

# JAPAN'S SECURITY IDENTITY

FROM A PEACE STATE TO AN  
INTERNATIONAL STATE

Bhubhindar Singh

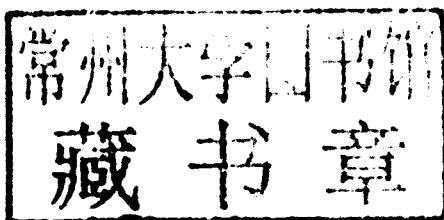


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# Japan's Security Identity

From a peace state to an international state

**Bhubhindar Singh**



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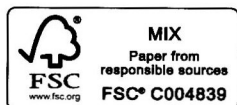
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# Japan's Security Identity

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a significant change in Japanese security policy, as Japan's security identity has shifted from a peace state to an international state. In this book, Bhubhindar Singh argues that from the 1990s onwards, the Japanese security policymaking elite recognized that its earlier approach to security policy which was influenced by the peace-state security identity was no longer appropriate. Rather, as a member of the international community, Japan had to carve out a responsible role in regional and international security affairs, which required greater emphasis on the role of the military in Japan's security policy.

To explore the change in Japan's security identity and its associated security behaviour, this book contrasts the three areas that define and shape Japanese security policy: Japan's conception (or definition) of national security; the country's contribution, in military terms, to regional and international affairs; and the changes to the security policymaking regime responsible for the security policy formulation. Further, it seeks to challenge the dominant realist interpretation of Japanese security policy by adopting an identity-based approach and showing how while realist accounts correctly capture the trajectory of Japanese post-Cold War security policy, they fail to explain the underlying causes of the change in Japanese security behaviour in the post-Cold War period.

This book is an important addition to the current literature on Japanese security policy, and will be of great use to students and scholars interested in Japanese and Asian politics, as well as security studies and international relations more broadly.

**Bhubhindar Singh** is Assistant Professor and Deputy Head of the Centre of Multilateralism Studies at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

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**To my family**



# Preface

This book was conceived after I cleared my dissertation at the University of Sheffield in 2006. My dissertation, entitled 'Japanese post-Cold War security policy: crises and security identity transformation', examined the relationship between external military crises and Japanese security policy development in the post-Cold War period. The dissertation essentially had two parts. The first sought to show that there was a change in Japanese security policy between the Cold War and the post-Cold War periods. This was an important premise of the argument examined there. This change was expressed through a shift in Japanese security identity from a peace state to an international state. The second part examined what caused this shift in the post-Cold War period. The answer to this question was external military crises. After the completion of the dissertation, I thought both parts of the dissertation's argument deserved deeper and more focused analyses. Hence, this book focuses on the first part of the argument that examines the shift in Japanese security identity from a peace state to an international state. This narrative is built on three papers I have published since: 'Japan's security policy: from a peace state to an international state', *The Pacific Review*, 21 (3), September 2008: 303–25; 'Peacekeeping in Japanese security policy: international-domestic contexts interaction', *European Journal of International Relations*, 17 (3), September 2011: 429–52; and 'Japan's reconceptualization of national security: the impact of globalization', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 11 (3), September 2011: 491–530 (with Philip Shetler-Jones).

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For my field research in Japan, I would like to thank Furuki Toshiaki for supporting my 18-month stay at the Graduate School of Law, Chuo University, during the period October 2005–March 2007. I also thank Nakamura Naofumi for supporting my stay at the Institute of Social Science (ISS), University of Tokyo, during the period August–September 2005. I would also like to thank the interviewees who took time out of their busy schedules to answer my questions. Their candid responses and insights were extremely valuable for my knowledge and understanding of Japanese security policy.

At Sheffield, I would like to thank my former colleagues at the School of East Asian Studies (SEAS) and friends from the SEAS and other departments who provided invaluable support, intellectually and otherwise.

In Singapore, I owe special thanks to the colleagues/friends at the former IDSS, now known as RSIS. They gave constant support and encouragement that kept me focused on the dissertation and this book. The people I owe a big thank you to include Ang Cheng Guan, Bernard Loo, Iqbal Sevea, Joseph Liow, Joey Long (who also read Chapter 3 and provided excellent comments), Khong Yuen Foong, Kumar Ramakrishna, Ralf Emmers and Tan See Seng.

