shifts within the international system. Nevertheless, less than four years after the First World War, the norms of imperialism began to give way to new global trends. Through the Paris Peace Conference (1919) and Washington Conference (1921-22) America and Britain instituted a new international order that replaced the old balance of power system with the ideals embodied by international liberalism. The new order was designed to freeze the postwar status quo between the victorious Western Allies; the dissatisfied secondary powers of Germany and Italy; and outliers such as Japan and the Soviet Union.

The emerging system represented a shift away from outright imperialism towards economic openness, a principle that a half century later would reemerge as a dominant international norm. The shift had a considerable impact on Japan. During the era of new imperialism, Japan not only accepted the geopolitical struggle for power and prestige, but earned a respected place near the apex of the power hierarchy through adherence to social mobility. The significant ideological shift in international

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Many Japanese political elite, including Tanaka Giichi, agreed the engagement went on far too long. This dynamic raises questions regarding the relationship between Japanese politicians and military officers and how they reacting to prestige and nationalism, specially in the context of the general public. This question would provide the basis for useful future research.

399 Hata 1988, 281.

400 Pyle 2007, 139-43.

401 Hata 1988, 282.
norms following WWI required Japanese leaders to either abandon its imperialist foreign policy or to abandon social mobility.

During the negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference, the Japanese delegation had two major objectives. The first was to secure de jure authority over its newly acquired territories. The second was to push for racial equality for peoples of Asian descent. Japan succeeded in inheriting the German rights in Shandong, but her claim was short-lived. America opposed any measures that further compromised the sovereignty of China. It was only after the revelation that Britain and France had already agreed to Japan’s demands that America acquiesced to Japan’s territorial claims. American resistance stemmed from the fear that Japan was a growing threat, and contributed to the American withdrawal from the League of Nations and its refusal to sign the peace treaty. In China, anti-Japanese boycotts and riots erupted in major cities. This surge of social unrest proved vital to Chinese communists, who in the coming decades exploited Chinese nationalism to press their political agenda.402

Japan’s second objective was outright rejected. The Japanese delegation proposed amending the charter of the League of Nations with a racial equality clause. The proposal was designed to reverse the discrimination experience by Japanese nationals abroad and challenge any racially motivated prejudice against the Japanese state.403 Since the enactment of the unequal treaties against Japan in the mid-nineteenth century, Japanese leaders were extremely sensitive to how Japan was perceived internationally. Through its emulation of Western imperialism, Japan had reversed the treaties, proven itself to be the premier Asian power, and demolished any illusion of inherent Western superiority through its defeat of Russia. The Racial Equality Proposal must therefore be understood as an effort by Japan to institutionalize what it believed was the successful execution of its strategy of social mobility.404 In light of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and Japanese efforts in WWI, the proposal provides a

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404 It should be noted that had the act been ratified, the universalist language of the proposal would have also required Japan to treat its own minority subjects in Korea and Taiwan with equality - a consideration the Japanese showed little interest in instituting.
telling insight that the Japanese elite believed they had finally reached parity with Western powers. The act was eventually overturned by President Wilson, despite a majority vote from the League of Nations Commission, a move that would breed resentment among the Japanese and explode into a nationalistic fervor in the coming decades.405

American resistance strained relations between the two powers. In the years following the Paris Peace Conference, America and Japan commissioned large-scale naval buildups leading to a short but intense arms race. American-Japanese relations were further complicated by President Wilson’s proclamation of the principles of self-determination were interpreted by many under the yoke of Japanese imperialism as support for their independence. By 1921, rising tensions pressured both sides to enter negotiations. At the Washington Naval Conference, America and Japan set limits on naval expenditures and the fortification of strongholds in the Pacific. The Japanese agreed to field only three capital ships for every five produced in America and Britain, which relegated the Japanese Navy to a position of inferiority vis-à-vis the British and American fleets.406 Japan’s acceptance of this cap discredits ahistorical interpretations of Japanese foreign policy that present a linear progression from Japanese industrialization to its bellicose policies during the 1930s and 1940s.

It has been established that the norms of new imperialism were firmly entrenched among the Japanese political elite. From a constructivist perspective, it may be expected that these norms, which formed a significant part of Japan’s collective identity and had been transmitted through successive generations of politicians, would continue to dominate policy decisions. However, when considering the Japanese strategy of social mobility, it is clear that Japan’s ongoing struggle for great power status developed within the boundaries of the established power hierarchy. As suggested by SIT, Japanese leaders were less committed to specific norms than they were to status seeking behavior. Although Japanese leaders ultimately maintained imperialist norms (the reasons for which are detailed in Chapter 6) this ideological flexibility harkens back to the ready acceptance of

405 Ibid., 150-63.

modernization norms during the *bakumatsu* (Chapter 3) and emergence of mercantilist norms during the Cold War (Chapter 6 and 7).

Additionally, the Japanese agreed to withdraw its troops from Shandong, Siberia, and Northern Manchuria and realign its relationship with China under terms more equitable than those dictated by the Twenty-one Demands/Peking Conferences. In exchange, America supported the Pacific status-quo and refrained from further militarizing its Pacific strongholds.\(^{407}\) The marquee agreement of the conference was the Nine Power Pact, which institutionalized America’s Open Door Policy in China by supplanting all existing treaties with the principles of economic openness.\(^{408}\)

Given Japan’s established imperialist foreign policy, this deferment to Western interests can prove troubling to traditional international relations interpretations of Japanese foreign policy. Nevertheless, it has been established that the Japanese strategy was one of social mobility. As such, Japan was less beholden to the norms of imperialism than might be expected. Prime Minister Hara Takashi expressed a desire to pursue Japanese national interests within the context of the emerging “global trends” of internationalism by focusing his efforts on the League of Nations.\(^{409}\) Government leaders concluded that they should actively participate in the Paris Peace Conference as a means of demonstrating Japan’s commitment to peace.\(^{410}\) Official communications between the Japanese delegation and Tokyo expressed a “wholehearted agreement in principle to [the] draft resolution”.\(^{411}\) This sentiment suggests that Japan’s preference for status seeking behavior remained bound by to social mobility.

Practical considerations likewise influenced the Japanese. The principles embodied by the Versailles-Washington System reinforced the status quo. The new

\(^{407}\) Ibid.

\(^{408}\) Hata 1988, 282-3.

\(^{409}\) Ibid., 283.

\(^{410}\) Kajima and Kajima Heiwa 1976, 447-54.

\(^{411}\) Ibid., 525-6.
system upheld Japan’s concessions in Korea and Northern China, two areas Japan believed to be core security concerns. The reduction in hostilities and improved cooperation with America and Britain also held the potential for future defensive agreements with both powers. This second component again confirms the Japanese preference for fortifying its position within the recognized power hierarchy. Finally, Japanese compliance with the Versailles-Washington System was essentially non-binding. The League of Nations lacked the ability to enforce any sanctions that may result from a future Japanese decision to change its foreign policy strategy, thus providing the Japanese an opportunity to bide its time.412

The direction of Japanese foreign policy in the postbellum years must be considered within the context of social mobility. Japan’s wartime advances did not meet with Japanese expectations regarding its international prestige. Even its intentions to reassure its status by reversing the racial exclusion experienced by its citizens in Western nations through the Racial Equality Proposal were rebuffed.413 Japanese leaders were not deterred by the changing international environment. The nascent Versailles-Washington System encouraged a new world order founded upon global capitalism and liberal political institutions. Still seeking to enhance its status through social mobility, Japan again adapted to international mores. Borrowing heavily from the American capitalist model, Japan explored a new foreign policy designed to fortify its national strength by substituting military strength with economic growth.414

The new internationalist principles were soon thrust to the forefront of the Japanese policy debate. During the 1920s, warlords and militarized political groups carved China into violently contentious regions, which threatened the security of Japanese holdings in Northern China. The most prominent policy strategist committed to adhering to the principles of the Versailles-Washington System was Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō. Shidehara’s diplomatic stance espoused three internationalist minded foreign policy principles: a desire for international


413 Pyle 2007, 155-59.

414 Ibid., 166.
collaboration centering on diplomacy and the League of Nations, a preference for economic integration over imperialism, and a non-interventionist policy in China. The liberal posture of “Shidehara diplomacy” was a hallmark of Japanese foreign policy during the 1920s.\(^{415}\)

By 1925, Shidehara had significantly improved Sino-Japanese relations, which was in no small part a result of his support of China’s demands for tariff autonomy, and his overt optimism regarding Manchuria where he believed the “Japanese could cohabit with the Manchurians and Koreans in mutual friendship and cooperation”.\(^{416}\) Continued unrest in China undermined Japan’s adoption of internationalist principles. Following the Nanjing Incident in March 1927, which witnessed attacks by Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang forces on consulates and foreign residences, Shidehara declined to join the Americans and British in exacting retribution. Shidehara’s soft stance on China directly contributed to the collapse of the Wakatsuki administration in the following month.\(^{417}\)

The new government replaced Shidehara with Tanaka Giichi. Tanaka adopted a more aggressive stance towards China, underwritten ostensibly by efforts at “protecting the Japanese residents in China”.\(^{418}\) In May 1927, Tanaka dispatched an army brigade to Shantung to support Northern warlords against Kuomintang advances. A conference of experts summoned by Tanaka concluded that: “If political upheavals should reach Manchuria and Mongolia ... and threaten Japan's special positions and interests ... the Japanese government will protect them no matter where the threat comes from”.\(^{419}\) Despite Tanaka’s efforts to back Chinese warlords

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\(^{417}\) Hata 1988, 286-7.


\(^{419}\) Ibid., 6.
Deteriorating Sino-Japanese relations corresponded with a distancing of Japan and the West. America and Britain quickly normalized relations with the Kuomintang, and even conceded tariff autonomy to the new government.\textsuperscript{421} Tanaka failed to secure Japanese claims in China, and in 1929 Shidehara returned as Foreign Minister.\textsuperscript{422} Shidehara shared Tanaka’s belief that Japanese interests needed to be protected, but pushed for diplomatic answers. Shidehara’s immediate aim was to normalize relations with Chiang Kai-shek and reinstitute Japan’s noninterventionist stance.\textsuperscript{423} As Shidehara later noted: ‘If ... one takes a broader view of the future well-being of both China and Japan, one will be satisfied that there is no other course open to the two nations than to pursue the path of mutual accord and cooperation in all their relations, political and economic.’\textsuperscript{424}

Although Shidehara was once again criticized by the military for his perceived weakness, his preference for internationalist principles reveals the tension between competing domestic groups on the “Manchuria Question”. This concern persisted through the 1930s and redirected the trajectory of Japanese foreign policy towards confrontation with the West. Table 5.4 provides a reference for these factors.

\textsuperscript{420} Pyle 2007, 168-9.

\textsuperscript{421} Hata 1988, 290.

\textsuperscript{422} It should be noted that despite Tanaka’s hawkish tactics, his aim was secure Japanese interests in China, not to block Chinese reunification nor undermine Japan’s cooperative relationship with the West.


\textsuperscript{424} Tiedemann 2006, 209.
Table 5.4: Approaches to the Manchuria Question

The Versailles-Washington System ultimately succumbed to a myriad of destabilizing elements. The new international order faced domestic upheavals in China and Russia, the Anglo-American alliance faltered as America emerged as the predominate Pacific naval power, and the global economy collapsed, sending the developed nations into an economic depression. Perhaps most significantly, America and Britain reneged their self-assigned responsibilities within the Versailles-Washington System. Neither state was willing to commit the necessary resources to assure prolonged stability in East Asia; when confronted with the ongoing pressures of the international environment, they reacted with insular and protectionist policies that undermined the idealistic principles upon which the system was founded. This turn left Japanese leaders with no clear signal as to the direction of international norms. Table 5.5 expands the analysis of the foreign policy variables examined throughout this thesis. Note that two groups are bolded within the domestic identity hierarchy, indicating a period of ambiguity with no dominate group identity. This ambiguity did not bring Japan in direct confrontation with the West nor did it overtly challenge the still evolving internationalist norms of the international community, resulting in a tentative continuance of social mobility.

Table 5.5: Japanese Foreign Policy Strategy (1918 - 1931)

425 Notably, the Warlord Era in China and the effects of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

5.5 Japan in Flux

The role of two crucial aspects of Japanese foreign policy evolution are explicated in this chapter. First, Japan’s continued ascension to great power status was explored with particular reference to the Russo-Japanese imperial rivalry. This discussion drew from the concerns over sovereignty and power (developed in Chapter 3) and the norms of new imperialism (covered in Chapter 4) that exemplified Japan’s strategy of social mobility. Second, Japan’s evolving knowledge of international norms and power relations were analyzed through the neoclassical realist and ideational factors highlighted by this thesis’ framework. SIT was used to frame this analysis and assure consistency when considering the variables underwriting the policy approach of Japanese leaders.

Of particular note is Japan’s rise to the pinnacle of the international power hierarchy through a strategy of social mobility. Although Japanese leaders maintained relative consistency in their policy strategy, world events forced Japan to refine certain corresponding variables. The Russo-Japanese War reinforced Britain's position as Japan’s referent group. The aftermath of World War I, which ushered in a new era of internationalism, served as an impetus for considerable ambiguity regarding the future trajectory of foreign policy.

The following conclusions can be drawn by revisiting the research questions:

1. How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy?

   - Japanese leaders remained sensitive to external pressures while pursuing status seeking behavior through social mobility. This consistency is evidenced by Japanese participation in WWI, an exploration of the norms emerging from the Versailles-Washington System, and policy ambiguity regarding instability in China.
2. *How have these factors changed with time?*

- The most notable shift occurred following WWI, where the Versailles-Washington System replaced the norms of new imperialism with the ideals embodied by international liberalism. The new order was designed to freeze the postwar status quo, and fundamentally challenged the imperialist norms underwriting Japan's existing foreign policy strategy.

3. *What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?*

- As international trends shifted, a split materialized between political groups over the Manchuria Question. Diplomats were sympathetic to the emerging liberal trends of the Versailles-Washington System while the military upheld the norms of new imperialism inherited from the now fading Meiji Consensus.

The emphasis this chapter places on competition between political groups regarding the Manchuria Question is expanded in the following chapter, where the collapse of Japan's longstanding strategy of social mobility is detailed. It is demonstrated that the ambiguity resulting from the struggle between these groups provided fringe members of the military an opportunity to force the Japanese government towards social competition. A strategic move that thrust Japan into direct confrontation with its former allies.
Chapter 6

New Directions in Foreign Policy, 1931 - 1972

Emperor Hirohito and General MacArthur at the U.S. Embassy
Tokyo, 27 September, 1945
When military preparations are complete, we need not go to great lengths to find a motive or occasion. All we need to do is pick out time and then proclaim to the world our absorption of Manchuria and Mongolia as we proclaimed the annexation of Korea.

- Lieutenant Colonel Ishiwa, 1931

[The Tripartite Pact] is the best thing that could have happened to us. The trend towards victory in the war of resistance has been decided.

- Chiang Kai-shek, 1940

When I recall ... the way in which our so-called ‘progressive’ intellectuals speak today of Japan as little better than an American colony ... it makes me wonder if these critics belong to the same race of people who only fifty years ago had acted with such decision and judgment.

- Yoshida Shigeru, 1957

For years I have believed that war should be abolished as an outmoded means of resolving disputes between nations ... my abhorrence reached its height with the perfection of the atom bomb.

- General Douglas MacArthur, 1964
Japan's ascension to great power status resulted from the successful adoption of imperialist norms by Japanese leaders, but the end of the First World War signaled a shift in international trends. In an effort to reinforce the postwar status quo, America and Britain reoriented the international power hierarchy away from the norms of imperialism towards those of internationalism. This shift fundamentally challenged Japan's strategy of social mobility, which was contingent upon accepting the dominant norms of the international system. Maintaining social mobility now required Japanese leaders to forgo the imperialist agenda that served Japan since the Meiji Restoration and embrace the nascent Versailles-Washington System.

This chapter expands upon the policy options facing Japanese leaders between imperialist and internationalist directions in foreign policy, with a specific focus on the decision by Japanese leaders to maintain an imperialist foreign policy, thereby aborting social mobility. Particular attention is given to the conspiracy surrounding the Mukden Incident in 1931, which provided the Imperial Japanese Army with a pretext for invading Manchuria without government authorization. The incident handicapped the Japanese government, forcing state officials to abandon their attempts to adapt to the changing global trends, and pushed Japan to challenge the existing power hierarchy through social competition (Section 6.1). To facilitate a more comprehensive examination of the Japanese foreign policy, the invasion of Manchuria (1931), the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), and the Pacific War 427 (1941-1945) are organized into a single conceptual unit.428 Over this period, Japan experienced near constant warfare. Furthermore, Japanese leaders maintained a consistent strategy of social competition that firmly rejected the Western-centric power hierarchy (Section 6.2).

The occupation of Japan by Allied forces in 1945 is then surveyed (Section 6.3). Although the occupation crippled Japan's foreign policy capacity, state leaders utilized

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427 The Pacific Theater of the Second World War will be referred to as the “Pacific War” in line with Japanese historical scholarship.

the pacifist elements of the postwar constitution throughout the 1950s and 1960s to institute a strategy of social creativity. Social creativity occurs when a state defines original parameters for status seeking behavior that do not challenge the existing power hierarchy. By leaning upon America to assure Japanese national security, state elites directed their efforts towards rebuilding the Japanese economy (Section 6.4). This process had a profound impact on the political groups operating within Japan, and is closely examined to answer the third research question - What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?

Detailing the two strategy transitions, from social mobility to social competition and from social competition to social creativity, through a consistent theoretical approach avoids the pitfall of overemphasizing prewar militarism or postwar pacifism without the appropriate historical nuance. It clarifies the factors that must be examined when engaging with the first set of research questions over this time period - How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time? Furthermore, this chapter presents the emergence of postwar Japan as a socially creative state driven by economic considerations within the same theoretical framework as the Japanese government’s rebuffing of the international community and its adoption of socially competitive foreign policy during the 1930s and early 1940s. This consistency enhances the veracity of the conclusions offered throughout this thesis by demonstrating the robustness of the framework through which this analysis is derived.

6.1 The Mukden Incident of 1931

The organization of the Manchurian Invasion (1931), the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), and the Pacific War (1941-1945) as a unified period provides a clear narrative of the historical events leading to the collapse of Japan’s empire. In addition, it corresponds with the established theoretical framing of Japan’s foreign policy evolution. During this period, Japan rejected the existing power hierarchy and
challenged the authority of the Western powers through a strategy of social competition. Direct military confrontation with the West may not have occurred until the 1940s, but throughout this period, Japan rebuffed the status quo and confronted Western dominance in peripheral regions. Following the First World War, Japan entered a decade of political ambiguity. Its foreign policy oscillated between the imperialist norms that had dominated the international system over the previous fifty years and the internationalist norms that emerged from the Versailles-Washington System. Japan’s struggle to maintain its sensitivity to global trends is evident from the political conflict between Tanaka (who favored imperialism) and Shidehara (who favored internationalism) detailed in Chapter 5.

