Japan's Security Decisions:
Allison's Conceptual Models And
Missile Defense Policy

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(ABSTRACT)

This research project assesses the continued utility of Allison's three policy-making models in analyzing contemporary foreign policy problems. It also explores the effect of cultural considerations on Allison's concepts by delving into the unique themes of Japanese politics. The climate in which this policy decision is made is framed through a discussion of the strategic environment and Japanese defense policy following the Cold War and 9/11. The rational actor, organizational process, and bureaucratic politics models are applied to Japan's 2003 decision to field a missile defense system through a qualitative analysis of English-language secondary hard-copy and online sources. Some Japanese government materials are reviewed as well; the Japanese language, however, presented challenges to research. Despite the expectation that the rational actor model best describes the Japanese approach to missile defense, this project shows the true value of Allison's theories lies in their capacity to expose issues relevant to policy problems from varying perspectives. Japan's missile defense policy likely resulted from a combination of the three models, each influenced in varying degrees by the cultural aspects of Japanese politics.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

This research project has at its beginnings a personal interest in national security policy, the focus of the researcher's undergraduate studies. I am intrigued by the role decision-makers play in the policy process, particularly in the American system. My initial efforts were geared toward exploring the US missile defense policy introduced in the late 1990s and taken for action in the early 2000s. While this would have been a worthwhile endeavor, I found myself living in Japan during the course of my studies with new interests piqued. The research question, then, became, "How do the US and Japanese decisions to pursue missile defense compare?" After conducting some preliminary research (and taking stock of the resources available to me), it was apparent that this problem lies outside the scope of my intended efforts, so I decided to concentrate solely on the Japanese missile defense policy.

The year 2004 marked the 150th anniversary of relations between the United States and Japan. Much has happened in the years that followed the visit of Commodore Perry's "black ships," and U.S.-Japan relations today are arguably at their highest point ever. Both nations share a commitment to representative democracy and capitalist markets. Their security alliance is the cornerstone of regional stability in East Asia. Yet Japan remains somewhat of a mystery, generating relatively little interest, in wide American circles. This research began as a modest attempt to fill even a minute portion of that void by exploring the Japanese policymaking process.

Despite being overshadowed by regional up-and-comers China and India, Japan retains the world's second-largest economy and has become more active in overseas peacekeeping missions, including its historic 2003 deployment to Iraq. The nation seeks permanent representation on the United Nations Security Council and continues to enhance its self-defense

capabilities—moves that cause concern among its conquest-scarred neighbors. Particularly, the country agreed in the late 1990s to work with the United States on missile defense research, and on 19 December 2003, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda announced, "The Government of Japan decided 'On Introduction of Ballistic Missile Defense System and Other Measures' at the Security Council and the Cabinet Council today."[1] But to say that "Japan" as a country feels vulnerable or that "Japan" has decided on a missile defense shield overlooks the inner workings of the "black boxes" of the international community.

Policies and decisions are the culmination of sometimes-intense political processes, often overlooked in the broader field of international relations. Graham T. Allison's examination of the Cuban Missile Crisis—in his 1969 *APSR* article and subsequent 1971 book *Essence of Decision*—provides analysts with tools, in the form of three decision-making models, to plunge below the systemic notion of international relations, to where policies are crafted and completed. Some argue that Allison's work "legitimately remains one of the most frequently cited studies in the literature on bureaucracy, foreign policy, and governmental policymaking."[2] The focus of this research is the application of the three models—rational actor, organizational process, and bureaucratic politics—to the Japanese missile defense problem. Specifically, the models are applied to the efforts supporting the Japanese Cabinet's announcement in December 2003 that Japan would, in fact, pursue a missile defense capability.

While the primary intent of this project was to assess the Japanese decision using Allison's models, it evolved into an analysis of the models using the Japanese missile defense

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[1] Yasuo Fukuda, Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary, Tokyo, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/tyokan/2003/1219danwa_e.html>, 19 December 2003.

[2] Jonathan Bendor and Thomas H. Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," *The American Political Science Review* 86.2 (June 1992): 318; due to limited access to research resources and time constraints, this project relies on the propositions set forth in Allison's 1969 article rather than *Essence of Decision*.

case. Lack of Japanese language skill, scarcity of time to devote to achieving a truly comprehensive understanding, and inaccessibility of information germane to Japan's politics hindered a thorough examination of the country's policymaking process. On the other hand, much is obtainable regarding Allison's models. Given the information available, the research question became, "Could Allison's models accurately characterize or explain the Japanese policymaking process?"