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Japan for fieldwork and to learn the Japanese language; the British government for the Overseas Research Studentship (ORS) for the entire three years of my study at Sheffield; and the Japan Foundation, London, for Japanese language training at the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Osaka, Japan.

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I would like to thank Neelanga Somaratne for his research assistance during the period 2010–11, and Darlene Machell de Leon Espena for assisting with the bibliography. Needless to state, all errors, misrepresentations and omissions are my own responsibility.

# Abbreviations

ACSA	Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement
ADMM	ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASDF	Air Self-Defence Force
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATSML	Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law
BMD	Ballistic missile defence
BPND	Basic Policy on National Defence
CLB	Cabinet Legislation Bureau
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
DPRI	Defence Policy Review Initiative
DSP	Democratic Socialist Party
EAS	East Asian Summit
GSDF	Ground Self-Defence Force
HNS	Host nation support
IPCL	International Peace Cooperation Law
IR	International relations
JCG	Japanese Coast Guard
JCP	Japan Communist Party
JDA	Japan Defence Agency
JMOD	Japan's Ministry of Defence (also appears as MOD)
JSP	Japan Socialist Party
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MITI	Ministry of International Trade and Industry
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MSDF	Maritime Self-Defence Force
MTDP	Mid-Term Defence Programme
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDPG	National Defence Programme Guidelines
NDPO	National Defence Programme Outline
NPA	National Police Agency
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

ODA	Overseas development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
RIMPAC	Rim of the Pacific
SCAP	Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers
SCC	Security Consultative Committee
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SDF	Self-Defence Force
SDI	Strategic Defence Initiative
SDPJ	Social Democratic Party of Japan
SOFA	Status of Forces of Agreement
TMD	Theatre Missile Defence
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNPCC	United Nations Peace Cooperation Corps
UNPKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operation
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction

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# 1 Introduction

This book is about the change in Japanese security policy between the Cold War and post-Cold War periods. This change is examined in the context of the new security roles (understood as military roles) that Japan's Self-Defence Force (SDF) has adopted in the post-Cold War period. Three areas especially stand out and have been well documented in the literature. First, Japan's SDF has incorporated humanitarian and disaster relief duties, including peacekeeping, into its mandate. The foundation was laid with the passing of the 'Law Concerning Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations' (also known as the International Peace Cooperation Law (IPCL)) in 1992, which authorized the deployment of the SDF to United Nations-mandated peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs). Second, Japan deepened and widened the responsibilities of the SDF in the context of US-Japan defence cooperation. This was mainly in the form of rear-area logistical support to the United States (US) military during periods of peace and crisis in the Asia-Pacific region following the revisions of the defence guidelines that were passed by the Japanese National Diet in 1999. The bilateral defence relationship saw further strengthening in the first decade of the 2000s through Japan's proactive participation in the US-led 'war on terror'. The SDF was deployed to the Indian Ocean for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) to support the US and other militaries following the passage of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law (ATSML) in 2001, and was again deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) to provide non-combat logistical and reconstruction support following the passing of the Iraqi Reconstruction Law in 2003. Finally, Japan joined other concerned states in combating the rise of piracy incidents in the Gulf of Aden. It deployed Maritime SDF (MSDF) destroyers off the coast of Somalia to guard vessels from Japan and other countries under maritime police action provision in the SDF Law. To support the MSDF's long-term commitment to this mission, the Japanese government has set up a base in Djibouti – its first full-scale overseas base.