Shidehara’s diplomatic engagement with China faced vigorous opposition from conservative factions within Japan’s political apparatus. This opposition was no more evident than within the Japanese military. The army reacted adversely when the Kuomintang government in China called for “the rapid abolition of all unequal treaties and the recovery of all rights and interests” in 1930.429 The proclamation directly challenged Japanese extraterritorial claims in China, which had been conceptualized by both politicians and the army as Japan’s economic “lifeline” and lynchpin of Japan’s “national survival”.430 Even Shidehara noted: “Some of the rights we enjoy in Manchuria are inextricably linked to our nation’s existence, and no matter how generous a policy we take towards China, these rights can never be given up”.431

Further distancing between the government and the military occurred in the wake of Shidehara’s acquiescence to Western demands at the Washington Naval Conference (1921) and London Naval Conference (1930).432 A naval arms race between America and Japan following the Paris Peace Conference (1919) placed considerable constraints on the economics of both states, leading to a compromise whereby

429 Hata 1988, 294.
430 Beasley 1987, 190.
431 Samuels 2007, 25.
432 Hata 1988, 294.
Japanese construction of capital ships was capped.\textsuperscript{433} Efforts by the three governments to expand the same restraints to additional types of warships at the London Conference was vehemently opposed by Japanese navy. When the Hamaguchi government ultimately decided to ignore the navy and agreed to expand the ratio, members of the military establishment (both navy and army) united in protestation. Citing the Meiji Constitution, which dictated that the appropriate Chief of Staff was directly responsible to the emperor in matters concerning national defense, military leaders argued that the cabinet had no authority to overrule the navy’s decision. This constitutional restriction did not prevent the government from proceeding, but it did prompt the military to explore more comprehensive methods for bypassing Japan’s civilian authority when faced with perceived national security crises in the future.\textsuperscript{434}

The economic impact of the Versailles-Washington System further complicated the Sino-Japanese relations. Japanese exports to China fell sharply between 1929 and 1931, largely as a result of the American and British endorsed Open Door Policy and the consequences of the Great Depression. During the same period, Japanese trade with Taiwan and Korea continued to rise, providing credibility to economically minded politicians on the political right who believed that the depression could be stymied in areas where Japan exerted political authority. As the political tide shifted, Shidehara lost the support of both the business and rural communities who favored a more aggressive approach to foreign policy. Conservative politicians argued that the world was in a state of “economic warfare” and that Japan must create its own economic bloc to protect its interests.\textsuperscript{435} In reference to deteriorating Sino-Japanese relations, Shigemitsu Mamoru, consul-general in Shanghai, argued that Japan must “cope with East Asian matters on its own responsibility and at its own risk”.\textsuperscript{436}

\textsuperscript{433} Kennedy 1963, 234-5.

\textsuperscript{434} Beasley 1987, 190.

\textsuperscript{435} Ibid., 189.

\textsuperscript{436} Ibid.
The confluence of political and military opposition coalesced into a “reform movement” (kakushin undō) between the army and ultraconservative groups. The movement sought to enhance the political strength of the army by replacing political parties with the military, thereby expanding the approach of Yamagata Arimoto (discussed in Chapter 5) who instituted policies to increase the political strength of the military. In March 1931, young army officers belonging to the Cherry Blossom Society (Sakurakai) conspired to overthrow the government. The conspirators had significant support within the military establishment and right-wing nationalist groups that believed Shidehara had undermined Japanese security. The coup was eventually abandoned, but the failed putsch reaffirmed to influential officers that military action in Manchuria must be given the highest priority. A similar situation emerged in October of the same year when naval officers of the Cherry Blossom Society and political activists organized a second unsuccessful coup. This surge of political unrest was also evident among fringe nationalist groups, such as the Patriotic Society (Aikokisha).

The growing rift between diplomatically minded politicians who favored social mobility and militaristic groups favoring social competition crippled the effectiveness of Japan’s foreign policy apparatus. This dynamic must be considered in relation to aforementioned research questions. The changing international norms embodied by the Versailles-Washington System intensified the domestic conflict over the Manchuria Question. Yet by the 1930s, the Versailles-Washington System had proved ineffectual in fortifying the postwar status quo. The ambiguity in a policy strategy within Japan thus corresponded with ambiguity within the international system. It is among this flux within the international system that the Japanese military, which remained driven by imperialist norms, pushed Japan towards social competition.


438 Seki 1984, 163-4.


440 Ibid., 96; Seki 1984, 162.
Following the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), the Japanese army began fortifying Kwantung, the southern part of the Liaodong Peninsula. The Kwantung Army was the foundation of these fortification efforts, and over the following two decades it became the largest and one of the most respected commands among imperial forces. Kwantung officers were also highly influential within the Imperial Way Faction, a group which advocated a Shōwa Restoration, whereby the Taishō democracy would be violently overthrown and political power would be concentrated within the military and vested with the emperor.

The turmoil of the early 1930s provided Kwantung Army officers with the necessary traction to distance themselves from the civilian authority in Tokyo. Lieutenant Colonel Ishiwara Kanji and Colonel Itagaki Sishirō, two politically active officers of the Kwantung Army, devised plans to force the ambiguity regarding Manchuria towards a military solution. By merging his knowledge of military science with elements of Nichiren Buddhism, Ishiwara developed a theory of ultimate global war. Ishiwara asserted that “Manchuria and Mongolia [were the] first line of defense”, a belief that he disseminated through pamphlets to newspapers, periodicals, and tens of thousands government offices. Itagaki managed their efforts through both organizing support within the Kwantung Army and through communications with sympathetic political groups, such as the Cherry Blossom Society.

The plotting of the Kwantung Army came to fruition in September of 1931, when members of the Second Battalion detonated an explosive device on the South Manchuria Railway in the outskirts of Mukden. The staged incident was designed to

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441 Sims 2001, 192-5.

442 Visions of a Shōwa Restoration were also shared by the Cherry Blossom Society.


444 Hata 1988, 294.

445 Seki 1984, 171.

446 Ibid.

447 Ibid.
derail the Dairen Express, and thus provided the pretext for the Japanese occupation of Manchuria.\footnote{Hata 1988, 294-5.} The explosion proved too weak to sufficiently damage the track, and the targeted train passed safely onto its destination. Nevertheless, the Kwantung Army acted upon the Mukden Incident, citing their “Basic Plan of Operations” which stated that once contact was made with opposing forces “the army will press towards Mukden with all its strength, deliver a united attack against the center of the Mukden army...and resolve the matter with the utmost expedition”.\footnote{Seki 1984, 228-9.} Over the next several months, Japan executed a full invasion of Manchuria and eventually establish the puppet-state of Manchukuo.\footnote{Beasley 1987, 194-7.}

The Mukden Incident had a tremendous impact on the trajectory of Japanese foreign policy. The conspiring of the Kwantung Army proceeded without the consent of the Japanese government. When Japanese intelligence officers reported to the government that the Kwantung Army was devising plans to force a conflict between Japan and China, the government responded by holding a number of high-level meetings designed to “deprive the Kwantung Army of an excuse for going into action”.\footnote{Seki 1984, 224.} When Kwantung officers learned of the government’s plans to thwart the incident, they hastened the timeline of the conspiracy, which may have undermined the effectiveness of their efforts.\footnote{Hata 1988, 295.}

Once the bomb had been detonated and the Kwantung Army moved into Mukden, the government was left with little choice but to renounce the diplomatic stance embodied by Shidehara and proceed with the occupation of Manchuria. This element cannot be understated, as the actions of the Kwantung Army represent a clear challenge to the political authority of the Japanese government.\footnote{Ibid.} The affair also undermined Japan’s diplomatic relationship with America and Britain when the truth of the Mukden Incident was revealed to the international community. Ultimately, the
fallout from the affair led to Japan’s withdrawal from the League of Nations in March 1933.\textsuperscript{454}

A consensus soon formed around these converging strains of imperialism and nationalism that utilized Pan-Asian idealism to further Japan’s military objectives.\textsuperscript{455} The convergence of these two groups formed the basis of the militarism frequently discussed during this period.\textsuperscript{456} Prince Konoye Fumimaro, a prominent member of the imperial family, publicly challenged the preeminence of Britain and America in Asia. At Versailles he observed how Japan’s efforts for racial equality where cast aside, leaving him to reject current status quo, believing it to favor Western interests. He encouraged Asian politicians to boycott free trade as an oppressive institution of the Western powers. Regarding the League of Nations, he proclaimed: “Japan should join the League, but it should insist on the exclusion of economic imperialism and discriminatory treatment between white and yellow races. It is not only militarism which harms social justice.”\textsuperscript{457}

In 1933, Konoye created the Shōwa Research Association, a political think tank he utilized to develop a theoretical basis of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Through appeals to a universal Asian heritage, it encouraged the cultural and economic unity of the East Asian race and promoted a “bloc of Asian nations led by the Japanese and free of Western powers”.\textsuperscript{458} When Konoye became Prime Minister in

\textsuperscript{454} Beasley 1987, 193.

\textsuperscript{455} One of the acknowledged limitations of this thesis is that it cannot fully explore the effects of Pan-Asianism on Japanese foreign policy during the early twentieth century. Useful resources for further research include:


\textsuperscript{456} It should also be noted that among the Japanese public, politicians were often perceived as corrupt and lacking integrity, paving the way for the military takeover of the government. For more details see: Tiedemann 2006, 186-9.

\textsuperscript{457} Samuels 2007, 60-2.

1937, he deployed the work of the Shōwa Research Association to forward Pan-Asianist propaganda that argued Japanese military aggressiveness served to liberate Asia from Western imperialism.\textsuperscript{459}

It is within this context that the benefits of conceptualizing the Mukden Incident, the Second Sino-Japanese War, and the Pacific War (the latter two will be covered in the following section) as a single prolonged conflict becomes evident. Prior to the occupation of Manchuria, the Japanese government, specifically under the guidance of Shidehara, generally favored a diplomatic approach to Sino-Japanese relations. Hawkish groups within Japan continually challenged this position. Shidehara's diplomatic stance was consistent with a strategy of social mobility, whereby he sought to conform Japanese foreign policy to the internationalist norms of the Versailles-Washington System. However, the occupation of Manchuria isolated Japan from the international community, thus inhibiting social mobility.

The Mukden Incident must therefore be understood as the event which ended the Japanese government’s strategy of social mobility, a position it had held since the early days of the Meiji Restoration. In other words, the incident brought to a head the confrontation between imperialist/militarist and internationalist norms that had divided the Japanese polity since the conclusion of World War I. Notably, it was the shifting norms of the international community, to which Japanese leaders failed to adapt, that undermined Japan’s position with the Western powers. The occupation of Manchuria was in-line with the norms of new imperialism, which had been widely accepted by the great powers in the previous decades, but now represented an ideological challenge to the existing power hierarchy. It is out of this controversy that Japan’s strategy of social competition emerged.

While this ideological confrontation has been discussed within historical accounts of Japanese foreign policy, evaluating the theoretical consequences of the incident provides a much needed frame of reference for analyses of Japanese foreign

\textsuperscript{459} Samuels 2007, 60-2.
policy within the study of international relations. The rejection of internationalist norms by the Japanese government was not a planned effort to discard the strategy of social mobility. Conversely, the Japanese government was coerced by fringe groups within the military to pursue war. Given the political strength and popularity of the military within prewar Japanese society, the government had few options other than supporting their actions. Having abandoned social mobility in favor of reaffirming the imperialist norms now spurned by the international community, Japan's path towards confrontation with the other great powers was set in motion.

The difference in motivations between these groups must be considered. Diplomatically minded politicians like Shidehara were sensitive to shifting global trends, and sought to avoid confrontation with West. While the militarists pursued avenues for enhancing state power through continued promotion of imperialist norms. Prolonged competition between these groups within the domestic identity hierarchy resulted inhibited a cohesive foreign policy direction. This thesis has presented several political crossroads in the evolution of modern Japan's foreign policy, but few historical moments are as significant as this fissure between the Japanese government and military. The two groups possessed fundamentally different perceptions of the ambiguous external pressures of the international system. Such a critical moment requires analysis within a framework that can assess the numerous factors at play. The framework of this thesis accounts for neoclassical realism's emphasis on power distributions and the perceptions of political elites, incorporates constructivism's insights into identity formation and norms, and utilizes SIT's understanding of group dynamics.

Beasley frames this dynamic between “colonialist” and “internationalist” ideologies in Beasley 1987, 190-1. While Hata refers as a conflict between “Expansionist” and “Non-expansionist” factions in Hata 1988, 303. Samuels also discusses these groups as “Big Japan Militarists” and “Liberal Internationalists” in Samuels 2007, 15.
6.2 Fifteen Years of War (1931 - 1945)

There are three avenues through which a state can affirm its position and prestige within the international system: social mobility, social competition, and social creativity. Japan’s strategy of social mobility was undermined by the Kwantung Army’s occupation of Manchuria. The politicization of the Japanese military corresponded with the transformation of imperialist norms into those of overt militarism, thereby thrusting Japan into social competition with the other industrialized states. Social competition occurs when a lower-status group seeks to challenge the dominant group’s superiority. In conventional international relations terminology, Japan turned from a status quo to a revisionist power. It is within this theoretical context that the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and the Pacific War (1941-1945) must be examined. Table 6.1 provides a reference for this shift in the direction of Japan’s foreign policy. It should be noted that under social competition, the referent group is the primary group that is being challenged. Since Japan challenged the Anglo-American power hierarchy, Britain and America constituted the referent group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1931-1945</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Militarist</td>
<td>Britain &amp; America</td>
<td>Social Competition. Imperialist norms transform in outright militarism that challenges the Western-centric hierarchical order.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: Socially Competitive Foreign Policy (1931 - 1945)

Following the occupation of Manchuria in 1931, clashes between Japanese and Chinese forces occurred with regularity, but these incidents remained relatively isolated affairs. It was not until the Japanese army clashed with Kuomintang forces at the Marco Polo Bridge in July 1937 that total war erupted. The Japanese won several

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461 For more on the commitment problem see: Kang 2007, 201.

462 During 1935-6 there was some diplomatic headway between Japan and China. For more details see: Hata 1988, 304-5. Nevertheless, the heightened tensions between the two states, the growing jingoism within Japan, and ongoing political factionalism inhibited diplomatic efforts. For more details on the conflict between the Imperial Army and the Japanese government see: Hoyt 2001, 195-7.
key battles during the early stages of the war, including the capture of Nanking and Battle of Wuhan, which forced the Chinese government to relocate to Chongqing. However, as the war continued into 1939 and 1940, the Japanese were unable to suppress both the Nationalists (Kuomintang) under Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Communists under Mao Zedong.\(^{463}\) The stalemate was only resolved with the eventual defeat of the Empire of Japan at the end of the Pacific War.

While the conflict with China can be framed as a progression resulting from the Mukden Incident, the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 requires further analysis. The isolation of Japan experienced following its withdrawal from the League of Nations conditioned its leaders to seek support elsewhere within the international community. Britain and to a lesser degree America (from the perspective of the Japanese government the two nations were inseparable) had constituted Japan’s primary referent group while adhering to its strategy of social mobility. The Japanese occupation of Manchuria forced Japanese leaders to reassess its relationship with the other great powers. The Japanese government had demonstrable fondness for the Germany stemming from the early Meiji leaders’ desire to emulate the military professionalism of the German army.\(^{464}\) With Germany having already overrun the Netherlands and France, two established colonial powers within East Asia, and advancing towards Britain, the Tripartite Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan presented Japanese leaders a strategic resolution to its isolation.\(^{465}\)

German advances in Europe also prompted Japanese militarists to revisit the debate regarding Japan’s southern advance strategy. As discussed in Chapter 5, the objectives of northern advance proponents were underlined by securing Japanese interests in Korea and Manchuria. With the creation of Manchukuo, which solidified Japan’s hold on north China, leaders within the government and military began

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\(^{464}\) This element is referenced in Chapter 4 with regards to the Iwakara Mission and it is again covered in Chapter 5 regarding Japan’s entry into the First World War.

\(^{465}\) Hata 1988, 310.
favoring a move into Southeast Asia. The European powers’ preoccupation with Germany provided Japanese leaders with what they believed was a perfect opportunity to secure its position in continental Asia against Chinese Communists and Nationalists. What Japan did not anticipate was the American response to Japan’s occupation of Northern Indochina, which was interpreted in Washington as a potential threat to its strategic concerns in the Taiwan straits. In response, America issued the Hull Note in November 1941. The bold proclamation called for a return to the pre-Mukden Incident status quo, and instituted an embargo on strategic materials (namely petroleum and scrap metal) exports to Japan. From this point forward, a confrontation between America and Japan approached inevitability from the perception of Japanese politicians and military leaders.

Tōgō Shigenori, Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, noted in his memoirs:

I was shocked to the point that I was blinded by utter disbelief ... In the end, [the United States] completely disregarded the many years of sacrifice made by Japan, forcing us to forgo the great nation status that we had striven so hard to establish in the Far East. To do so for Japan, however, would only mean suicide. We had no other choice but to rise.

Negotiations between Japan and the other great powers proved fruitless. The Japanese responded with a plan to occupy European colonies in Asia, thereby seizing valuable strategic resources and creating a large defensive parameter to bulwark against the response from the Allied powers. To fortify this defensive parameter, the Japanese military organized concurrent attacks on British and American strongholds, including the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the seizing of fortifications in Thailand and Malaysia, and the invasion of Hong Kong. Throughout 1942, Japanese forces routinely...

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466 Young, *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (University of California Press, 1998), 48-51. There did continue to be an internal debate whether or not the Japanese military should focus its attention on pushing into Siberia, as noted in Hata 1988, 310. This debate was a continuation of the Southern vs Northern advance theories discussed in the preceding chapters.

467 Ibid.


469 Quoted in: Ibid., 258.

overran Allied positions, seizing control of Burma, Malaysia, the Dutch East Indies, Singapore, and the Philippines. Japanese forces also achieved major naval victories the South China Seas, Java Sea, and the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{471} Map 6.1 represents the farthest expanse of the Empire of Japan in 1942.

The Japanese military soon found itself over-stretched and on the defensive. Allied naval victory in the Battle of Coral Sea halted Japanese attempts to invade Australian territories, and by May 1942 the Americans had broken Japanese naval codes and used this information against the Japanese at the decisive American victory


\textsuperscript{472} Adapted from the Wikimedia Commons file: "Japanese_Empire_(orthographic_projection).svg"
at the Battle of Midway.\textsuperscript{473} The cumulative effects of the Allied victories at Coral Sea and Midway reduced Japan’s offensive capabilities and facilitated Allied landings on Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands campaign. Combined, these victories enabled the Allies to turn the tide of the Pacific War and take offensive action against Japan that culminated with the fire bombing of Tokyo and the decimation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by atomic bombs.\textsuperscript{474}

Both the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War contain nuances that will not be surveyed here, as both conflicts have been dealt with extensively within the relevant literature.\textsuperscript{475} What is necessary for the purposes of this thesis is to establish a conceptual link between the Japanese government’s abandonment of social mobility for social competition, whereby Japanese leaders directly challenged the power hierarchy of the international system. While this period of Japanese foreign policy (1931 - 1945) conflicted with the prevailing international norms, Japan’s decision to maintain an imperial foreign policy was not one determined entirely by government officials. Although the Japanese government could have resisted the path towards militarism with greater resolve, the actions of the Kwantung Army greatly restricted Japan’s foreign policy options. Furthermore, the success Japan experienced through its adherence to imperialist norms contributed the difficulty in shifting away from imperialism.