Yale professor Ian Shapiro warns, "Where pure strategic accounts [like Allison's rational actor model] do poorly as explanations, sometimes it will be for lack of attention to cultural variables…."[3] He notes, "Unless we are told which aspect of culture is supposed to account for the outcome in question, there is no way to begin systematic evaluation of the claim."[4] Taking this into consideration, a secondary goal of this research is to expose readers to the cultural aspect of Japanese politics. While the December 2003 outcome is known, application of Allison's models to the preceding policy process would be incomplete without first revealing cultural and social overtones in Japanese politics. Thus, this research begins with an overview of these influences on policymaking in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 frames the missile defense climate in Japan by examining the current strategic environment, Japan's evolving defense role, and a myriad of issues germane to the missile defense debate, including the impact of MD on the U.S.-Japan alliance, regional security, domestic legal considerations, cost, and technological feasibility. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 document the qualitative assessment of Japan's 2003 decision using Allison's rational actor, organizational

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[3] Ian Shapiro, "Can the Rational Choice Framework Cope with Culture?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 31.1 (March 1998): 41.

[4] Ibid. 40.

process, and bureaucratic politics models, respectively. Cultural influences remain a theme throughout the research and present a potential challenge to Allison's concepts.

While all three of these models are valuable, this research aims to show that Allison's rational actor model best describes Japan's December 2003 missile defense decision—more the result of a reasonable choice based on the best available alternative, and less a result of organizational processes or bureaucratic politics. The approach in making this determination is a qualitative review of English-language hard copy and on-line secondary sources, though future researchers may wish to examine primary sources in the Japanese language or quantitative variables such as Japanese public opinion polls and media content. Allison's own application of his models is qualitative as well, indicating that their utility could lie more in their "magnifying glass," rather than their "measuring stick," characteristics.

These findings should not only further explore Allison's models but also add to the body of knowledge on Japan, its culture, and its policymaking. It is the hope of the author that this volume, even with its limitations, will serve as the jumping point for further research into these areas and may contribute to a wider understanding allowing the U.S.-Japan security relationship to continue and flourish in the years to come.

CHAPTER ONE

THE JAPANESE POLICY MAKING PROCESS

There is a notable scarcity of attention devoted to Japanese policy making in Western academic efforts. The US-Japan relationship forms the cornerstone of East Asian security and stability, yet Gerald L. Curtis points out that there is "little solid information available to people interested in contemporary Japan about how that country's political system actually does work."[5] Many casual observers have notions about the workings of Japan's government, but language and culture present challenges to those desiring thorough research. Much can be learned, however, from original and translated English volumes that are available.

Several themes appear consistently in these studies of Japanese politics. One of these is the system's unique nature. Japanese scholars describe the modern decision-making process as "hybrid" and "bifurcated," drawing on different backgrounds and reflecting relationships between the citizenry and informal government on one hand and interest groups and the formal institutions of government on the other.[6] Since the late 1800s, Japan has been adept at incorporating outside ideas into its own culture, never sacrificing its exceptional identity. These mostly Western ideas have been incorporated into a Japanese system built on social relationships and cultural norms.

One of these norms, representing another common theme, is a "marked separation between power and authority," causing some to argue that "it is not entirely clear just where decisions *are* made" and that the "locus of responsibility" in policy making is "ambiguous" amid

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[5] Gerald L. Curtis, *The Japanese Way of Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988) x.

[6] Jun-ichi Kyogoku, *The Political Dynamics of Japan*, trans. Nobutaka Ike (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1987) 226; Nobutaka Ike, *Japanese Politics: An Introductory Survey* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1957) 285.

an "opaque" process.[7] These ill-defined roles and responsibilities can complicate serious research into the Japanese decision-making apparatus.

Some scholars find it helpful to frame their research by dividing the study of Japanese politics into two schools based on which group—elected officials or career civil servants—is believed to control the system: "the 'dominant bureaucracy school' (*Kanryo-shudo Ron*) and the 'dominant politicians school' (*Seijika-yui Ron*)."[8] While characteristics of the Japanese process make it difficult to trace decisions and policies to their ultimate source, previous studies in each of these schools indicate an understanding that authority and power reside primarily in either politicians, bureaucrats, or both, offering evidence of another recurring theme. The addition of this theme to those of uniqueness, ambiguity, and the distinction between power and authority results in a characterization of the Japanese political system.