Compared to its Cold War security policy, these roles indicate a significant shift in Japanese post-Cold War security policy – a shift that points towards a more active security posture for the SDF in regional and



## 2 *Introduction*

international affairs. This point is widely accepted in the available literature on Japanese post-Cold War security policy. However, what is interesting about this shift is that these new security roles adopted by the SDF in the post-Cold War period, while significant, came with restrictions. These roles have largely occurred in non-combat and support areas, and the SDF's participation has been targeted at international activities that address global security challenges. This research aims to analyse what these changes mean for Japanese security policy and what kind of role(s) Japan would assume in the regional and international security affairs in the post-Cold War period. This research is confined to the period starting from the onset of the post-war period to the end of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)'s political rule in August 2009 when it suffered an electoral defeat at the hands of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) in the national general election. The reason for selecting this period is that the foundation for an activist security policy for Japan was laid during the LDP's dominant tenure of the political system. Nevertheless, the DPJ's security policy practice will be discussed in detail in the concluding chapter – a discussion that will show that the DPJ is also committed to pursuing an activist or internationalist security policy.

### **Argument**

The underlying premise of the argument proposed here is that the Japanese post-Cold War security policy has undergone a high (significant) level of change compared to its Cold War policy. As will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, this aspect of significant change in Japanese post-Cold War security policy has been captured in the extant literature by works that fall under the realism category published from the 1990s onwards, and especially in the first decade of the 2000s following Japan's active participation in the US-led military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. Relying on reasons such as the shift in the East Asian balance of power unfavourable to Japanese interests (characterized by China's political, economic and military rise as well as North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes), Japan's own economic stagnation and the shift within the Japanese political system towards the right of the political spectrum, the realists have argued for, and rightly so, the significant change between Japan's Cold War and post-Cold War security policies, namely in terms of an expanded security policy in the military-strategic dimension of the regional and international affairs.

However, as argued here, these analyses fall short. Japan has not fulfilled the realist expectations of pursuing a solely power-based security policy. This point becomes reasonably clear and even striking in light of Japan's response to the shift in the East Asian balance of power that is argued to be unfavourable to its national interests. Japan has not increased its defence expenditure; in fact, its defence budget has decreased since the early 2000s. Japan has not pursued the nuclear option even after North Korea's

declaration of its nuclear capability following the tests in 2006 and 2009. Instead, Japan has carved out a security role that contributes to the humanitarian and disaster relief efforts that address global security challenges, such as through peacekeeping activities. To be sure, Japan did strengthen the US-Japan security relationship through greater institutionalization of bilateral defence cooperation and interoperability of the two militaries. However, these new defence roles within the alliance have mainly occurred in support or non-combat military roles, such as the provision of rear-area logistical support for the US military, as mentioned earlier. In short, Japanese security roles have expanded but not in line with the expectations that conform to the power-based analyses of realism.

The argument presented here attributes the change in Japan's security roles to the shift in the role conceptions or identity that determine Japan's role in regional and international security affairs. Applying an identity-based perspective, this change is explained by a transformation (which is ongoing) in Japan's security identity from a peace-state security identity (based on the Yoshida Doctrine) in the Cold War period to an international-state security identity in the post-Cold War world. What this means is that the Japanese security policymaking elite recognized that its Cold War approach to security policy influenced by the peace-state security identity was inappropriate in the post-Cold War period. Japan could no longer avoid incorporating a military dimension into its external security policy. Being a member of the international community, Japan had to carve out a responsible role in regional and international security affairs. In particular, this change in perspective within the Japanese leadership resulted in the introduction of a greater military role in Japan's post-Cold War security policy. These new roles do not fulfil the realists' expectations of Japan becoming a great power, but they do fulfil Japan's objectives of contributing to international peace and security as a responsible actor. As argued here, the new security roles are influenced by a new security identity, that is, the international-state security identity.

The change in Japan's security identity from a peace state to an international state is elucidated by examining the normative context within which Japanese security policy is produced and reproduced. It is contended here that there is a shift in the normative context, which engendered the transformation of Japan's security identity and its resultant security policy. Three core aspects of the normative context are examined. The first is Japan's territorial conception or definition of national security in military-strategic terms, namely whether the security policymaking elite applied a narrow (self-defence) or wide (self-defence plus regional and/or international security) conception in formulating its security policy. The second aspect of the normative context is the extent to which Japan's SDF was active in regional and international affairs in military terms. This refers to whether the SDF avoided involvement in security affairs or became involved in maintaining peace and stability and/or the resolution of military crises in