The ideological flexibility that had enabled the successes of the Meiji period was contingent upon a clearly defined international system with identifiable norms, an established power hierarchy, and emulative great power politics. The ambiguous international system of the 1930s and early 1940s offered limited avenues for Japanese elites to adapt to the changing global trends. Early twentieth century institutionalism was at its best a tenuous international consensus, whose two main advocates, America and Britain, had themselves retreated away from their commitment to


\textsuperscript{475} For excellent sources related to Japanese history, please refer to the literature review offered in Chapter 1.
internationalism as a result of war exhaustion and the Great Depression. Status seeking behavior within the nascent institutionalism of the League of Nations and the Versailles-Washington System ultimately proved impossible for Japanese leaders.

6.3 The Occupation Years (1945 - 1952)

The Empire of Japan collapsed under the weight of a crippled economy, the death of approximately three million Japanese people, and two nuclear detonations. At its height of power in 1942, the empire had in less than fifty years expanded to encompass an area of 7,400,000 square kilometers, a space twenty-times larger than of the 377,944 square kilometers of Japan’s home islands. The haste of Japan’s expansionism was only matched by its retreat from peripheral holdings following its surrender in 1945. By the end of the Pacific War, Japan had returned to its pre-First Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) status as a small island state.476

The cost of expansionism was astronomical. Colonial holdings rarely yielded a profit for their imperial possessors, and this dilemma was no more true for Japan whose empire spanned an area relatively poor in resources.477 The Allied powers had blocked Japanese maritime transport during the war, cutting Japan off from the raw materials necessary for the maintenance of their industry.478 During the war years, military expenditures accounted for 85 percent of the national income, and the strained economy could not meet the demands of both the military and the public, causing living standards to drop rapidly following the outbreak of hostilities with China in 1937.479 At the time of its surrender, Japan was isolated from the global economy and its people where on the verge of starvation.480

476 Hata 1988, 314.
477 Ibid.
479 Coox 1988, 377.
480 Ibid.
Although liberated from the yoke of Japanese imperialism, several of Japan’s former colonies faced numerous crises. In addition to the economic and infrastructure costs, Japanese war crimes decimated areas of East Asia. The Japanese Imperial Army committed innumerable atrocities, many of which were racially motivated. During the Nanking Massacre, which followed its capture in December 1937, hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians and prisoners of war were murdered by Japanese soldiers. Estimates place the death toll at between 70,000 - 300,000 persons.\textsuperscript{481} Widespread war rape and looting also befell Nanking over the six-week period.\textsuperscript{482}

Sanctioned mass murders occurred throughout Japanese occupied territories both elsewhere in China and across the empire, including the Manila Massacre (approximately 100,000 deaths).\textsuperscript{483} There were numerous instances where prisoners of war were executed. Tens of thousands (some estimates are in the hundreds of thousands) of “comfort women” were forced into prostitution.\textsuperscript{484} Forced labor and biological weapon testing (on human subjects) were also conducted, none of which are more infamous than Unit 731, a covert biological and chemical research unit. Under the leadership of General Shirō Ishii, unit 731 performed vivisections, biological attacks, and weapon experiments on thousands of civilians.\textsuperscript{485} These atrocities transpired with at least nominal sanctioning by the Japanese government, whose questionable involvement in these events remains contested in modern Japan.\textsuperscript{486}

\textsuperscript{481} The number of civilians killed is highly disputed. For a more detailed analysis see: Yoshida, The Making of the “Rape of Nanking”: History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States: History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States (Oxford University Press, USA, 2006), 94-6.

\textsuperscript{482} For primary source documents related to the massacre see: Brook, Documents on the Rape of Nanking (University of Michigan Press, 1999).

\textsuperscript{483} Gruhl 2009, 97.


\textsuperscript{485} Peter Williams, Unit 731: Japan’s Secret Biological Warfare in World War II (Free Press, 1989).

\textsuperscript{486} This modern impact of these events on Japanese foreign policy is discussed in Chapter 7.
With Japan’s formal surrender aboard the USS *Missouri* on September 2nd, 1945, it capitulated its sovereignty to the Allied powers. In accordance with the Potsdam Declaration, President Truman’s formal proclamation regarding the terms of surrender, occupation forces soon arrived under the command of General Douglas MacArthur. The absence of strong regional allies left America as the principle power responsible for reconstruction in the Asia-Pacific. China, an American ally during the war, was at the brink of a renewed civil war, and the European nations were preoccupied with their own recovery. In his role as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP), MacArthur was responsible for coordinating occupation efforts between General Headquarters (GHQ), which consisted of several thousand civilian and military personnel assigned to domestic posts throughout Japan, and the Japanese government. GHQ efforts were directed at dismantling the Meiji State, particularly Japan’s capacity to wage offensive war.

To this end, occupation forces initially planned to decentralize the Japanese economy by permitting only ‘such industries as will sustain her economy’ and moving additional industry (particularly heavy industry) overseas. This strategy was short lived. It provided little means through which the Japanese could contribute to the domestic rebuilding process or pay for potential reparations. For example, the blockade on maritime transport of raw materials continued during the first years of the occupation, contributing to the real GNP per capita in 1946 to drop to 55 percent of the 1934-6 level. Economic considerations and various levels of social disorder lead Secretary of the American Army Kenneth Royall to comment “that Japan cannot

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491 “Potsdam Declaration, Clause 11,” (July 26, 1945).


493 Kōsai 1988, 494.
support itself as a nation of shopkeepers and craftsmen and small artisans any more than it can exist as an agricultural nation”.

As the consensus in Washington shifted away from punitive economic policy towards transforming Japan into a self-sufficient state, America dispatched renowned economist and banker Joseph Dodge to Japan in 1949. Dodge was an expert on postwar economic recovery, having previously developed economic reconstruction plans in West Germany. Charged with designing a similar strategy for Japan, Dodge instituted fiscally conservative economic policies collectively known as the “Dodge line” that aggressively addressed the national budget, reduced government intervention in the economy, and established a fixed exchange rate for the yen to keep Japanese export prices low. Dodge’s polices eventually pushed Japan towards self-sufficiency, but in the short term they led to increased unemployment and social distress, and were predictably unpopular amongst the Japanese public.

The Japanese government played a crucial role during the occupation years. While the Japanese government was often forced to defer to GHQ, they were mainly cooperative with demobilization efforts. The significance of this collaboration could be disregarded as an attempt by Japanese politicians to appease occupation forces in the hopes of benefiting their political career, but such cursory treatment does not adequately address the ideological imperatives of postwar Japan. The occupation purged approximately 200,000 individuals from public affairs and dissolved all of Japan’s rightwing political organizations. Resultantly, the numerous vacancies in government were filled with left-leaning civil servants who demonstrated a genuine desire to steer Japan away from its past militarism, an evolution within the Japanese polity that will later be shown to have greatly affected its foreign policy.

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496 Ibid.


499 Ibid., 672.
realigned the political discourse in Japan. The prewar consensus that had formed around nationalism and militarism was effectively dismantled, opening the Japanese polity to suppressed norms, namely those of internationalism and economic openness championed by Shidehara. While the occupation inhibited Japanese leaders from engaging in foreign policy, the domestic factors (e.g. identity formation and intergroup competition) that form part of this thesis’ framework were still at work. The purge elevated liberal norms to the forefront of the domestic identity hierarchy. In the coming years, these norms established the foundation of Japan’s postwar foreign policy.

In stark contrast to the postwar political environment in Germany, where the Nazi government was thoroughly dismantled, GHQ was eager to utilize the Japanese government as a means of furthering its objectives. This desire was reflected in the Potsdam Declaration, which spoke to the responsibilities of the Japanese government to ‘remove all obstacles to the revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people’ rather than outlining its delegitimization.\textsuperscript{500} Much of the cooperation between Japanese politicians and GHQ hinged upon the fate of the Imperial family. MacArthur exonerated Emperor Hirohito and the entire Imperial family in the hopes of facilitating a peaceful political transition. MacArthur reasoned that if the emperor retained figurative power, Hirohito could provide the Japanese people with a “symbol” of continuity and thusly undermine anti-occupation dissent.\textsuperscript{501} Hirohito’s involvement within the armed forces is subject to debate, but some historians contest that he held substantial leverage over the wartime military and that MacArthur went to extraordinary lengths to spare Hirohito from war crime indictment. This may have included corrupting witness testimony to defer political responsibility away from Hirohito and onto other prominent figures, namely Hideki Tōjō.\textsuperscript{502}

\textsuperscript{500} Text excerpt from: Bevans, Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America, 1776-1949, vol. Volume 3, Multilateral, 1931-1945 (Department of State, 1968), 1204-5.

\textsuperscript{501} Bix 2009, 12-7, 575-80.

\textsuperscript{502} Ibid., 584-605.
The International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) brought to trial twenty-eight Japanese military and political leaders who were charged with conspiracy to start and wage offensive war or ‘crimes against peace’ (Class A war crime).\textsuperscript{503} Thousands more were later tried for ‘conventional atrocities or crimes against humanity’ (Class B) and ‘the planning, ordering, authorization, or failure to prevent such transgressions at higher levels in the command structure’ (Class C).\textsuperscript{504} All Class A defendants were found guilty and seven were sentenced to execution. The occupation forces also made efforts to shame the Japanese people into blaming the Imperial military for driving the country to a ruinous end.\textsuperscript{505} Conceptually, the trials expanded the political purge instituted by the occupation forces, delegitimizing the militaristic and nationalistic elements within Japanese political society that had instituted Japan’s deleterious strategy of social competition. Nevertheless, protecting the Imperial house inhibited a severing of the past comparable to the denazification of Germany. Japan’s contentious relationship with its past continues to haunt its diplomatic relations with China.

The most lasting consequence of the occupation was the 1946 Postwar Constitution.\textsuperscript{506} The primary aim of occupation forces was to remove potential threats in the Pacific by disarming Japan, and redirecting the Japanese government towards American strategic concerns. Notwithstanding that the constitution was drafted (and subsequently redrafted) by Americans, the drafters were sensitive to the Meiji Constitution and to the concerns of Japanese politicians.\textsuperscript{507} Under the new constitution, the emperor was made into a figurehead. The democratically elected Diet became ‘the highest organ of the state’, placing matters of authority, political responsibility, and sovereignty in the hands of the Japanese people.\textsuperscript{508} Japanese politicians played a significant role in the language of the Constitution, especially with


\textsuperscript{504} Text excerpt from: Ibid.

\textsuperscript{505} Jansen 2002, 673-4.

\textsuperscript{506} The constitution would be enacted on May 3rd 1947.


\textsuperscript{508} Kennedy 1963, 318.
regards to Article 9, in which Japan formally renounced the use of war as a sovereign right. Article 9 reads:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.\footnote{The Constitution of Japan, Article 9.}

Responsibility for Japanese security was therefore vested primarily with occupation forces. It should be noted that the Constitution also called for Japan to maintain a minimal Self-Defense Force to maintain its sovereignty.

Authorship of the clause remains disputed. MacArthur wrote in his memoirs that it was Shidehara who ‘wanted it to prohibit any military establishment for Japan —any military establishment whatsoever’.\footnote{Macarthur, Reminiscences (Naval Institute Press, 1964), 303.} According to MacArthur, Shidehara believed the military had lost the respect of the Japanese people, and that rearmament would hinder Japan’s recovery. MacArthur mirrored this sentiment himself, stating ‘[f]or years I have believed that war should be abolished as an outmoded means of resolving disputes between nations’.\footnote{Ibid.} This pacifist-leaning sentiment was shared by other prominent Japanese politicians, namely Yoshida Shigeru, whose two terms as Prime Minister between 1946 - 1953 had an indelible impact on the direction of Japanese foreign policy.

The egalitarian measures of the postwar constitution quickly found traction among the public, which adapted the ascending liberal-pacifist norms with the same pragmatism witnessed during the Meiji Period.\footnote{Jansen 2002, 672.} This ideological flexibility, which was previously discussed in Chapter 4, must be considered when conceptualizing Japanese foreign policy during this period. The occupation of Japan was unlike any

\footnote{509 The Constitution of Japan, Article 9.}
\footnote{510 Macarthur, Reminiscences (Naval Institute Press, 1964), 303.}
\footnote{511 Ibid.}
\footnote{512 Jansen 2002, 672.}
other period of Japanese history. Some correlation can be drawn to the late Tokugawa period, in which foreign encroachment fundamentally altered the direction of Japan. However, the Meiji Restoration occurred mainly as a response to the perceived danger posed by foreigners, as opposed to outright occupation. The economically minded practitioners of gunboat diplomacy were ultimately more interested in opening up Japan for trade than fundamentally altering the Japanese political structure.\textsuperscript{93}

Similarities do exist regarding the impact of foreign pressures upon foreign policy. Considering that Japan was an occupied country between 1945 and 1952, it would be inappropriate to discuss a foreign policy strategy. Other variables that would eventually condition policy in the subsequent decades were rooted in the political developments of the occupation years. The purge of the Japanese polity and the disarmament of its military infrastructure opened the way for more diplomatically minded politicians, such as Shidehara and Yoshida, and facilitated the ascension of liberal-pacifist norms. Although these individuals are often oversimplified as mere pacifists, it will be shown in the following section that they adapted the postwar constitution towards rebuilding Japan through a strategy of social creativity. In this sense, the pacifism often associated with Yoshida was a vehicle for enhancing state power through economic growth, a socially creative strategy that both elevated Japan’s international standing and formed the basis of the global capitalist norms that has blossomed in the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

\textit{6.4 The Postwar Foreign Policy Strategy (1952 - 1972)}

The onset of the Cold War shifted the nature of US-Japanese relations. During the first years of the occupation, American strategy in the Pacific hinged upon developing a strong relationship with Kuomintang China and disarming Japan. As American foreign policy became increasingly focused on countering Communism, the prospect of a non-industrialized and demilitarized Japan concerned American policy experts who worried that Japan may succumb to the Communist tide. This evolution in strategic thinking was furthered by the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949)

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 674.
and the outbreak of the Korean war (1950-1953). Consequently, Japan became America’s first line of defense against Communism, and the reconstruction effort was refocused on developing Japan into a powerful Asian ally.

During the final years of the occupation, the ancillary effects of the Korean War had a tremendous impact on the occupation. MacArthur was replaced by General Matthew B. Ridgeway in 1951 for openly disagreeing with President Truman over Korean War Policy. In MacArthur’s wake, Truman appointed John Foster Dulles as special ambassador to Japan and charged him with re-negotiating the security relationship. Dulles attempted to convince Yoshida that Japan, while remaining an American ally, should participate more completely in its own national defense. Yoshida rejected Dulles’s proposal, citing the restrictions of Article 9 as justification. Yoshida’s careful political maneuvering was motivated by his desire to avoid burdening the anemic postbellum economy with the costs of participating in the fight against communism. The economic mindedness of Yoshida remained at the heart of Japan’s postwar policies, and became a key component in developing a foreign policy strategy once the occupation had ended.

Yoshida was well versed in American strategic thinking. He had emerged as a leading politician under MacArthur, and helped coordinate efforts between occupation forces and the Japanese government. Yoshida had been essential in establishing a working relationship between liberal and conservative elements of Japanese government. Despite rejecting the American proposal, Yoshida was confident that Japanese security remained uncompromised. Japan’s geopolitical significance and the American investment in occupation were indicative of a broader global agenda contingent upon extending the security of the American nuclear

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514 Ibid., 689-9.
515 Mcdougall, Asia Pacific in World Politics (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), 77-9.
518 Ibid., 120-5.
umbrella to Japan.\textsuperscript{520} Regarding the constitutional restraints, Yoshida later wrote in his memoirs: 'To the question of rearmament...I have always held the view that Article 9 - the renunciation-of-war clause - does not need to be amended. And I still adhere to that view'. \textsuperscript{521}

Yoshida’s consistent privileging of economic factors, themselves norms, formed the basis of Japan’s postwar strategy of social creativity. Social creativity is a re-imagining of the status hierarchy by a subordinate group (Japan) with the intent of achieving recognition for excelling in an alternate domain that does not directly challenge the dominate group (America). Yoshida’s resistance to American pressure is a clear indication of this emerging strategy, where he directed Japan towards status seeking behavior underwritten by economic norms. Interpreting this emerging phase in Japan’s foreign policy evolution requires an understanding of both material and ideational factors. Yoshida was not solely motivated by pacifist norms, as a constructivist reading may suggest. He had a keen understanding of Cold War power politics, and exploited America’s anti-Communist efforts towards rebuilding Japan.

Dulles and Yoshida did eventually compromise on the establishment of Japanese Police Reserve that would inherit domestic security concerns from occupation forces. In later years, this policing force transformed into the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF). The compromise was a precursor for establishing a formal security treaty between the two states.\textsuperscript{522} The Treaty of San Francisco was signed on 8 September 1951 and officially concluded the Pacific War, ended the age of imperialism in Japan, and restored some sovereignty to the Japanese state. The treaty also returned the vast majority of Japan’s former colonial holdings to indigenous rule.\textsuperscript{523} A security treaty between the two powers established American territorial rights within Japan and restricted the Japanese government from entering security agreements with third

\textsuperscript{520} Ibid., 192-5.

\textsuperscript{521} Ibid., 146.

\textsuperscript{522} Jansen 2002, 701.

parties without American consent. Yoshida later wrote ‘Mr. Dulles had taken upon himself the responsibility of shouldering all the difficulties of negotiation, and thereby won for Japan most important concessions from the other Allied Governments that we ourselves at the time would have been in no position to secure’.525

These two treaties defined the direction of Japanese foreign policy and ended Japan’s isolation from the international community. The Japanese economy was opened to trade with other democratic states, but remained cut off from relations with China and the Soviet Union. The world Japan entered was decidedly different than the one it had been thrust into during the nineteenth century. The multipolar imperialist hierarchical order had given way to Cold War bipolarity. Japan faced two potential directions in foreign policy. First, Japanese leaders could uphold Article 9 and accelerate economic recovery by capitulating its sovereignty to America (social creativity). Second, state elites could strain the postwar economy in the hopes of reasserting Japanese sovereignty by developing a military complementary to American interests thereby increasing its relative position among the other American allies (social mobility).

Yoshida believed that Japan’s natural historical position was allying with the world’s strongest power and utilizing this relationship to strengthen Japan. In other words, Yoshida favored policies aimed at self-strengthening (state power) rather than addressing Japan’s compromised sovereignty. In defense of his pro-American position, Yoshida drew parallels to Anglo-Japanese relations of the early twentieth century, which harken back to the characteristics of modern states discussed in Chapter 4:

What strikes one about these events ... [is the] contrast to the dissension concerning the attitude to be taken towards Great Britain and the United States ... At the time of the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Great Britain was at the height of her power ... while Japan was an insignificant island nation ... which had only just begun to rise from obscurity. The difference - in international significance and power potential - between the two countries was far greater than the differences which exist between Japan and the United States today. Yet the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was welcomed by Government and people alive and no one viewed that document as meaning that Japan was truckling to British imperialism or in any danger of becoming a glorified British colony.526

524 Ibid., 199-201.
526 Ibid., 4.
The security agreement with America provided Yoshida with the necessary political traction to dedicate the Japanese government towards economic growth and defined the extent to which Japan could exercise “self-defense”.

