

Japan's foreign policy under the DPJ: What has changed and what not?



Christopher Hughes
University of Warwick

DPJ Foreign & Security Policy

- DPJ 2 years since taking power; already prime minister no. 3; assessment of impact on Japan's trajectory; any changes from LDP?
- DPJ initial 'fear and loathing' in Japan and US
- Fools: naïve; wrongheaded; confused; no policy?
- Knaves: untrustworthy; hidden agenda?
- DPJ shift (or drift) significant from LDP trajectory
- Negative for US-Japan; negative for Japan
- DPJ to be cajoled/coerced on right path (by US?)

DPJ Foreign & Security Policy

- DPJ explicit, coherent, sophisticated, realistic, grand strategy/vision:
 - not necessarily problematic for US-Japan ties; although caused short-term frictions
- DPJ implementation difficulties:
 - domestic (leadership coordination; Ozawa; internal divisions; coalition partners; experience; priorities; focus on process; posturing; 'yuai')
 - international (US resistance; China challenge; NK)

DPJ Foreign & Security Policy

- DPJ pressures results in default to LDP-type strategy
- US-dependent, East Asia underdeveloped
- DPJ longer term may yet attempt to pursue ambitions; create tensions with US

What is/was the DPJ vision?

- Strong/active international power
- Recognition of multi-polarity (US relative decline; China's rise; Japan decline); escape Cold War, not post-war
- Japan risks US-China conflict or condominium
- Japan enhance position by breaking past behavior (over-dependence on US; shirking responsibilities; 'closed' nationalism; 'blocking regionalism')
- Japan greater balance between US and China (recentering?)
- Cognitive, not tactical, East Asian regionalism
- Emphasis on UN and multilateralism
- Japan restore autonomy key for 'normal' ally/partner

US-Japan Alliance

- DPJ not anti-US; genuine rationalization of importance/sustainability US-Japan alliance (deeper than LDP?)
- DPJ reorient alliance within Constitution and security treaty
- ‘Equal alliance’; no followership; less military out of area; focus on East Asia
- ‘Multilayered alliance’ (finance, climate, nuclear)

US-Japan Alliance

- Japan withdraw Indian Ocean; civilian contribution; more meaningful?
- Okinawa/Futenma
 - DPJ questions USMC role; manifesto commitments; attempt to sustain alliance
 - Japan domestic mishandling (and by US)
 - DPJ plans keep USMC in Okinawa; accepted deterrence rationale;
 - Resolution or gridlock? (same mistakes as LDP?)

US-Japan Alliance

- US realignment/bases
 - DPRI continues mainland
 - DPJ caution on HNS and SOFA
- Nuclear issues
 - 'secret pacts', DPJ not press on NCND
 - DPJ caution NFU/US strategy, NE Asia NFZ
 - DPJ more cooperative on 'nuclear free world'?
- BMD

Japan and East Asia

- DPJ and LDP continuities (Koizumi EAC 2002; FTA/EPA/CEP; financial regionalism)
- LDP 'US-Japan good = good Japan-East Asia relations'; regionalism proliferation/dilution
- DPJ commit EAC; enmesh China in working macro-region; open Japan; less ideology & history
- DPJ 'open regionalism', not bloc; EAC core regional format; values & multi-layered functional cooperation; Japan not cede leadership to China
- DPJ abandon EAC concept US pressure and China provocations; attention shift to TPP

Japan and East Asia

- Japan-North Korea
 - DPJ hard-line continues from LDP
- Japan-Russia
 - DPJ & Northern Territories
- Japan-India
 - DPJ continuity from LDP, EPA
- Japan-Australia
 - ACSA

Japan Defense Policy

- DPJ increase activism in UN?
 - DPJ revise UNPKO 5 principles?; Sudan dispatch?
- DPJ shift defense policy?
 - maintain anti-piracy mission Gulf of Aden
 - NDPG procurements; 'dynamic defense'
 - arms export ban?

Conclusions

- DPJ has/had distinct and plausible policy vision
- US over-anxious/mistaken strategy?
 - LDP continuities; DPJ plans for proactive Japan to be welcomed
- DPJ domestic & international constraints on full policy realization
- Tsunami reinforce DPJ timidity?
- PM Noda continue relapse into LDP-style policy?

Conclusions

- Japan-US longer term problems?
 - DPJ long-term not abandon vision of multipolar order and risks of LDP strategy
 - DPJ 'Resentful Realism'?
 - US work with Japan to develop viable strategy; obstruction only enhance tensions?