Yoshida’s commitment to economic recovery laid the foundation for Japan’s transformation from a defeated nation on the verge of starvation to an economic superpower. Under the protection of the American nuclear umbrella, Japanese military spending was locked to 1 percent of the GNP, which freed the Japanese government from the vast expenditures of the Cold War. Much of this capital was invested into subsidies for selected industries, providing a much needed spark to economic growth. The Japanese also experimented with new employment and management systems, and expanded the social services available to its citizens. Technology transfers from American investors eager to gain a foothold in the Japanese market supplied Japanese businessmen with the means to rebuild Japan’s industrial sector. The Japanese explored every opportunity to expand its economy, including profiting greatly by supplying UN forces during the Korean War. The Japanese government’s commitment to low military spending and a low diplomatic profile also eased tensions regarding postwar Japan, allowing the Japanese government to enter into peaceful economic agreements with other states.

Yoshida’s preference for economic development and deference to the American military remained firmly entrenched in the Japanese polity after his tenure as Prime Minister. Collectively, these policies became known as “The Yoshida Doctrine.” Yoshida’s strategy of social creativity has considerable theoretical implications. Out of the contentious occupation period, Yoshida was able to establish an effective means of pursing status seeking behavior. This strategy occurred under tremendous external pressure from America to support its efforts at containing communism. Yoshida’s balancing of both domestic concerns and external constraints established a new way

of approaching foreign policy that quickly ascended to the apex of Japan’s domestic identity hierarchy.

Yoshida did face opposition from conservative factions, particularly from unindicted Class A war criminal and future Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke who declared: “It is not the policy of an independent nation to have troops of a foreign country based on its soil”\(^\text{530}\). Nonetheless, Yoshida Diplomacy remained a fixture of Japanese foreign policy throughout the 1950s and 1960s.\(^\text{531}\) Table 6.2 represents these divergent views in relation to foreign policy strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Years as PM</th>
<th>Norm Set</th>
<th>FP Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yoshida Shigeru</td>
<td>May 1946 - May 1947 Oct. 1948 - Dec. 1954</td>
<td>Liberal/Progressive</td>
<td>Social Creativity: Enhance state power by focusing on economic strength and deferring military concerns to US.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kishi Nobusuke</td>
<td>Feb 1957 - July 1960</td>
<td>Conservative/Traditionalist</td>
<td>Social Mobility: Fortify Japanese sovereignty by developing a traditional security position and revising relationship with US.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2: Yoshida vs Kishi * Foreign Policy Approaches

Ikeda Hayato, who served as Prime Minister from 1960 - 1964, instituted additional economic reforms.\(^\text{532}\) Ikeda stressed the importance of the Japanese government investing in the emerging technological sectors, namely those surrounding the transistor radio, prompting Charles de Gaulle to dismiss Ikeda as a “transistor salesman”.\(^\text{533}\) According to prominent Japanese historian Nakamura Takafusa:

\(^{530}\) Samuels 2007, 85.


Conservatives who opposed the Yoshida Doctrine governed between 1955-1960, but their attempts to revise the constitution faced considerable resistance.

* Due to the incapacitation of Prime Minister Ishibashi Tanzan, then Foreign Minister Kishi Nobusuke served as Deputy Prime Minister from 31 January 1957 until his election on 25 February 1957.

\(^{532}\) Matray, Japan’s Emergence as a Global Power (Greenwood Publishing Group Incorporated, 2001), 170-1.

Ikeda was the single most important figure in Japan’s rapid growth. He should be remembered as the man who pulled together a national consensus for economic growth and who strove for the realization of the goal...From a broader perspective, however, Japan consistently adhered to Yoshida Shigeru’s view that armaments should be curbed and military spending suppressed while all efforts were concentration on the reconstitution of the economy.534

Yoshida and his successors skillfully employed the tenets of Japan’s pacifist constitution to counter both foreign and domestic pressures to militarize Japan and maintain a strategy of social creativity. According to Andrew Oros, what emerged from the debate over Japanese security is a security identity of “domestic antimilitarism” that restricts domestic militarism but acknowledges a defensive role for a military, which embodies much of the social creative strategy forwarded by the Yoshida Doctrine.535

Under the Yoshida Doctrine, the dollar value of items imported into Japan rose from $69 million in 1949-1955 to $3.2 billion in the early 1970s.536 The economic growth averaged 9.2 percent per annum between 1956-1973,537 and Japan’s GDP rose from 8369.5 billion yen in 1955 to 148,327.1 billion yen in 1975.538 The economy grew steadily until the oil shock of 1972 (which will be examined in Chapter 7).539 Ongoing economic growth hinged upon stability within US-Japanese relations. The treaties signed in 1951, which capitulated Japanese national security to America, were revisited at the end of the decade. On 19 January 1960, the two states signed the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. The treaty renewed America’s commitment to Japanese security, and required a collective response should a military threat befall Japan. Notably, the agreement did not require Japan to reciprocate should there be an attack against American interests or territory.540

538 Japan, "Gross Domestic Product Classified by Economic Activities - 68sna, Benchmark Year = 1990 (1955--1998)."
539 Kö sai 1988, 495.
When analyzing the Yoshida Doctrine, it is important to consider two constraints that conditioned postwar Japanese foreign policy. First, the American occupation limited the policy options available to Japan. Even after the occupation ended, the security agreements between America and Japan required the Japanese government to defer to Washington regarding matters of security. Unsurprisingly, these factors resulted in America emerging as the dominant group through which the Japanese government defined its strategy of social creativity. As the leader of the democratic states during the Cold War, it was through the alliance system defined by America that enabled Japan to regain its international footing. The decision by Japanese leaders to define their own terms of success corresponds theoretically with the Japanese state forming its own referent group.

The bipolar structure of the international system further restricted policy options. When Japan emerged from its isolation in the 1860s, the multipolar international system provided considerable opportunity for upward mobility. Such maneuverability within the Cold War power hierarchy was impossible for Japan, a state inherently limited by resources and still recovering from the Pacific War. Other American allies, particularly those in Europe, invested heavily in their respective militaries during the Cold War. Through the skillful manipulation of the “peace clause” of the Japanese constitution, Yoshida and his successors resisted this call to arms, and dedicated the entire state towards economic growth. The Yoshida Doctrine must therefore be understood as a strategy of social creativity, whereby Japanese leaders defined their own parameters for status seeking behavior within the greater boundaries outlined by the capitalist Western-bloc. See Table 6.3 for details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952-1972</td>
<td>Bipolar</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>• Mercantilist</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Social Creativity. Article 9 utilized to off-load security costs onto America, affording Japan opportunity to focus on domestic rebuilding and economic growth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3: Postwar Foreign Policy Strategy (1952 - 1972)
It should be noted that social creativity, while privileging norms different than those that underwrote Meiji social mobility, exhibits considerable political contiguity. The Yoshida quote previously presented draws a direct connection to the benefits of Japan allying itself with the strongest international power. Britain fulfilled this role during the Meiji Years, culminating with the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902. Fifty years later, the Japanese government cultivated its relationship with America until a new unequal treaty relationship was formed in 1960. The treaty renewed the American commitment to Japan while not requiring the Japanese to aid in the defense of American territory. Although this arrangement did require Japan to forfeit elements of its sovereignty, it was a carefully considered tradeoff that enabled social creativity.

This strategy greatly enhanced the power of the Japanese state, and must not be oversimplified as simply “pacifist” or misconstrued as a pseudo-imperialist American policy. This nuance exemplifies the analytical capacity of this thesis’ framework. Neoclassical realist interpretations provide a strong case for the external pressures restricting Japan’s policy options, but may underplay the ideological motivations of leaders such as Shidehara and the consequences of the postwar political purge. Constructivism is useful when considering the ascension of liberal-pacifist norms, but does not account for Yoshida’s pragmatic exploitation of Article 9. A synthesis of both theories bound by the insights of SIT provides the necessary means for analyzing this contentious period in Japanese history with consistency.

6.5 One Step the Right, Two to the Left

This chapter reviewed the collapse of Imperial Japan and the emergence of postwar Japan governed under the 1947 Constitution. Two significant shifts in the direction of Japan’s foreign policy were examined: (1) Japan’s rejection of social mobility during the 1930s and turn towards a socially competitive revisionist state [Shift A]; and (2) Japan’s adoption of a socially creative foreign policy that privileged economic recovery over traditional security following the Pacific War [Shift B]. For clarity, these shifts are referred to in the subsequent conclusions as “Shift A” and “Shift B” respectively. Despite the multitude of factors contributing to both of these shifts, the offered
framework has clarified the most salient variables and provided a consistent frame of analysis. The conclusions drawn from this thesis’ research questions are listed below. Since this chapter discusses two shifts in Japan’s policy evolution, research questions 1 and 2 are answered together.

1. How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan's foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time?

• [Shift A] - Following the First World War, the imperialist norms governing the international community were displaced by the emergence of internationalism. Japanese leaders initially experimented with these new norms, but rising domestic opposition, the collapse of the Versailles-Washington System, and the actions of the Kwantung Army restricted the foreign policy options of the Japanese government. Ultimately, Japan maintained its commitment to imperialism regardless of the changes within the international power hierarchy, thereby instituting a strategy of social competition.

• [Shift B] - The surrender of Imperial Japan ended its strategy of social competition, and the Allied occupation undermined Japanese sovereignty. During the occupation, Japanese leaders were unable to exercise a full range of diplomatic options. When the occupation ended in 1952, many of the militarist political elements were purged from the Japanese government, facilitating the rise of more diplomatically minded leaders. Rising tensions from the Cold War prompted the Americans to pressure the Japanese towards a more traditional security posture, but Prime Minister Yoshida and his successors utilized Article 9 to maintain a low diplomatic profile and focused the government’s efforts upon rebuilding the economy through a strategy of social creativity.
2. *What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?*

- **Shift A** - The maintenance of imperialist norms came at the expense of embracing the emerging global trends of the international system, a decision which sharply contrasted with social mobility that had been prevalent since the Meiji Restoration. The rising influence of the military and swelling nationalism transformed the established imperialist norms into those of overt militarism. In this manner, continuity existed with regard to norms but not strategy. Imperial Japan practiced a socially competitive foreign policy that challenged the international power hierarchy, and diverged from the social mobility of preceding generations.

- **Shift B** - The Yoshida Doctrine enabled Japanese leaders to define their own parameters for prestige and power within an international system driven by the strategic interests of the Cold War. It would be erroneous to assume Yoshida and his successors were driven solely by ideological factors. Yoshida was attuned to the bipolarity of the Cold War. He utilized the American nuclear umbrella to assure Japanese security while directing the Japanese government towards domestic recovery. Yoshida’s willingness to accept compromised state sovereignty while fortifying national strength harkens to the early Meiji strategy regarding the unequal treaties, where Japanese leaders favored national strength over sovereignty.

The direction set by Yoshida provided an avenue for status seeking behavior that eventually elevated Japan to a position comparable with that achieved with social mobility during the height of imperialism. Nevertheless, the external pressures following the collapse of the Soviet Union would fundamentally alter the Japanese strategy. The next chapter analyzes Japan’s late Cold War and post-Cold War policy by exploring the highs and lows of Yoshida’s social creativity.
Chapter 7

A Resurgent Japan, 1972 - 2014

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi at Tokyo’s Haneda Airport
September 2006
When you pass through Japan, you should perhaps talk a bit more with them. You only talked with them for one day and that isn't very good for their face.

- Chairman Mao speaking to Henry Kissinger, 1973

The bonds of friendship which unite us are even greater than the ocean which divides us. Nichi-bei no yuho wa eien desu. [Japanese-American friendship is forever.]

- President Reagan, 1983

I believe that it is the duty of the political leadership to consider what kind of structure can be created in the event that the state or the people are exposed to crises and I intend to move forward with consideration on emergency legislation.

- Prime Minister Koizumi, 2001

If Japan is going to play a full role on the world stage and become a full active participating member of the Security Council, Article Nine would have to be examined

- Secretary of State Colin Powell, 2004
The bipolarity of the Cold War and Japan's decimated domestic infrastructure created a unique historical moment that enabled Japanese leaders throughout the 1950s and 1960s to embrace the loose isolationism of the Yoshida Doctrine. However, from the 1970s onward, external pressures have increasingly reduced the practicality of maintaining a low diplomatic profile. Tracing this process is necessary to answer: How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time?

Political tensions during the 1970s tested the Yoshida Doctrine (Section 7.1). Instability in the Middle East that cut off the flow of oil into Japan, the termination of the Bretton Woods system, and the Sino-American rapprochement left Japan vulnerable to external factors. Combined, these elements forced state elites to reconsider the low diplomatic stance upon which social creativity was rooted. The ongoing financial success of Japan during the 1980s coincided with a more assertive foreign policy stance (Section 7.2). Prime Minister Nakasone sought to utilize Japan’s tremendous economic strength to further Japan’s position within the international power hierarchy without outright violating the Yoshida Doctrine.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Japan possessed the second largest economy in the world and had abstained from the vast military expenditures that typified Cold War politics. Many commentators looked to Japan as a model state ready to assume the mantle of leadership within the emerging international order (Section 7.3). The implosion of the Japanese economy and the backlash against Japan’s non-participation in the Gulf War soon undermined this optimism. The ensuing “lost decade” of economic stagnation crippled the Japanese strategy of social creativity and prompted Japanese leaders to explore new directions in foreign policy (Section 7.4).

The 1990s were marked by considerable ambiguity in Japanese foreign policy, as Japanese leaders struggled to adapt to the changing international environment. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001, Prime Minister Koizumi forwarded a more assertive policy stance that pushed Japan towards social mobility. The Koizumi government considerably strengthened ties with America and sponsored
several pieces of groundbreaking legislation that reduced the restrictions governing JSDF deployment (Section 7.5). Since returning to power in 2012, Prime Minister Abe has considerably furthered the normalist cause by reinterpreting the Japanese constitution to enable Japan to act in some degree on behalf of collective self-defense. Nevertheless, constitutional restrictions still inhibited the shift towards social mobility, and this chapter concludes with a discussion of the constitutional reform efforts by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) (Section 7.5).^541

By framing Japan’s constitutional concerns within the developed theoretical framework, it is demonstrated that debate surrounding Article 9 is the primary variable upon which the future trajectory of Japanese foreign policy is dependent. The ideological factors underpinning the question - *What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?* - are outlined through an examination of the Yoshida Doctrine, the policies of Nakasone and Koizumi, and the political groups relevant to constitutional reform.

### 7.1 Late Cold War Political Challenges (1973 - 1982)

The resurgent Japanese economy faced two “shocks” during the 1970s that jeopardized Japan’s recovery. The first shock centered on Japan’s dependence on foreign resources. As an island nation with poor reserves of fossil fuels, Japan relies upon imports and is vulnerable to the direction of global politics.\(^542\) The embargo on crude oil implemented by the Americans and the British in 1941, discussed in Chapter 6, was a primary factor in pushing Japan towards war. In the 1970s, instability in the Middle East had severe repercussions for Japan. American support for Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur War was answered by the major oil producing countries

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541 Discussion of these competing political parties is restricted to the final sections of this chapter due to LDP preeminence. From 1955 until 2009 the LDP remained in power with the exception of an 11 month period between 1993 and 1994. The DPJ was in power 2009 - 2012, but has again become the minority party.

restricting oil output to America and its allies.\footnote{Ibid., 25, 183-5.} Although Japan’s support of Israel was cursory at best, and more a product of its security agreement with America, it was one of the many states targeted by the embargo.

Japan appeased the Arab nations by distancing itself from Israel and backing the Palestinian claim for a homeland. These measures reopened the flow of oil into Japan, but the restricted output resulted in a fourfold (in dollars) cost increase and pushed the economy into a recession.\footnote{Gordon, A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 287; Jansen 2002, 732.} Real GDP growth dropped from an average of 9.6 percent, which had been sustained between 1960 and 1973, to 3.8 percent.\footnote{Michael M. Hutchison, Takatoshi Ito, and Frank Westermann, "The Great Japanese Stagnation: Lessons for Industrial Countries,“ in Japan’s Great Stagnation: Financial and Monetary Policy Lessons for Advanced Economies, ed. Michael M. Hutchison and Frank Westermann (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 3-4.} Higher oil prices also triggered the worst inflation rate since the 1940s, and in 1974 consumer prices increased by 25 percent.\footnote{Gordon 2003, 287.} The Japanese government responded with a stalwart campaign to reduce oil consumption and push towards a more self-sufficient economy. While Japan remained dependent upon energy imports, by 1980 it had reduced its oil imports from the Middle East by 12 percent.\footnote{Bela A. Balassa and Noland, Japan in the World Economy (Peterson Institute, 1988), 3-5.} These conservation and diversification efforts also equipped Japan for future oil crises, such as the oil shortage following the Iranian revolution in 1978.\footnote{Jansen 2002, 732.}

The second shock developed from the political maneuverings of the Nixon administration. In 1971, President Nixon canceled the direct convertibility of the American dollar into gold, thus signaling the end of Bretton Woods system.\footnote{Bundy, A Tangled Web: The Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency (I.B. Tauris, 1998), 261-3.} The transition to free floating currency ended the fixed exchange rate of 360 yen to 1 dollar that had been a hallmark of the controversial “Dodge Line”. Nixon was driven to end
what his administration perceived as Japan’s unfair trade advantages. Japan’s balance of trade with America shifted from severe deficits during the early postwar years, towards parity in the 1960s, to a massive trade surplus in the 1970s that favored Japanese exports. See Figure 7.1 for details. American leaders coerced the Japanese government to cap the flow of Japanese goods into America. The sale of steel was restricted in 1969 as was the sale of textiles in 1972. The revaluing of the yen diminished the trade imbalance, as the yen proved undervalued when it rose to 300 and peaked at 87 yen to the dollar.

Nixon’s foreign policy strategy posed additional challenges to Japan. The Nixon Doctrine of 1969 called for America’s Asian allies to enhance their role in countering communism. Nixon believed that as America’s primary ally in the region, Japan

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553 International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade.
554 Bundy 1998, 68.
needed to assume greater responsibility in the collective security of Asia. Despite this pressure, former Foreign Minister Ōhira Masayoshi explored “comprehensive security” measures designed to enhance both national and regional security through an emphasis on diplomatic, economic, and technological cooperation.

The most significant political challenge to Japan came from Nixon’s surprise opening of relations with China in 1971. Sino-American rapprochement came without forewarning to Japanese government, leaving Japanese ministers scrambling to quickly normalize their relationship with China. While the rapprochement did eventually ease Sino-Japanese relations and improve America’s stance in Asia, Nixon’s ambivalence towards Japan raised questions as to the continued viability of the security agreement between the two states. According to esteemed Japanese author and diplomat Ogata Sadako: “No American action left a more profound impact on Japanese foreign policy in the postwar period than the unilateral decision by President Nixon to go to Beijing and seek rapprochement...It changed the meaning of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and forthwith the alliance itself”.

Through adherence to the Yoshida Doctrine, the Japanese economy had rebounded, but it was a policy approach contingent upon social creativity. Social creativity holds that political leaders define their own parameters of success and prestige within the greater boundaries of the existing international order. In practice, this strategy entailed Japan deferring its national security to America while focusing on economic and domestic rebuilding. The dual shocks of the 1973 oil crisis and Nixon’s foreign policy highlight three elements of Japan’s Cold War strategy that require further examination.

555 Pyle 2007, 254.

556 The Ōhira Research Group report also included provisions for an enhanced military role, but these were underplayed. The norms of comprehensive security did gain traction, but they did have a some impact on how security was perceived by the policy making elite. Future research could explore this relationship with a SIT framework. For details see: Yuzawa, Japan’s Security Policy and the Asean Regional Forum: The Search for Multilateral Security in the Asia-Pacific (Taylor & Francis, 2007), 18.


559 Ibid., 320.
First, these events demonstrated that Japan was intricately tied to the global community. While the Yoshida Doctrine advocated a low diplomatic stance, the Japanese economy remained vulnerable to external variables. Additionally, any illusion that Japan could exist in semi-isolation under the protection of the American security umbrella was shattered by the Sino-American rapprochement, which forced Japan to quickly normalize its relations with China. Japanese leaders maintained social creativity in spite of these external constraints. Realist interpretations that contest that foreign policy is derived primarily as a response to external pressures (namely neorealism) are therefore insufficient for conceptualizing this consistency of social creativity that continued to minimize Japan’s international presence.

Second, Japan’s postwar grace period was deteriorating. During the early years of the Cold War, America was content to subsidize the unbalanced security agreement while the Japanese economy recovered. Although America had pushed for stronger Japanese involvement in regional security during the 1960s (specifically during the Korean War), it had upheld the economic and security advantages that enabled the Yoshida Doctrine to flourish. As the Japanese economy matured and America’s anti-communist strategy became more entangled in Southeast Asia, the American leadership looked to Japan to shoulder greater regional responsibility.

Third, Nixon’s unilateral realignment with Communist China and economic policies sowed tensions between America and Japan. The American strategy during the Cold War centered on containing communism by isolating communist regimes. In Asia, America had coerced Japan to support its aggressive anti-communist posture, which ultimately left Japan isolated from China. The sudden shift in policy angered and embarrassed Japanese leaders, who in spite of strong domestic opposition had supported American security initiatives. The slight did not go unnoticed by the international community. Chairman Mao suggested to Kissinger during their private meetings: ‘When you pass through Japan, you should perhaps talk a bit more with

\footnotesize{560} Gordon 2003, 292.

\footnotesize{561} Bundy 1998, 236-9.
them. You only talked with them for one day and that isn’t very good for their face’. The economic restrictions on Japanese goods further complicated US-Japanese relations. The Japanese government “voluntarily” agreed to the measures, but the political pressure was intense. Given Japan’s dependence on the security agreement with America, begrudging compliance was the only option.

These three factors resulted in moderate revisions to the Yoshida Doctrine that are best conceptualized through the offered framework. Social creativity persisted, but external pressures heightened Japan’s participation in global affairs. These pressures were not significant enough to reorient its policy strategy, but the preference for a low diplomatic profile embodied within the Yoshida Doctrine was reduced. The norms of privileging economic growth over military strength were maintained.

7.2 Nakasone Questions the Yoshida Doctrine (1982 - 1987)

While none of the aforementioned pressures resulted in an immediate realignment of the US-Japanese Security Treaty, they were precursors to the challenges the alliance would soon face. Amidst the growingly complex political and economic environment of the Cold War, the Japanese economy proved incredibly verbose. As the Japanese economy matured, the average GNP growth rate settled between 4 and 5 percent. Moderate inflation persisted despite this growth and unemployment remained below 2 percent. This excess of capital coincided with soaring levels of FDI. By the end of the 1980s, Japan’s global FDI stood at sixty-seven billion dollars, a marked increase from the $227 million in FDI that Japan had mustered in 1966. Japan’s export surplus continued to grow. By the mid-1980s, Japanese trade surplus with America was valued

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563 Gordon 2003, 293.

564 Michael M. Hutchison, Takatoshi Ito, and Frank Westermann 2006, 3-4.


at fifty billion dollars. As Japanese imports saturated the American market, calls for trade liberalization came from Washington. American policy makers responded by establishing quotas that further restricted the flow of Japanese goods into America.

The success of the Japanese economy corresponded with a more assertive political posture. In 1982, conservative leader Nakasone Yasuhiro became Prime Minister. Nakasone was an outspoken critic of the Yoshida Doctrine, and during his five year tenure he undertook an ambitious effort to redefine Japan’s national security interests. At the heart of Nakasone’s philosophy was the belief that the Yoshida Doctrine was a temporary policy borne out of the necessities of the postwar period. Nakasone pushed for autonomous defense, a traditional alliance with America, and “a constitution independently drawn up by the Japanese people”. He openly approved the transfer of military technology to America, which departed from the Yoshida Doctrine’s ban on the export of arms. Nakasone furthermore declared an end to the taboo on discussing revisions to Article 9 and questioned the validity of the restriction on defense spending that limited SDF expenditures to 1 percent of the GNP.

Nakasone’s hawkish attitude was well received by other conservative leaders, particularly President Reagan, who boldly proclaimed that the “Japanese-American friendship is forever”. The Ron-Yasu relationship, as the relationship between the two leaders became known, enhanced Japan’s prestige among the Western-bloc states and provided Nakasone with a platform for defining his vision for Japan. It was in a

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567 Ibid., 312-3.
568 Gordon 2003, 293.
570 Pyle 2007, 270.
571 Ibid., 272.
572 Sebata 2010, 64, 187, 205-12.
574 Ibid., 206-8; Maswood, Japanese Defence: The Search for Political Power (Regional Strategic Studies Programme, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1990), 18-9.
Washington news conference that Nakasone declared that Japan sought “‘complete control [of the Sea of Japan] so that there should be no passage of Soviet submarines and other naval activities in time of emergency.’”\(^{575}\) Although such proclamations were commonplace during the Cold War, for a country whose Cold War posture had been defensive and reserved, Nakasone’s statements were a radical departure from the recent past.

Under Nakasone, Japan also became a more active member of the international economic community. In 1985, G-7 leaders agreed to the Plaza Accord, which depreciated the yen in an attempt to reduce Japan’s trade surplus and to stimulate the struggling American economy. The value of the dollar versus the yen declined sharply between 1985 to 1987, but structural conditions in Japan inhibited a leveling of the trade imbalance.\(^{576}\) Furthermore, the Plaza Accord may have been a significant contributor to the Japanese asset price bubble that in the coming decade drove Japan into a serious recession.\(^{577}\) Despite these shortcomings, the central role played by Japan during the negotiations demonstrates its position as a major economic actor during the late Cold War period.

According to Kenneth Pyle, Nakasone ‘sought an internally generated sense of national purpose. Rather than adapting to international trends, he would lay out a self-determined course of the nation’.\(^{578}\) Pyle continues: ‘Nakasone set out to transform the pragmatic, opportunistic, and reactive pattern of Japan’s politics. Japan had to set forth its own self-generated objectives and principles’.\(^{579}\) Pyle’s analysis implies a divergence from the sensitivity to international trends and pragmatism

\(^{575}\) Feldman and Landtsheer, *Politically Speaking: A Worldwide Examination of Language Used in the Public Sphere* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998), 50. Feldman and Landtsheer also provide an excellent analysis of how Nakasone’s aggressive language was perceived by the Japanese public.


\(^{577}\) Paprzycki and Fukao, *Foreign Direct Investment in Japan: Multinationals’ Role in Growth and Globalization* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 92.

\(^{578}\) Pyle 2007, 270.

\(^{579}\) Ibid., 272.
highlighted throughout this thesis. This divergence, however, is perhaps better interpreted through this thesis’ framework.

Nakasone was driven, as were all Japanese politicians hereinbefore discussed, by a desire to fortify Japanese national strength against external pressures. For Nakasone, these pressures were partially constituted by the restrictions of the Japanese constitution (authored by Americans) and by the Yoshida Doctrine, which deferred Japanese security to an outside authority (America). These factors compromised Japanese sovereignty and restricted its ability to exercise national power. The neoclassical realist elements of this thesis contest that power and sovereignty comprise the core variables of statehood. As Japan regained its regional position through economic growth, Nakasone addressed what he perceived as a deficiency in sovereignty. Nakasone’s distancing from the Yoshida Doctrine is in-line with the expectations outlined by the offered framework. Furthermore, this dynamic is reminiscent of the debate surrounding the unequal treaties of the nineteenth century discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

The difference between Nakasone and his predecessors was one of strategy, not philosophy. While politicians of the Yoshida camp were visibly less militarily oriented than Nakasone, they all possessed a fundamental desire to strengthen Japan. Nakasone diverged from the social creativity of the Yoshida Doctrine, which restricted Japanese national power to economics. For Nakasone, Japan also needed traditional military strength that corresponded with its economic power, a position reminiscent of the social mobility that characterized pre-1930s Japanese policy (see Chapters 5 and 6). In other words, Nakasone pushed for Japanese normalization.

Within this understanding of social mobility, the policies of the Reagan administration that emphasized military strength and the heightened tensions between superpowers during late Cold War period, must be understood as the relevant global trends Nakasone was charged with interpreting. Nakasone was therefore decidedly sensitive to international trends, albeit the trends embodied by the antagonism of Reagan’s foreign policy. Table 7.1 visualizes Nakasone’s divergence from the Yoshida Doctrine. Note that Nakasone sought to improve Japan’s position
within the Western-bloc hierarchy by mirroring the practices of other secondary partners in America’s bilateral network of alliances, resulting in Britain being listed as a referent group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure of IS (timeline)</th>
<th>Dominant Group</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>FP Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yoshida Doctrine</td>
<td>Bipolar (1952 - 1989)</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1: Nakasone’s Approach vs the Yoshida Doctrine

Nakasone did not undo Yoshida Doctrine, but his divergence from social creativity remains important to understanding Japan’s current foreign policy debate. Conceptually, Nakasone was a precursor to the resurgence of an assertive foreign policy that followed 9/11, which is discussed in Section 7.5. Table 7.2 provides a reference for Japan’s foreign policy during the late Cold War period. The emergence of the “normalist” group within the domestic identity hierarchy resulted directly from Nakasone’s initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972-1991</td>
<td>Bipolar</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>• Mercantilist • Normalist • Pacifist • Nationalist</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Social Creativity. Japan maintains its low diplomatic profile, but its growing economic strength enhances its power and prestige.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2: Late Cold War Foreign Policy Strategy (1972 - 1991)

7.3 The Post-Cold War Challenge (1989 - 1992)

During the late 1980s, the American public became increasingly apprehensive about Japan. The Plaza Accord failed to rectify the trade imbalance, leaving some American
industries, notably the automotive sector, struggling to keep pace with their Japanese counterparts. Additionally, Japanese investors made several high-profile real estate purchases including the Rockefeller Center in New York (1989) and the Pebble Beach golf course (1990), stirring fears of a hostile Japanese takeover of the American marketplace. Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Theodore H. White’s evocatively titled article “The Danger From Japan” claimed that Japan had instituted a long-term plan to undermine the American economy. According to White, other rising states ‘seek to follow Japan’s course, at whatever cost to American jobs. Conscience prevents Americans from spurning the poor and suffering of the world who seek to better themselves; but common sense forbids a course that permits their betterment by our impoverishment’.

President George H.W. Bush utilized the Structural Impediments Initiative (SII) in an attempt to address these concerns. The SII was a committee established in 1979 by the American and Japanese governments as a forum for economic and political experts. The talks provided no viable solutions, prompting American politicians towards more aggressive solutions. Eventually, the “Super 301” provision of the 1988 Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act was applied to Japan. The act authorized trade sanctions against countries impeding America exports. These retaliatory measures were deplored by many in Japan, but under the threat of sanctions, the Japanese government approved tariff revisions and enhanced American access to key sectors of the Japanese economy.

The ongoing struggle to correct the trade imbalance highlights the persistent success of the Japanese economy during the Cold War. When the Soviet Union collapsed at the end of the 1980s, Japan was at the height of its power. The impact on

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both the international system and the direction of Japanese foreign policy was monumental. The absence of a second superpower left America with unquestioned military supremacy, ushering in an era of American hegemony. This shift from bipolarity to unipolarity was, however, limited to the sphere of traditional military power. The dissolution of the Soviet Union resulted not from the military confrontation for which it had been prepared, but as a consequence of domestic and ideological constraints. Key among these factors was the inoperability of the Soviet economic model, demonstrating that even the mostly militarily developed states are vulnerable to economic variables.\footnote{Mccauley, \textit{The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union} (Longman, 2008), 448-51.; Strayer, \textit{Why Did the Soviet Union Collapse?: Understanding Historical Change} (M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 56-63.}

The abrupt Soviet downfall accentuated the limits of military spending, and served as a victory not only for America but for global capitalism. Cold War bipolarity was a consequence of two superpowers engaged in social competition. By employing their colossal material, ideological, and technological strength, America and the Soviet Union attempted to geopolitically best one another. The relative power parity between superpowers (especially with regard to nuclear deterrence) created a stalemate, and each superpower resided over hierarchical power distributions within their respective sphere of influence. Each sphere was bound by unique political norms, the most obvious being the competition between democratic and communist norms. With no discernible challenge to the American hegemony following the Soviet collapse, the security basis for the Cold War privileging of military norms in the Western-bloc (containing communism) vanished.

The new international order had yet to take shape. This thesis’ framework contests that power is defined by international norms and remains dependent upon the perception of state elites. With Soviet communism removed from the ideological landscape, the binding norms of the victorious Western-bloc acquired new significance. Key among these were economic norms, where American preeminence was not assured. Japan soon emerged as the primary challenger to the American led
Decades of steady growth had elevated the Japanese economy to the second largest in the world. Japan’s economic success hinged upon the social creativity of the Yoshida Doctrine, which privileged economic development over military expenditures. The state-driven capitalism of the Japanese model provided a viable alternative to the American model, and was exported to other states. Japanese style capitalism had already provided the ideological and political foundation of the so-called “Asian miracle”, where several Asian states experienced a quarter century of remarkable growth.

Kenneth Pyle notes that ‘there was widespread belief that Japan had succeeded in developing a superior economic system, one that had not only caught up with the other advanced economics but was now prepared to lead a new international system’. This “new international system” was contingent upon a decreased emphasis on military strength. States that avoided the immense military expenditures of the Cold War were perceived as forerunners of a new economically driven international system. Paul Kennedy’s famous book *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* (1987) envisioned the decline of America and rise of Japan. Others repeatedly proclaimed ‘The Cold War is over, and Japan won’. Kenneth Waltz summarized this perspective by stating that ‘[w]hat promised to be the American century will be halved by Japan’s remarkable economic resurgence, or so they say’.

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589 Pyle 2007, 278.


591 For an excellent handling of the widespread use of this phrase by politicians and analysts see: Kristof, "Japan's Full Story: Inside and Outside of the Cabinet,” *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 6 (November 1, 1997).

592 Waltz 1993, 71.
As the international community shifted away from the Cold War system towards power relations dependent upon economic strength, Japan was uniquely positioned for success. This nuance is lost on interpretations of international politics that underplay economic variables. The Yoshida Doctrine had enabled Japanese leaders to exploit the US-Japanese alliance to redirect capital that may have been exhausted by defense spending into the economic health of the state and the welfare of Japanese citizens. Through social creativity, Japanese elites defined their own parameters of success outside the arena of geopolitical competition. With no perceivable threat to the American military and global stability all but assured, other states began exploring similar strategies.

Robert Gilpin summarized the changing norms of the international environment by stating:

Western liberal societies find Japanese economic success particularly threatening because it is the first non-Western and nonliberal society to outcompete them. Western economies are based on belief in the superior efficiency of the free market and individualism, the market and individual in Japan are not relatively autonomous but are deeply embedded in a powerful nonliberal culture and social system.\(^{593}\)

Traditional military power remained definitively in the hands of America, but economic supremacy was contentious. As the Gilpin quote emphasizes, there was serious concern that Japan may head the emerging economic multipolarity. The tenets of Japan’s social creativity needed only to be exported and emulated, which had been the case with the “Asian Miracle”, by other states seeking to realign their foreign policy strategies to favor economic strength over military strength. Although the Japanese economy did falter in the coming years, should Japan remained a model for economic success, its strategy of social creativity may have defined the norms of the economic power hierarchy. In this alternate history, Japan would have constituted the dominant and referent groups for other states. The principles of the Yoshida Doctrine would have set the parameters for those states seeking social mobility through mirroring Japan’s successes. Table 7.3 summarizes the transitioning international system. Note the tiering effect of military unipolarity and economic multipolarity.

\(^{593}\) Quoted in: Pyle 2007, 279.
7.4 The Lost Decade (1990 - 2000)

The optimism surrounding Japan during the early 1990s soon faded. Domestic factors combined with the inability of Japanese leaders to respond to external constraints and undermined Japan’s position. Two events in particular, the Gulf War (1990-1) and the Japanese asset price crisis (1990-2), warrant further consideration.

Japan’s position as a global leader and the feasibility of the US-Japanese alliance, which was necessary for maintaining social creativity, were tested in the early 1990s. Despite broad international support to move against Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait, the restrictions of Article 9 that ‘forever renounce war as a sovereign right’ and lack of support among the public prevented Japanese leaders from acting. Secretary General of the LDP, Ozawa Ichirō, argued that Japan’s participation in the UN-authorized multilateral intervention was consistent with the preamble of the Japanese constitution, which acknowledged Japanese responsibilities to the international community. This interpretation of collective security (shūdanteki anzen hoshō) did not violate the constitutional ban on collective self-defense (shūdanteki jieiken). Ozawa’s efforts were halted by Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki who held that

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594 The Constitution of Japan, Article 9.

JSDF deployment was “constitutionally impossible”. The fallout over the Gulf War created a rift within the LDP that led to Ozawa’s withdrawal from the party.

Prominent American leaders responded to Japan by questioning the practicality of maintaining the American security guarantee. Rust Deming, former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific affairs at the State Department, chastised Japan, stating that it had for too long enjoyed a “free ride on the back of the US”. Tensions further escalated when Japan hesitated in offering financial support for the Gulf War. In response, the House of Representatives voted in September 1990 to remove American troops stationed in Japan unless the Japanese government provided a monetary contribution for maintenance of said troops. The Japanese government eventually provided $13 billion to support the war, and agreed to shoulder fifty percent of the maintenance costs for the American troops stationed in Japan. While the Japanese financial commitment was significant, the protracted process through which it materialized embittered both sides. American politicians contested that financial support did not alleviate the human cost of war. Japanese leaders felt their contribution was under-appreciated and resented American ignorance regarding the nuances of the Japanese constitution.

The most damaging blow to Japan’s position within the emerging power hierarchy was the collapse of the Japanese asset bubble. The strength of the Japanese economy was the foundation of its rising international position. Through social creativity, Japanese leaders had indirectly but effectively provided the international community with an alternative to the militarily distribution of power dominated by America. Furthermore, the Japanese economic model provided emerging economic powers with a variant of capitalism that emphasized societal interconnectivity and

596 Samuels 2007, 66.
597 Ibid.
598 Preble 18 April 2006, 4.
599 Ibid.
600 Cooney, Japan’s Foreign Policy Maturation : A Quest of Normalcy (New York: Routledge, 2002), 36.
601 Gordon 2003, 316.
income equality, which contrasted with the inherent competitiveness of American-style free market capitalism.602

The Japanese asset bubble lasted from 1986-1991 and was characterized by rapid price increases and unchecked credit expansion. The excessive easing of monetary policies provided a ready supply of investment capital, leading to a score of bad investments.603 The Tokyo stock exchange crashed in 1990, with its index falling from 33,000 to 13,000.604 Although the market rallied in the following year, by 1992 the bubble had burst. The stock exchange index fell again, to an average of 14,000.605 Consumer and investment confidence plummeted. The Japanese government responded with a series of policies to revive the economy, but it was already too late.606 Over the next decade, the Japanese economy floundered and GDP growth flatlined.

The social creativity of the Yoshida Doctrine limited Japan’s international presence to the economic sphere, but as the grandeur of the Japanese economy faded, so did the potential of Japan as a global leader. The domestic elements that enabled Japan’s economic rise proved unable to guide a mature Japanese economy, reducing the viability of Japan as a referent group both for its own strategy of social creativity and for other states seeking to expand their economic interests through social mobility.607 Other factors further eroded Japan’s international position. The liberalization of the global economy following the Soviet collapse facilitated the rise of other states. Regionally, the Chinese and Indian economies surged while the Japanese economy remained stagnant. Figure 7.2 provides a visual representation of GDP growth rate between these economies during the 1990s.

602 Jansen 2002, 734.
605 Gordon 2003, 316.
In the domestic sphere, political scandals rocked the once dominant LDP. Cracks in the LDP position surfaced in the late 1980s, when the LDP was for the first time pushed into a minority position. By the mid-1990s, former LDP leaders Hosokawa Morihiro and Ozawa Ichirō left the party and spearheaded the first non-LDP government since 1955. Although Hosokawa’s victory was a landmark moment for political plurality in Japan, the political environment of the 1990s was unstable. From 1989 until 2001, Japan had nine prime ministers who averaged little over a year in office. In comparison, from 1948 until 1989, only thirteen men (including Tanzan Ishibashi whose term was limited to 68 days by a stroke) were elected Prime Minister.

A further shock to the Japanese economy came in 1997, when the Asian economic crisis spread throughout Southeast Asia. A flood of investment capital during the 1990s created an economic bubble in the region, which burst towards the end of the decade. Japanese banks were particularly vulnerable. The collapse of the

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610 Hook 2005, 52.

domestic real estate market left Japanese banks with a host of nonperforming loans. The economic crisis compounded the already precarious position of some of these banks. The Japanese government allowed several banks to fail, and responded by injecting public money into the economy to stabilize the banking sector.\(^{612}\)

The confluence of these factors inhibited Japan’s position within the international power hierarchy, and refocused the efforts of government leaders towards stabilizing the US-Japanese alliance. In response to the backlash against Japanese non-participation in the Gulf War, Japanese politicians enacted the International Peace and Cooperation Law (IPCL) in June 1992, which permitted the JSDF to engage in UN peacekeeping missions. The scope of the IPCL was limited, restricting the JSDF to supporting roles, but it was a significant departure from the established legal parameters that had confined the JSDF to the defense of the Japanese mainland.\(^{613}\)

Further revisions came in the wake of regional instability. In March 1993, Pyongyang announced its intent to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and in May the North Korean government successfully test-launched a medium range ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan. American negotiators eventually brokered a diplomatic solution, but the lack of military operability forced Japan to remain politically reserved throughout the crisis.\(^{614}\) Political pressure for revision of JSDF regulations mounted in Japan, prompting Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa to order a review of the existing defense guidelines.\(^{615}\) New guidelines were finalized in October 1995, which called for stronger military cooperation with America, emphasized the importance of Japanese contributions to regional security,\(^{616}\) and

\(^{612}\) Jansen 2002, 735.

\(^{613}\) Hughes and Fukushima 2004, 67.


\(^{615}\) Hughes and Fukushima 2004, 68.

authorized JSDF deployments in ‘situations in the areas around Japan that have a direct effect on Japan’s security.’

Chinese opposition to Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui’s suggestions of de jure independence during the summer of 1995 further eroded the viability of Japanese leaders maintaining social creativity. The Yoshida Doctrine emphasized a low diplomatic profile, but the 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis was marked by highly publicized Chinese military exercises and Beijing’s suspension of high-level dialogues with Washington and Taipei. The conflict was only resolved following President Clinton’s dispatching of two carrier battle groups into Taiwanese waters. Furthermore, Chinese regional aggressiveness intensified the territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands between China and Japan.

The instability of the 1990s pushed Japan towards stronger participation in regional security through a strengthening of the US-Japanese alliance. In April 1996, President Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto signed the US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security, which refocused the alliance’s objectives on regional security. The US-Japan Defense Guidelines were revised in September 1997. The new guidelines reinterpreted Article 9 to enable JSDF participation in ‘situations in areas surrounding Japan’ through non-combat roles, such as rear-end logistics and search and rescue missions.

Despite these efforts, Japan’s position within the international power hierarchy was severely compromised. The combination of factors both external (the Gulf War, the rise of other powers, and the Asian financial crisis, regional instability) and internal (the asset bubble crash, political instability) forced Japanese leaders to move away from the establishment strategy of social creativity. Structural pressures also played a role. The Yoshida Doctrine excelled under the bipolarity of the Cold War, which

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617 Arase July/August 2007, 657.
619 Arase July/August 2007, 567.
shielded Japan behind the American nuclear umbrella. When the Cold War ended, Japan was thrust onto the international stage and expected by many to assume the mantle of leadership. This expectation shattered under the weight of a stagnant economy and Japan’s hesitancy towards liberal-internationalist initiatives, such as the Gulf War, which had previously been kept in check by Soviet counterbalancing.

For a state whose previous successes had been founded on a low diplomatic profile and economic growth, these factors strained the existing strategy of social creativity. Although the Yoshida Doctrine remained tentatively in place, Japanese politicians explored new avenues for status seeking behavior. The response was a combination of efforts to revive the economy and a renewed emphasis on the US-Japanese alliance. In this regard, the foreign policy strategy of Japan during the 1990s was reactive and largely ambiguous.

The combination of international and external pressures also limited the dissent between political groups. Despite its struggles, the LDP remained Japan’s premiere party. While inconsistent leadership followed the high turnover of prime ministers, there was some consistency in LDP efforts to counter regional instability and to address the political backlash that followed the Gulf War. A hedging strategy emerged, which utilized Japan’s waning economic strength (Japan remained the world’s second largest economy until 2010) and enhanced military cooperation with America to supplement for losses in international prestige.

Although the JSDF remained limited by Article 9, revisions to parameters governing JSDF deployment elevated the position of political groups seeking Japanese normalization within the domestic identities hierarchy. The expanded role for the JSDF that emerged in the 1990s diverged considerably from the low diplomatic profile that underscored Japan’s Cold War social creativity. As is expanded in the following section, a strategy of social mobility that positioned Japan as a more traditional regional power, was emerging. While constructivism accounts for differences in group identities (mercantilist vs. normalist) and neoclassical realism explores the pursuit of national power, a synthesis of the two approaches broadens their analytical power. Furthermore, exploring these dynamics within a framework that also utilizes SIT
reveals the material and ideational differences between these groups. Table 7.4 illustrates the ambiguity within the domestic identity hierarchy and Japan’s policy outcome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991-2001</td>
<td>Military Unipolar</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>• Mercantilist</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td><strong>Ambiguous</strong>. Japan maintains its security deference to America, but begins move away from social creativity following the Gulf War and economic crash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Normalist</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4 : Post-Cold War Foreign Policy Strategy (1991 - 2001)

The ambiguous strategy direction of the 1990s is reminiscent of Japanese foreign policy following the First World War, which wavered between the existing imperialist norms and accepting the nascent internationalist norms of the Versailles-Washington System. While the differences in global trends were not as pronounced in the 1990s as they were in the 1920s, the rise of American military hegemony and the fall of a counterbalance to liberal Western-bloc norms (mainly democracy and capitalism) were strong indicators of the emerging international system.

7.5 The Rise of Koizumi (2001 - 2006)

The aforementioned efforts to address Article 9 were notable precursors to the unfolding of global events during the 2000s. The terrorist attacks of September 11th renewed the American emphasis on its network of bilateral relationship, providing Japanese leaders an opportunity to shift gears away from the increasingly ineffectual strategy of social creativity.

Structurally, the hierarchical order of the international system remained largely unchanged between the 1990s and 2000s. America’s unmatched military strength resulted in a unipolar military-power hierarchy. Nevertheless, the rise of secondary military powers such as China, India, and a rebounding Russia should be noted. Economic multipolarity continued throughout the decade, preserving the two-tiered international order that enabled states to utilize economic strength as a vehicle for
fortifying their international position.

America’s War on Terror should be interpreted in the same vein as containment strategies during the Cold War. While not focused directly at the bipolar social competition of superpowers, the nature of American efforts against terrorism have had a similar impact on power relations. Consequently, secondary powers can enhance their international position within the American-led unipolar power hierarchy by supporting the War on Terror, much in the same manner that states like Britain maintained high international prestige throughout the Cold War through strong integration with American security objectives.\(^{621}\) The Blair administration maintained this strategy through support for the wars in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003). A similar strategy was adopted in Japan. In this manner, Britain provided a referent group for a successful secondary alliance partner for Japan. Given the constitutional restraints of Article 9 and the hesitancy exhibited by Japanese leaders during the 1990s, it is necessary to examine the dynamics of US-Japanese relations of the 2000s and 2010s in further detail.

Japan’s role in American strategic planning was prescribed in October 2000 by a report from the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) titled “The United States and Japan: Advancing toward a Mature Partnership”. The report was lead by Richard Armitage (later appointed Assistant Secretary of State by President Bush) and Joseph Nye, and advocated enhanced security cooperation through technology exchanges, the adaption of a comprehensive Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) program, intelligence sharing, and the rescinding of Japan’s ban on collective self-defense. The report concluded: ‘the post-Cold War Asian security setting pose new and complex challenges to the United States and Japan. How the two countries respond, individually and as alliance partners, will define significantly the security and stability of the Asia-Pacific’.\(^{622}\) The bipartisan report was widely utilized by the Bush...

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\(^{621}\) Social creativity remains possible given this interpretation. For example, French and German opposition to the Iraq War is evidence of their rejection of the American security norms. Japan could have opted to follow a similar path but a confluence of factors including Japanese dependence on the American security guarantee and a conservative government (discussed in detail throughout this section), conditioned Japanese leaders towards social mobility.

\(^{622}\) National Defense University, ”The United States and Japan: Advancing toward a Mature Partnership,” (Institute For National Strategic Studies Special Report, October 2000), 7.
administration.  

In April 2001, Koizumi Junichiro was elected Prime Minister, and under his leadership Japan adopted a more assertive foreign policy stance that embraced the measures outlined by the INSS report, and pushed Japan towards normalization. Koizumi endorsed America’s armed response against the Taliban in Afghanistan (2001) and endorsed the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, which authorized Koizumi to send support vessels and personnel into the Persian Gulf. The unprecedented law created legal ambiguities regarding JSDF deployments. American action in Afghanistan was not authorized by the UN Security Council, and therefore fell outside the 1992 IPCL, which permitted JSDF deployments in support of UN peacekeeping operations. Geographically, the Persian Gulf was well beyond the limits 1999 Situations Law that sanctioned JSDF action in the areas surrounding Japan. The expanded guidelines effectively circumvented the extant restrictions on JSDF deployments.  

This reinterpretation of security coincides with the emergence of social mobility during the 1990s, and is mirrored by Koizumi’s statement that: “it is the duty of the political leadership to consider what kind of structure can be created in the event that the state or the people are exposed to crises and I intend to move forward with consideration on emergency legislation”. The implementation of contingency laws were a hallmark of the Koizumi government, and indicative of Koizumi’s desire to move away from social creativity and position Japan as a more traditional regional power.  

Following the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the Japanese government enacted additional measures that granted the Prime Minister emergency powers and  


\[624\] Arase July/August 2007, 571.  

\[625\] Tsuchiyama 2007, 62.
sanctioned JSDF action in Iraq.\textsuperscript{626} While JSDF efforts in Iraq were limited to supporting roles, the deployment of ground personnel further compounded the legal understanding of Japanese defense. Iraq posed no threat to Japanese security, eliminating justification for JSDF deployment under the emergency powers granted to Koizumi. Furthermore, the invasion elicited a contentious response from the UN Security Council, creating an inconsistency with the UN peacekeeping mandates that precipitated past JSDF operations in Mozambique (1993-1995), Kosovo (1999), and East Timor (2002).\textsuperscript{627}

Security dialogues via the Security Consultative Committee (SCC) also intensified following 9/11. The SCC was established in the mid-1970s, but under Koizumi the meetings became central to alliance strengthening. The committee met in December 2002 to address the changing security environment, and to establish the parameters of mutually shared security responsibilities between the states.\textsuperscript{628} Reciprocity between allies is not unusual. However, given the hesitancy exhibited by Japanese leaders operating under the Yoshida Doctrine, the redefining of Japan’s regional role indicates support from both American and Japanese leaders for social mobility though normalization.\textsuperscript{629} The SCC met twice in 2005 to solidify the alliance’s strategic objectives, and proclaimed the US-Japanese relationship as the ‘bedrock of Japan’s security and anchor of regional stability.’\textsuperscript{630} It was a bold statement, one that indistinguishably linked Japanese security to that of the region.

Japanese commitment to the SCC objectives corresponded with a more assertive foreign policy. For example, under pressure from American diplomats, the SCC


\textsuperscript{627} McDougall 2007, 79-83.


identified the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan controversy as a prime strategic concern.\textsuperscript{631} This marked the first official Japanese declaration regarding Taiwan, which precipitated a contentious response from the Chinese, and represents a significant departure from the low diplomatic stance of the Yoshida Doctrine.\textsuperscript{632} SCC has continued to meet with some regularity, and these meetings have focused on further security cooperation, including increased integration of American and Japanese command structures, missile defense deployments, and defense force exercises between the JSDF and American military.\textsuperscript{633}

The measures enacted under Koizumi circumvented aspects of Article 9 without requiring constitutional reform. Although considerable constraints on JSDF deployment persisted, the authority Article 9 once carried eroded. In terms of norms and identity, Koizumi elevated the status of the normalist group while reducing that of the mercantilist group, which had previously utilized Article 9 to minimize Japan’s commitment to regional security. Counterarguments may contest that without constitutional reform social mobility through normalization is impossible. There is some validity to this argument, and it is explored in the following section. However, constitutional restrictions do not always reflect political realities. America has in its history only issued a handful formal declarations of war as outlined by the American constitution, in spite of dozens upon dozens of oversees military operations.

Military integration between America and Japan provides a second conceptual tool for tracing the move away from social creativity. Shared missile defense initiatives occurred throughout the 2000s. Missile defense has a long history in Japan, beginning with Nakasone support for the Star Wars’ Defense Initiative in 1986 and numerous joint-studies between American and Japanese defense contractors.\textsuperscript{634} Japan’s adoption of missile defense has been driven by ballistic missile proliferation in East Asia,

\textsuperscript{631} Bisley 2008, 77.

\textsuperscript{632} Arase July/August 2007, 580.


\textsuperscript{634} Hughes 2004, 108.
notably the North Korean missile tests in 1990, 1993, and 1998.\textsuperscript{635} Japan began purchasing off-the-shelf missile defense systems from America following 9/11, while maintaining the existing joint-research ventures.\textsuperscript{636} Integration within America’s missile defense program has improved Japan’s defense posture, but it also pushed Japan further away from the low diplomatic profile of the Yoshida Doctrine.

The continuity between Nakasone and Koizumi must not be understated. Both leaders forwarded normalist strategies derived out of a perceived need to address deficiencies in Japanese security. The combination of Japan’s stalled economy and the post-9/11 international environment provided the necessary political traction for a push towards social mobility under Koizumi. At the heart of Koizumi’s approach was a reinterpretation of the US-Japanese alliance through the lens of normalization. While Japan remained the junior member, Koizumi envisioned Japan as more a \textit{partner} and less as a \textit{client} within the American security framework. This dynamic harkens to Koizumi’s predecessors who forged the Anglo-Japanese alliance in 1902 and the early Meiji leaders who themselves countered security deficiencies in the form of unequal treaties.

Under Koizumi’s leadership, the domestic debate over sovereignty and power were refocused towards social mobility. Although elements of social creativity persisted through Article 9, the policy ambiguity of the 1990s was significantly reduced. Within the domestic identity hierarchy, the normalist group supplanted the mercantilist group. Social creativity stymied Japan’s response to the Gulf War. A decade later, the Koizumi reacted to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq with an assertiveness that had been absent from Japanese foreign policy since before the American occupation. Koizumi’s foreign policy approach is represented in Table 7.5.

\textsuperscript{635} Kwak and Joo 2003, 120-3.

\textsuperscript{636} Hughes 2004, 108-11.
The nature of Koizumi’s strategy of social mobility was characterized by both the unipolar power hierarchy and by the multipolar economic hierarchy. The Japanese government maintained its commitment to economic initiatives, but began acting more like a traditional power. Given the strengthening of the US-Japanese alliance during these years, social mobility is best understood when considering America’s network of bilateral alliances. While some states, such as France, drifted away from American hegemony in protestation against the Iraq War (which is indicative of a French foreign policy strategy of social creativity), other states, including Japan and Britain, pursued strategies to enhance their international position through alliance strengthening.

The strategy of social mobility adopted by the Japanese government was therefore contingent upon military support for American strategic objectives in a manner similar to other secondary partners in American alliances. Under this strategy, Britain provided Japan with the prime referent within the group of America’s allies. America constitutes the dominant group under this strategy, however the reliance America placed on its allies increased the permeability of the power hierarchy. See Table 7.6 for details regarding this dynamic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power Variable</th>
<th>Structure of Hierarchy</th>
<th>Dominant Group</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>FP Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Unipolar</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>American Allies</td>
<td>Social Mobility: Upward mobility possible within group of American Allies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Social Mobility: Economic strength elevates international standing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.6 Japanese Constitutional Reform

Conceptualizing this trend of normalization through the developed framework provides crucial insights for understanding the ongoing question of Japanese constitutional reform and the trajectory of Japanese foreign policy. Although nearly a decade has passed since the end of Koizumi’s premiership, his effective bypassing of Article 9 fundamentally altered the security debate within Japan. Using SIT to frame this shift is essential. Strict realist-leaning interpretations too often default to the status quo state vs. revisionist state debate that does not effectively encapsulate the controversy surrounding Japan. Similarly, constructivist interpretations may overemphasize the pacifist norms prevalent within the Japanese public. While pacifist norms do have some impact on the Japanese political system, in the post-Koizumi era these norms have had remarkably little impact on Japan’s foreign policy output.

Nowhere is this shift towards social mobility more evident than when considering the applicability of Article 9 within the debate over constitutional reform. Normalist norms within the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) were elevated by Nakasone’s support for Japan’s right to exercise collective self-defensive. Under Koizumi, the LDP reinterpreted the Japanese constitution to suit a strategy of social mobility, thereby propelling the norms of the normalist group to the apex of Japan’s domestic identity hierarchy.

The LDP proposed legislation in 2004 and 2005 to expand JSDF’s capabilities, arguing that Japan should be permitted to act in a manner commensurate with its great power status. From this perspective, Japan should possess a traditional military charged with national self-defense and permitted to be deployed in accordance with collective defense. LDP proposals aimed to circumnavigate Article 9 by establishing new laws that enabled collective defense without constitutional reform. These measures created legal ambiguities regarding the status of the JSDF, prompting a domestic debate between the LDP and DPJ over constitutional reform. The two houses of the Diet issued a report in April 2005 that recognized the need for constitutional

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637 Tsuchiyama 2007, 65.
638 Hughes 2009, 120.
revisions, but no consensus between the parties was reached.\footnote{Ibid., 118.}

Koizumi’s successor, Abe Shinzō actively pursued constitutional reform during his first term as prime minister (2006–7), stating that ‘it is important that we Japanese write a constitution for ourselves that would reflect the shape of the country we consider desirable in the 21st century’.\footnote{Weymouth, "A Conversation with Shinzo Abe," The Washington Post April 22, 2007.} Richard J. Samuels notes that: ‘Once in power [Koizumi and Abe] seized the opportunity to reform the domestic institutions of national security and to marginalize their political opponents.’\footnote{Samuels 2007, 6.} Abe successfully pushed new legislation through the Diet that placed a three-year moratorium on proposing drafts to the Diet, permitting the LDP time to solidify its political position.\footnote{Hughes 2009, 122-3.}

Following Abe’s first tenure as prime minister, there was a notable decrease in the debate over constitutional revision, largely as a product of the DPJ rising to power. The DPJ lower house victory in August 2009 marked only the second time since 1955 that the LDP was ousted from power. Nevertheless, this apparent rise of plurality within Japan has done little to alter Japan’s move towards social mobility. While the DPJ generally opposes the LDP’s approach to reform, seeing the ongoing reinterpretations of the constitution as “hollowing out” of the constitution’s underlying principles, the DPJ approach implicitly accepts a degree of normalization.\footnote{Ibid., 127-8. There is considerable variation within the DPJ regarding constitutional revisions. For more detail see: Hirata 2008; Hughes 2009; Kushida and Lipscy, Japan under the Dpj: The Politics of Transition and Governance (Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, 2013); Shinoda, "Japan’s Failed Experiment: The Dpj and Institutional Change for Political Leadership," Asian Survey, 52, no. 5 (2012); Shinoda, Contemporary Japanese Politics: Institutional Changes and Power Shifts (Columbia University Press, 2013); Tsuchiyama 2007.}
The DPJ seeks to clearly delineate the legal parameters of the JSDF’s role in self-defense, support of the US-Japanese alliance, and international security coalitions. LDP defector and former president of the DPJ Ozawa Ichirō championed this position by arguing that constitutional revision should be primarily driven by a desire to enhance Japanese participation in “maintaining and resorting peace and security of international society.” The DPJ’s election manifesto of 2009 addressed constitutional reform, stating that: ‘deficiencies in the present constitution are to be supplemented and points requiring revision are to be revised’. It should be noted that the momentum for constitutional reform, however, remained low between 2009 - 2012, as the DPJ remained focused on other political objectives. Additionally, the DPJ’s junior coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party, firmly opposed revisions to Article 9.

The loosening of JSDF restrictions and the strengthening of the US-Japanese alliance that occurred under Koizumi, and continued under Abe, formed the foundation of a strategy of social mobility. Although the LDP was out of power between 2009 - 2012, the DPJ did not reverse this trend. In some regards, DPJ policies reinforced those of the LDP. For example, the DPJ maintained the anti-piracy efforts initiated by the LDP. Japan has taken a leading role in combating international piracy, resulting in the establishment of a JSDF base in Djibouti. The base was completed in 2011 and constitutes the first overseas base of operations since the passing of Japan’s postwar constitution.

While the DPJ’s overarching strategy focused heavily on domestic economic and social considerations, the party also sought to improve Japan’s security posture by redefining the parameters of the US-Japanese alliance and expanding Japan’s

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645 Tsuchiyama 2007, 64.
647 Shinoda 2012, 800-6.
648 Winkler 2012, 22.
commitment to international peace.\(^6\) Although the DPJ may favor different policies than the LDP, such measures are further evidence of normalization via social mobility. That is to say, both parties are concerned with regional security measures that exist well beyond the low diplomatic profile that defined the social creativity of the Yoshida Doctrine. Furthermore, as Kenji E. Kushida and Phillip Y. Lipscy have noted, ‘international structural constraints—particularly regional threats and Japan’s continuing reliance on the United States for security—forced the DPJ to quickly abandon its plans to differentiate itself from the LDP’.\(^7\)

In April 2012, the LDP presented a draft proposal designed to ‘make the Constitution more suitable for Japan’.\(^8\) The revised draft reduced the provisions of Article 9 that prohibit the maintenance and use of armed forces, and modified Article 96 to lower the voting requirements for constitutional amendments to a simple majority of both houses of the Diet (currently, a two-thirds majority is needed).\(^9\) Since his return to the prime ministership in December 2012, Abe has revisited the issue of Article 9. Over the past several months, Abe has announced new interpretations of the constitution to enable Japan to participate in collective self-defense. Abe’s interpretation will allow Japan to exercise the use of force should its allies come under attack. The controversial move represents a dramatic shift away from the restrictions codified in Article 9.\(^10\) Additional evidence of the ongoing shift towards social mobility can be witnessed by Japan’s defense ministry recently requesting a budget of ¥5.05 trillion ($48.7 billion), marking the third straight year of budget increases after almost a decade of cutbacks.\(^11\) The increase returns the military budget to a level comparable with that of the Koizumi administration during the mid-2000s.


\(^7\) Kushida and Lipscy 2013, 6.

\(^8\) Nihon-koku Kenpou Kaisei Souan Q & A, p. 3.

\(^9\) Shinoda 2013, 234.


The debate surrounding constitutional reform clarifies the future direction of Japanese foreign policy. Koizumi pushed Japan towards social mobility, but full normalization is restricted by Article 9. The divide between LDP and DPJ approaches to constitutional reform highlights the contentiousness of the issue. Nonetheless, there is considerable support for some level of constitutional reform within both parties.\textsuperscript{656} While political competition between the two parties exacerbates their differences, when considering the overall picture of the Japanese polity, there exists considerable ideological overlap.

Richard J. Samuels distinguishes four distinct groups within the normalization debate. The four groups are: (1) the pacifists who outright reject the military institution and embrace unarmed neutrality; (2) the middle power internationalists who believe ‘Japan must remain a small power with self-imposed limits on its right to belligerency’; (3) the neoautonomists who desire ‘an independent, full-spectrum Japanese military that could use force’; and (4) the normal nation-alists who favor normality and ‘wish Japan to become a great power’ and to ‘step onto the international stage as an equal of the United States’.\textsuperscript{657} These four groups are divided along two crucial variables, the use of force in foreign policy and the US-Japanese alliance.\textsuperscript{658} By applying the framework of this thesis to Samuels’ conclusions and renaming some of Samuels’ groupings to fit with the offered analysis, the trajectory of Japanese foreign policy comes into focus. Table 7.7 is derived from a similar graphic presented by Samuels.

\textsuperscript{656} For further detail see Chapters 3 and 4 of Winkler 2012

\textsuperscript{657} Samuels 2007, 110-3.

\textsuperscript{658} Ibid.
This representation also accounts for the ongoing struggle between enhancing national power and reaffirming sovereignty that has continually resurfaced since the encroachment of Western imperialist powers during the nineteenth century. Consequently, the neoclassical realist core concepts of statehood discussed throughout this thesis are combined with the constructivist self-other divide between political groups and SIT strategies of status seeking behavior. It should be noted that the mercantilist group possesses an ambiguous strategy resulting from the inoperability of pure social creativity amid Japan’s economic struggles.

Despite differences in their political platforms, and variations regarding Japan’s commitment to international peace, there is widespread support for both the US-Japanese alliance and considerable interest for refining the Japanese constitution within the LDP and DPJ. Resultantly, the push towards social mobility that began in the mid-2000s is unlikely to be reversed without a dramatic realignment of the political discourse in Japan. This conclusion is supported by several informative texts, such as the works of Kenneth Pyle and Christopher W. Hughes. While Article 9 inhibits social mobility from being fully institutionalized within the Japanese polity, the recent measures adopted by Abe have reinforced the LDP strategy of

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659 Hughes 2004; Hughes 2009; Pyle 2007
circumventing constitutional limitations and pursing social mobility without directly addressing Article 9.

When considering the alternatives available to Japan, it is unlikely that a new strategy will materialize to supplant social mobility. Japan does not possess the material power nor political will to rebuff their ties to the American-led power hierarchy, thus eliminating a possible strategy of social competition (nationalist strategy). Similarly, with Japan’s two major political parties placing a high value on the US-Japanese alliance and the Japanese economy no longer uniquely positioned as it was before the asset bubble crash, there are few avenues for establishing a strategy of social creativity (mercantilist and pacifist strategy). The potential for social creativity through multilateral institutionalism is a possibility. However, the organizations powerful enough to facilitate this option are also heavily dominated by America, further binding Japan to its longstanding alliance partner. Should America maintain its record of international security operations, which necessitates military flexibility from it allies, Japanese leaders will be further conditioned towards normalization. Ultimately, Japan has few options beyond maintaining social mobility. Constitutional revisions or further circumventive measures are likely to materialize as the direction set by Koizumi and Abe becomes a more permanent fixture of Japanese foreign policy. Figure 7.8 visualizes this approach. Note that although some ambiguity will remain until Article 9 is revised or completely disregarded, the normalist group has supplanted the mercantilists within domestic identity hierarchy.

![Table 7.8: Japanese Foreign Policy (2001 - 2014)](attachment://Table_7.8.png)
7.7 Surging Towards Social Mobility

This chapter detailed Japanese foreign policy from the 1970s until the present. The framework of this thesis was utilized to identify and analyze the variables driving Japan’s policy options. Theoretical consistency is necessary, as this chapter deals heavily with yet unresolved aspects of Japan’s policy evolution. The following conclusions can be drawn by revisiting the research questions:

1. How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy?

   - Throughout the latter half of the Cold War, Japanese leaders maintained the social creativity of the Yoshida Doctrine. Nevertheless, external pressures arising from Middle Eastern instability and the Sino-American rapprochement forced Japanese leaders to refine their foreign policy strategy. A low diplomatic profile persisted, but Japan’s vulnerability to external pressures conditioned its leaders towards a more assertive foreign policy stance. This assertiveness materialized in the 1980s under Nakasone, who sought to enhance Japan's international position through security objectives that diverged from the Yoshida Doctrine. Although Nakasone was unable to shift Japan away from its social creativity, his efforts set the direction for future strategy developments.

2. How have these factors changed with time?

   - The collapse of the Soviet Union fundamentally alternated the international power hierarchy (from bipolarity to unipolarity). The confluence of domestic unrest following the crash of the Japanese asset bubble and Japan’s lackluster response to the Gulf War undermined Japan’s position within the international power hierarchy. Throughout the 1990s Japan struggled to clarify its national direction. As Japan’s once dominant economy faltered, social creativity ceased to provide the power and prestige Japanese leaders desired.

   - Following 9/11, Koizumi pushed Japan towards social mobility through normalization. Koizumi envisioned a Japan less deferent to the American security guarantee and more participatory in assuring regional security. The direction of social mobility established under Koizumi has been furthered by
Abe, but remains limited by Article 9. The shift away from social creativity has thus been gradual and is not entirely institutionalized within the Japanese polity. Nonetheless, a review of the current debate surrounding constitutional reform reveals that Japan is unlikely to diverge from social mobility without the dramatic reorientation of the current political environment.

3. What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next?

- Two ideological camps are traced in this chapter. The first group embodied the norms of the Yoshida Doctrine, which privileged a low diplomatic profile and economic growth. Within the domestic identity hierarchy, this group remained preeminent until the end of the Cold War. Aspects of the Yoshida Doctrine remain salient to the political discourse in Japan, particularly the debate surrounding Article 9. The second group of normalists emerged under Nakasone, and rose to dominance through Koizumi’s push towards social mobility. Normalist norms are currently being reinforced by Abe ongoing efforts to reinterpret Article 9. While some ambiguity persists within Japan’s domestic identity hierarchy, not even the DPJ has labored to reverse this trend towards normalization, suggesting that Article 9 will either be revised or completely disregarded to accommodate Japan’s socially mobile foreign policy trajectory.
Conclusions

The Trajectory of Japanese Foreign Policy

DDH-181 JDS Hyuga of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force
Contemporary Japan possesses all the qualities of a great power. It wields the third largest economy in the world, features highly developed social and political institutions, and is at the forefront of technological advancement. Yet in the context of crafting foreign policy, the options available to Japanese leaders are greatly restricted by Article 9, which prohibits the use of force as an instrument for settling international disputes. Even more unusual is that for a state with wide-ranging legal limits on the legitimate use of force, Japan possess one of the most advanced and powerful militaries in the world. In addition to Japan’s own high level of technological development and economic capabilities, the JSDF’s close integration with the American military has significantly bolstered Japan’s military capability.

While the JSDF is equipped and often times functions as a conventional military force, it remains legally an extension of the police, serving theoretically to only bolster domestic security. This restriction hinders Japan’s ability to act independently of America, limits its contributions to regional and international security, and jeopardizes it position within international institutions, such as the UN. In recent decades, Prime Ministers Koizumi and Abe have introduced policies to significantly reduce the scope of Article 9. While these measures have improved Japan’s security posture, full normalization remains hindered by the pacifist elements of Japan’s constitution.

Japan’s history is similarly riddled with ambiguities arising from seemingly irreconcilable shifts in its foreign policy strategy. The encroachment of Western powers into East Asia undermined Japan’s centuries of self-imposed isolation, requiring Japanese leaders to quickly adapt to the international system of the nineteenth century. Within only a few decades, Japan had successfully modernized, and utilized its newfound political and military strength to reverse the unequal treaties it was coerced into signing. The emergence of Japan as a great power demonstrated that the military and economic prowess of the Western powers was a result of technological advancement and not of cultural superiority, thus providing peripheral states, which had been similarly marginalized, a successful state model that could be emulated. Yet the deleterious consequences of Japanese militarism left another equally indelible impact on the region. The historical legacy of Japan’s occupation of Taiwan, Korea,
Manchuria, its invasion of China, and war of aggression against the Allied powers remains a point of contention that often threatens regional stability.

Unraveling the mechanisms behind the foreign policy output of any state is a challenge at the best of times. For a state like Japan - whose policy history has shifted from isolationist to expansionist, from expansionist to militarist, from militarist to mercantilist, and from mercantilist to the political enigma Japan is today - this challenge can be outright daunting. With any body of research, certain calculated choices are made. These decisions determine which case studies are examined, the literature utilized, and the framework deployed. Within a discipline as far reaching as international relations, these decisions are sometimes complemented and often times contradicted by other researchers, who themselves must place limits upon the scope of their research. Resultantly, certain problematics persist. State-centric analyses of foreign policy trends too often truncate history in the hopes of excising inconvenient or ambiguous periods in a state’s historical evolution. So too are cultural norms frequently ignored in pursuit of theoretical parsimony, or if the pendulum swings in the opposite direction, cultural uniqueness is conveniently employed to counter theoretical shortcomings.

To forestal these limitations, this thesis developed a unique theoretical framework. Neoclassical realism and constructivism were first combined to broaden each theory’s range of analysis. In addition to providing a basis for engaging with the core neoclassical realist assumptions of statehood, neoclassical realism contends that the perception of political leaders must be considered when analyzing a state’s foreign policy output. Constructivism offers insights into the norms and identities that determine how the perception of state elites is formed. The relationship between neoclassical realism and constructivism is thus complementary, with neoclassical realist assumptions regarding inter-state relations forming a foundation upon which ideational factors can be engaged. Although this amalgamated approach considerably furthered the existing scholarship of both theoretical traditions, when considering how subjective factors (such as the perception of state elites) translate into foreign policy strategies, it proved necessary to draw upon additional analytical tools.
The incorporation of SIT expands the analytical capacity of this neoclassical realist-constructivist hybridization. SIT examines how perception, identity, and norms translate into group behavior. When applied to international relations, SIT provides a useful mechanism for conceptualizing foreign policy strategies and identifying the constraints acting upon state elites. SIT thereby presents a focused analytical lens that employs social psychology to clarify the interplay of international relations concepts. While SIT has been used to a limited degree within international relations, this thesis dramatically expands the current literature through its application of SIT to foreign policy analysis and Japanese history.

By tracing the aforementioned theoretical elements over a broad historical timeframe, this thesis forwards a multilevel framework that accounts for both the international and domestic factors that shape foreign policy, and designates useful terminology for defining foreign policy strategies. This framework is distinctive in that it remains theoretically parsimonious while accounting for the often misinterpreted shifts in Japan’s foreign policy strategies. By applying contemporary international relations interpretations of key variables (e.g. power, sovereignty, and norms) to historical events that pre-date the very emergence of the discipline, this thesis has arrived at several far ranging empirical conclusions.

The research questions of this thesis - How have concerns over national security and other external pressures from the international system influenced the dramatic shifts in modern Japan’s foreign policy? How have these factors changed with time? What ideological continuities exist between competing groups of Japanese political elite from one historical period to the next? - necessitated a broad, longitudinal historical survey. To facilitate a comprehensive discussion of the noted theoretical components, and to engage fully with the research questions, each of the preceding empirical chapters is bound to a specific time period. With the conclusions of these chapters already presented, it is now possible to unravel the nature of the continuities that have been observed.

Three historical and one contemporary (ongoing) shift in modern Japan’s foreign policy evolution are discussed. These are: (1) the severing of historical
isolationism and embracing of social mobility through imperialism during the Meiji Restoration; (2) the turn from social mobility to social competition that coincided with a revisionist Japan in the 1930s; (3) the postwar development of social creativity embodied in the Yoshida Doctrine; and (4) the ongoing push towards social mobility catalyzed by Koizumi and furthered by Abe.

The arrival of the Western imperialist powers during the nineteenth century was a systemic shock that undermined centuries of Sino-centric regional hierarchy. As Japanese leaders scrambled to fortify Japan against gunboat diplomacy, numerous political groups emerged. Confrontation between these groups played out over the next several decades, until a consensus formed around pro-modernization and pro-restoration norms following the Satsuma-Chōshū victory during the Boshin War. The internal and external constraints that embodied these competing identities must be contextualized. The external challenges to Japan's isolation, its unequal treaties with the West, and the internal political struggle resulting from Western encroachment, pushed Japan towards social mobility through modernization. Japanese leaders believed that by emulating the successful practices of the imperialist Western powers, Japan would gain the necessary state power and political traction to reaffirm its compromised sovereignty. Understanding the historical context of Japan's transition from isolation to an outward looking state preoccupied with sovereignty and power is essential, as it is the filter through which future foreign policy decisions were crafted.

By the early twentieth century, Japan had metamorphosed into an imperialist global power. Through a strategy of social mobility that hinged upon rapid modernization, Japanese leaders quickly reached a level of parity with the Western powers, and shifted the nucleus of East Asian power politics to center on Japan. This elevated Japan's position within the international power hierarchy, affording the necessary political capital to reverse the unequal treaties and forge an alliance with Britain. Having reclaimed its compromised sovereignty, Japanese state elites turned their attention toward overseas territorial acquisition. Given the imperialist norms of the period, this approach constituted a primary means of enhancing state power through social mobility.
The aftermath of the First World War ushered in a new era of internationalism and created considerable ambiguity regarding the future direction of Japanese foreign policy. Japan initially experimented with both imperialist and internationalist approaches to foreign policy. Yet rising domestic opposition, the collapse of the Versailles-Washington System, and the conspiring of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria restricted the foreign policy options of the Japanese government. Japanese leaders ultimately maintained their commitment to imperialist norms, thereby rejecting the global trends of the international system. Although Japan maintained ideological consistency with regard to norms, its persistent imperialist outlook isolated it from its allies, and represents a shift away from social mobility.

The rising influence of the military and swelling nationalism transformed the established imperialist norms into those of overt militarism. From the Mukden Incident of 1931 until the conclusion of the Pacific War in 1945, Japan practiced a socially competitive foreign policy that challenged the Western-centric international power hierarchy. Appropriately framing the transition from a status quo to revisionist power (from social mobility to social competition) requires a nuanced understanding of international norms, the changing external constraints, and the established preoccupation with power and sovereignty borne out of the Western imperial encroachment. Such nuance is often lost by literature that hints at Japan’s militarist past without contextualizing certain historical continuities. While not seeking to downplay the numerous atrocities committed by the Imperial military, it must be noted that Japan maintained ideological consistency with regard to the imperialist norms that had defined the geopolitics of the previous decades.

The Allied occupation in 1945 once again undermined Japanese sovereignty and precipitated the third policy shift. Occupation forces purged the majority of the militarist political elements within the Japanese government, facilitating the rise of more diplomatically minded leaders. While the occupation did initially coerce the Japanese elite towards a pacifist foreign policy under the postwar constitution, the rising tensions of the Cold War prompted the American government to pressure Japanese leaders towards a more traditional security posture. Nevertheless, Yoshida and his successors utilized Article 9 to resist the external pressure to rebuild the
Japanese military, and opted to maintain a low diplomatic profile while rebuilding the Japanese economy. The foreign policy of the Yoshida Doctrine must therefore be interpreted as a socially creative strategy that defined new parameters for gauging prestige and power within an international system driven by the strategic interests of the Cold War.

Notably, this strategy was not simply one of pacifism, as suggested by texts attempting to link the current anti-war sentiment within the Japanese public with the postwar pacifist moment. While Yoshida and many of his contemporaries expressed a aversion for war, which coincided with the palpable war exhaustion prevalent in postwar Japan, the Yoshida Doctrine was designed to increase Japan’s national power. As is evident from the negotiations between Dulles and Yoshida, Japanese leaders skillfully navigated the power dynamics of the emerging bipolarity of the Cold War to rebuild the Japanese infrastructure and strengthen Japan’s national power through economic norms.

This distinction might appear minor at first, but the historical context through which the Yoshida Doctrine emerged must be considered. In each case study examined, state elites balanced the trade-offs of bolstering state power and fortifying sovereignty. During the early Meiji period it suited Japan’s leaders to temporarily accept the loss of sovereignty resulting from the unequal treaties, while they endeavored to strengthen Japan’s national power. In the postwar period, Japanese leaders similarly utilized losses of sovereignty - those resulting from Allied occupation, the pacifist constitution (which was heavily influenced by the Allies), and the American security guarantee - to offload the financial burden of Japan’s national security. This approach enabled Japanese elites to direct their efforts towards enhancing state power through economic growth. As the Japanese economy matured, normalist leaders like Nakasone attempted to reclaim aspects of Japan’s sovereignty by rebalancing the US-Japanese alliance and pushing for autonomous defense.

Japan’s strategy of social creativity reached the height of its success just as the Cold War ended. Possessing the second largest economy in the world and removed from the rampant military spending of Cold War power politics, many looked to Japan
as a model state for the new international system. This optimism was short-lived, however, as the crash of the Japanese asset bubble and Japan’s lackluster response to the Gulf War quickly undermined its international prestige and challenged its strategy of social creativity. Throughout the 1990s Japanese leaders struggled to clarify their national direction, leading to a decade of relative policy ambiguity. Following 9/11, Koizumi and Abe pushed several pieces of landmark legislation through the Diet, granting Japanese leaders unprecedented flexibility in deploying the JSDF without outright challenging Article 9. The direction forged by Koizumi and Abe was one of relative social mobility, where Japan sought to join the ranks of the elite states by participating in American security objectives without constitutional revision. A decade later, no significant counter to the LDP’s push towards social mobility has yet emerged. In fact, since returning as prime minister, Abe has endeavored to further distance Japanese foreign policy from the restrictions of Article 9.

Tracing these shifts provides crucial insights into the processes through which foreign policy emerges. Japan’s foreign policy history demonstrates a consistent effort to strengthen state power vis-à-vis other regional powers and to reclaim or reaffirm aspects of Japan’s national sovereignty. While neoclassical realism suggests such characters are present for all states, understanding how the variables of power and sovereignty are defined requires a more nuanced understanding of domestic and international norms. Constructivism reveals how ideational factors constrain and inform the behavior of state elites, necessitating an analysis that distances itself from the “black-box” approach often forwarded by structuralist-leaning theorists. Surely, how power was conceptualized by Japanese imperialists during the 1930s was radically discordant with the mercantilist mindset of Japanese leaders during the 1970s.

The core variables of statehood (power and sovereignty) and norms clarify part of the process through which foreign policy emerges from the opaque shades of history and state bureaucracy. Neither theory, even when combined, offers a comprehensive understanding of the process through which foreign policy strategies emerge. By introducing SIT, this thesis employs a new level of analysis that draws upon the innate groupism that defines all aspects of social behavior. Japan’s imperialist and militarist past, its postwar mercantilism, and its current move towards
normalization materialized through the interconnectedness of history, perception, norms, and external constraints.

This pattern of evaluating the external structure, considering the balance between power and sovereignty, and identifying a referent group has been witnessed through each historical period hereinbefore discussed. The arrival of the Western powers in East Asia shifted regional power dynamics, forcing Japanese leaders to evaluate the most effective mechanisms for enhancing Japanese power and sovereignty. Ultimately, Japan’s leaders settled on a strategy of social mobility, they identified a relevant referent group in Britain, and modeled the new Japanese state after the prevailing great powers of the day. Eventually the imperialist norms adopted by Japanese leaders transformed into those of outright militarism, and Japan turned its attention towards challenging the Western-centric power hierarchy through social competition. In the process, state elites identified the great powers of the day, namely America and Britain, as the referent group they sought to displace.

Following the surrender of Imperial Japan, Japanese leaders faced a similar choice in what direction to steer the Japanese state. In this instance, they chose to rebuff the external pressure to follow the American lead in containing communism. Consequently, Japanese leaders opted for a strategy of social creativity, they elevated their own state-driven economic norms, and decided to self-referentially define their referent group. Currently, Japanese elites are actively sidestepping Article 9 in an effort to push normalization forward without forcing the issue of constitutional reform. This approach enables a flexible strategy of social mobility, allowing Japanese leaders to support a great range of security initiatives, as is expected of America’s junior alliance partners. In the context of SIT, these junior members serve as referent groups for one another. By tracing these theoretical and empirical conclusions over a broad historical survey, this thesis offers a clear and comprehensive picture of Japan’s foreign policy evolution, as represented by Table 8.1.
### Table 8.1: Tracing Japanese Foreign Policy Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Structure of IS</th>
<th>Permeability of IS</th>
<th>Domestic Identity Hierarchy</th>
<th>Referent Group</th>
<th>Policy Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1633-1804</td>
<td>Unipolar</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Traditionalists</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Social Creativity. Policies of sakoku isolate Japan. Chinese hegemony results in regional unipolarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1804-1854</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Traditionalists</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Social Creativity. Isolation maintained, but tenets of sakoku challenged by arrival of Western powers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854-1868</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Reformists</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Commodore Perry Opens Japan to Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Loyalists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traditionalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868-1894</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Modernist</td>
<td>Western Powers</td>
<td>Social Mobility. Westernization generally accepted for short period before giving way to more nuanced modernization modeled after Europe and America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894-1918</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Imperialist</td>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>Social Mobility. With modernization in full swing, Japanese leaders shift focus from domestic to international interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Nationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pan-Asianist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Internationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1931</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>• Imperialist</td>
<td>British &amp; America</td>
<td>Social Mobility. Imperialist and internationalist directions in FP explored. Considerable ambiguity in dominant identity. Western powers not confronted, thus maintaining Social Mobility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Internationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Nationalist</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Pan-Asianist</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Internationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-1945</td>
<td>Multipolar</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• Militarist</td>
<td>British &amp; America</td>
<td>Social Competition. Imperialist norms transform in outright militarism that challenges the Western-centric hierarchical order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pan-Asianist</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Nationalist</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Internationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-1972</td>
<td>Bipolar</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>• Mercantilist</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Social Creativity. Article 9 utilized to off-load security costs onto America, affording Japan opportunity to focus on domestic rebuilding and economic growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pacifist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Revisionist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-1991</td>
<td>Bipolar</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>• Mercantilist</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Social Creativity. Japan maintains its low diplomatic profile, but its growing economic strength enhances its power and prestige.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Nationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pacifist</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Nationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-2001</td>
<td>Military Unipolar</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>• Mercantilist</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Ambiguous. Japan maintains its security deference to America, but begins move away from social creativity following the Gulf War and economic crash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Normalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mercantilist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Nationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pacifist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2014</td>
<td>Military Unipolar</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>• Normalist</td>
<td>American Allies</td>
<td>Social Mobility. LDP measures have greatly eroded the effectiveness of Article 9. Negligible resistance offered by opposition parties. Normalization becoming more widely institutionalized in Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Multipolar</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Mercantilist</td>
<td>America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Nationalist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pacifist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is only with this multileveled understanding of Japanese foreign policy, that the contemporary constitutional debate facing Japanese leaders can be unpacked. By retooling core international relations concepts within the vocabulary of SIT, this thesis demonstrates a relatively consistent strategy of social mobility since the premiership of Koizumi. Within the context of post-9/11 Japan, social mobility centers on Japan utilizing a traditional military in a ‘normal’ manner as expected from other great powers, especially those allied with America.

This indirect approach to normalization forestalls the potential blowback from outright revising Article 9 that may surface both domestically from pacifist segments of the public, and from other regional powers, such as China or Korea, seeking to hedge against Japanese influence. This is not to say that revision of the Japanese constitution is off the table; for politicians like Abe it certainly is not. At the same time, Abe and his supporters do not wish to undermine Japan’s security ties with America, nor jeopardize the continuing expansion of JSDF responsibilities by pressing too strongly for constitutional reform. When considering the wider landscape of Japanese politics it must be noted that Japan’s primary opposition party, the DPJ, has done little to actively reverse the move toward normalization. Given that Japan’s two major political parties are generally supportive of expanding Japan’s role in international security, without a drastic reorientation of the political discourse within Japan, it is unlikely that this trend will be reversed.

As regional power dynamics continue to shift towards China, Japanese leaders will be pressed to retain Japan’s regional power and address any perceived deficiency in sovereignty that might inhibit efforts to reinforce Japan’s regional position. Japan’s strategy of social mobility must therefore be closely monitored. While the indirect forms of normalization that are currently underway are likely to continue for some time, these pursuits will continue to erode Article 9. Ultimately, Japanese leaders are on course to either diminish Article 9 to the level where it serves no practical purpose within Japanese politics, or a full-scale redrafting of Japanese constitution. Either outcome will place tremendous security pressure upon the Asia-Pacific, a region that is historically wary of Japanese assertiveness and already strained under the emerging bipolarity of a potential Sino-American rivalry.
Future Research Pathways

The conclusions of this thesis are not designed to stand alone as an exclusive monolith of research. It is hoped that the framework and conclusions developed in this thesis will help refine current topics facing studies of Japan and the broader East Asian region. Potential theoretical and empirical pathways for future research must therefore be considered.

In order to maintain focus on the stated research questions, this thesis focuses primarily on state elites. As noted in Chapter 2, there is a domestic contestation for power between competing political groups (the domestic identity hierarchy). It falls to state elites to mediate this competition and simultaneously balance the external pressures from the international power hierarchy. Future research can draw from the developed framework to more closely examine the impact of the general public or non-state actors on state elites. Exploring this dynamic is particularly relevant in reviewing efforts towards constitutional revision, and the level of support for said revisions among the Japanese public. Further exploration of status seeking behavior and group dynamics with the Japanese polity would also clarify the role of the LDP and DPJ in the political discourse. There is a considerable blurring of party lines as a result of prevailing factional affiliation (habatsu), leading to ideological overlap among the many of the politicians discussed. A more comprehensive understanding of the current domestic identity hierarchy is needed.

SIT provides crucial insights into status seeking behavior. Future research could utilize SIT to better understand how the emergence of new norms transforms the domestic competition between political groups. A possible avenue to explore is how modernization norms affect the domestic power of societal classes. During the early Meiji period, many of the samurai elite that had held esteemed positions within Tokugawa Japan were forced aside by the sweeping modernization efforts. A comparative survey of how ruling classes reacted to the domestic reorientation of modernization in their respective states may yield fruitful results.

The framework of this thesis has been designed to trace the evolution of a state’s foreign policy over a broad historical timeframe. For the purposes of this
research, three case studies - Meiji Japan, Imperial Japan, and postwar Japan - were examined. Nevertheless, the framework is easily transferable. A similar state-centric approach could be applied to other regional powers to form a comprehensive survey of East Asian power dynamics. These factors are particularly salient when considering Sino-Japanese relations. The collapse of the Chinese hierarchical order coincided with the rise of Japan, thereby shifting regional power dynamics. Japan's economic successes and military ties with America reinforced it position within the regional power hierarchy. As China rises and Japan strives to retain its regional power and prestige, the theoretical framework of this thesis could drive research that clarifies the historical, ideological, and hierarchical factors at play. This pathway would greatly enhance the conclusions presented in Chapter 7, and could specifically shed light on the ongoing Senkaku Island dispute.

Japanese leaders have been at the forefront of reconceptualizing security along the lines of “comprehensive” or “human” security. This paradigm privileges human welfare above traditional notions of national security, and is representative of a strategy of social creativity. The norms of comprehensive security have had some impact on Japan's policy making elite. Exploring whether these emerging norms have the potential to challenge the current trend towards social mobility would yield crucial insights into the future trajectory of Japanese foreign policy. This research could also explore Japan's use of multilateralism to bolster its position within the regional hierarchy.

A similar historically rooted expansion of the groups competing with the domestic identity hierarchy would enhance the offered conclusions. For example, literature on interwar Japan often focuses too narrowly on the emergence of militarism; further discussion of the present liberal internationalist factors and the military’s fear of democratic ideals would help clarify this transitional moment in Japan's history. A more thorough handling of the nationalist groups - beginning with the sonnō jōi movement, through the prevalent nationalism of the Pacific War, and ending with and analysis of contemporary nationalist groups (as noted the second quadrant of Table 7.7) - could supplement this research. Clarifying how nationalism has translated into policy may clarify why current nationalist movements often
forward revisionist interpretations of the Pacific War. Exploring offshoots of Japanese nationalism, such as Pan-Asianism, may supplement this pathway.

**Issues and Ambiguities**

As with any research project, certain limitations must be noted. When considered in conjunction with the potential future pathways outlined above, some if not all of these limitations would be addressed by future research projects that expand upon the theoretical framework presented in this thesis.

The primary aim of this thesis is to trace foreign policy output. As such, much of the offered analysis examines state elites charged with crafting foreign policy. This approach is consistent with neoclassical realism, which contests it is the perception of state leaders that filters and interprets external pressures from the international system. Similarly, constructivism holds that group leaders possess more control over group identity and norms than other in-group members. The role of the general public and non-state actors in this thesis is consequently underplayed to maintain analytical focus on the research questions.

A similar analytical restriction has been applied to liberalism. Liberal interpretations of interstate relations are rooted in twentieth century analyses of economic integration and regionalism. Some interesting analysis could potentially be drawn from examining Japan’s attempts to bolster its position within the post-Cold War power hierarchy through institutionalism. Nonetheless, some of the most influential international organizations - the UN, IMF, WTO, and World Bank - often support American global interests. When considering the *most* relevant factors to the research questions, it proved more effective to examine US-Japanese bilateralism than Japanese multilateralism.

The narrative of this thesis is designed to trace the evolution of modern Japan’s foreign policy. Resultantly, a greater focus is given to domestic factors in the early chapters, where the competition of political groups determined the very nature of the emerging modern state. The norms of the dominant domestic group, namely pro-modernization, were disseminated across Japan following the Meiji Restoration, and formed the basis of Japan’s foreign policy culture. This narrowing effect is fundamental to the narrative. The ongoing balance between protecting sovereignty
and enhancing state power inherited from the Meiji period has consistently defined the domestic struggle between groups. Furthermore, this narrative supplements the existing literature where the tracing of domestic competition between political groups has centered on the years following the Pacific War.

This thesis draws heavily from existing historical sources. Some criticism could be raised that the lack of new primary source material hinders the presented analysis. However, the historical sources used in this thesis are frequently neglected by international relations scholars whose preference for artificially truncating Japanese history to the period following the Pacific War is noted in the literature review. One of the stated purposes of this research is to improve international relations research by forwarding a multidisciplinary approach that draws upon underutilized resources.

Closing Thoughts

Japan is blessed with a rich cultural history and cursed with a complicated past. It possesses a high level of economic, social, and military development with political leaders dedicated to elevating Japan’s status within the international system. Yet it is also a state with a pacifist constitution and a contentious regional position. The confluence of internal and external dynamics drive the foreign policy of all states. It is the charge of researchers to determine through what metric the principles of statehood and group dynamics are interpreted without reducing their analysis to counterfactual or ahistorical claims. This imperative is all the more necessary for those committed to researching the enigma that is Japan. This thesis has addressed these gaps by presenting a historically nuanced conceptualization of modern Japan’s foreign policy evolution. It is my sincere hope that this project will in some capacity provide international relations scholars and East Asian experts a resource for expanding their respective research.
Appendix

To enhance the overall visual appeal of the title and quote pages at the beginning each chapter, citations were not presented. This appendix provides additional citation information regarding these elements. Note that quotations that also appeared within the body of a chapter are not listed here.

Introduction:
Title Page: Image Adapted from the Wikimedia Commons file: "Regions_and_Prefectures_of_Japan_2.svg"

Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:
Title Image: Adapted from the Wikimedia Commons file: "Diet_of_Japan_Kokkai_2009.jpg"

Chapter 3:
Title Image: Sourced the Wikimedia Commons file: "Foreigner_and_Wrestler_at_Yokohama_1861.jpg"

Chapter 4:
Title Image: Sourced from the Wikimedia Commons file: "JapanPunch29September894.jpg"

Chapter 5:
Title Image: Sourced from the Wikimedia Commons file: "Forces_returning_2.jpg"
Non-cited Quotes: General Dragomirov; Shidehara Kijūrō660

Chapter 6:
Title Image: Sourced from the Wikimedia Commons file: "Macarthur_hirohito.jpg"
Non-cited Quotes: Lt. Col. Ishiwaru; Chiang Kai-shek; Yoshida Shigeru; Douglas MacArthur661

Chapter 7:

Conclusion:


The Constitution of Japan, Article 9.


Kristof, Nicholas D. "Japan's Full Story: Inside and Outside of the Cabinet." *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 6 (November 1, 1997).


"The Problem of China's Fall." *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*, 5 April 1895.


Taliaferro, Jeffrey W., Steven E. Lobell, and Norrin M. Ripsman. "Introduction: Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy." In Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy, edited by Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, 1-42. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.