Whichever approach researchers use, it seems that Japanese decision making remains the aggregate of multiple entities' efforts and interactions. It reflects formal authority vested in government bodies as well as de facto power of political parties and special interests, influenced by cultural forces. An understanding of the themes and characteristics of Japanese policy making—a survey of formal and informal structures and cultural dynamics—allows further examination of specific national policies. An exhaustive review lies outside the scope of this research; the intent of this chapter is to provide an adequate foundation and a common comprehension from which to proceed.

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[7] Chalmers Johnson, *Japan, Who Governs?: The Rise of the Developmental State* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1995) 115; Ichiro Ozawa, *Blueprint for a New Japan: The Rethinking of a Nation* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, Ltd., 1994) 24, 59-60.

[8] Masato Kamikubo, "Bureaucrats, Politicians, and Policy Change in Japan," Discussion Paper 7, *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies*, <http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/discussionpapers/Kamikubo.html>, 4 November 2003.

In his 1989 volume, *Japanese Government Leadership and Management*, Charles F. Bingman, interested in how governments really work, notes "three rings of power" in Japanese politics: the Diet, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and the government ministries or bureaucracy. The former federal executive and professor of public administration claims that the key people in each of the rings are "very often the same people, serving three roles," and that it becomes "almost impossible to know which role is being played, and which circle predominates."[9] This chapter attempts to address these distinctions and to sensitize the reader to nuances of Japanese political culture over time by taking a closer look at the aforementioned themes. The selection of sources is eclectic and represents not only a sampling of cultural politics at different points in history, but also the persistence of common themes throughout.

East Meets West: Japanese Culture and Politics

Jun-ichi Kyogoku, professor emeritus of the University of Tokyo, emphasizes the underlying cultural themes that govern social interaction in his 1983 *Nihon no Seiji* (*Japanese Politics*) and in its subsequent 1987 abridged English translation, *The Political Dynamics of Japan*. Kyogoku maintains that with careful study, one finds that political institutions and functions in different countries are more similar than they initially appear. This being the case, he observes that "these differences are often attributed, quite rightly, to variations in cultural traditions."[10] He argues that one can form a better understanding of foreign politics "by knowing the codes and paradigms that guide the behavior of people in other countries."[11] Japan expert Chalmers Johnson also recognizes the uniqueness of the intertwining of Japanese culture and politics from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, claiming that study of the "Japanese polity

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[9] Charles F. Bingman, *Japanese Government Leadership and Management* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1989) vii, 11.

[10] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 38.

remains conceptually difficult" and "a subject on the frontiers of political science."[12] He further states that Japanese politics are organized and have evolved around a "discrepancy between the formal and the actual, between the ideal and the normative functioning of their political institutions." Everything has a *Nihon-teki imi*, or Japanese meaning.[13]

One of the features of Japanese politics, according to Gerald Curtis, is its "profound stability."[14] This stability is simply a visible indication of deeper social conditions in Japan. Japanese-American professor Nobutaka Ike of Stanford University, in a late-1950s study of Japanese politics, notes that "What distinguishes Japanese social behavior is the degree to which the individual is subordinated" to the group.[15] Members of groups "can become ideal individuals" by "[negating] their personal and private lives and [assuming] the communal and public roles that are expected of them."[16] There is significant cultural pressure on individuals to conform and subjugate themselves to society. Japanese are taught this behavior from childhood, learning "to be a credit to their parents, their ancestors and descendants, and to the family as a whole" and to "subordinate his own interests and welfare to the good of the family as a whole."[17] This family notion is extended throughout the homogeneous Japanese populace.

In politics, the approach remains largely the same despite the post-war emphasis on sovereignty of the people. [18] Since it is individuals who comprise political institutions, reformer

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[11] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 40.

[12] Johnson, *Who Governs* 162.

[13] Ibid. 158-59.

[14] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 1.

[15] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 35.

[16] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 42

[17] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 19.

Ichiro Ozawa takes this idea further by claiming, "Japanese-style democracy, then, might be defined as a system in which individuals are assured a secure life by the group in exchange for burying themselves in the group."[19] The elected official is today "much more of a supplicant" who relies on "ties of sentiment" to forge bonds with his electorate.[20] He occupies a special and respected place as the representative of his constituency, yet he himself remains a member with obligations to that group. Subordination of the individual to the group remains a cultural characteristic of Japanese politics, and is perhaps most convincingly evidenced by a strong desire for unanimity in decision making.

Ike explains that there is a "tendency in Japanese politics to value outward unanimity," noting that "the Japanese individual is caught in a web of obligations which tend to limit the area of action left to choice."[21] The obligation for each individual to subordinate himself results in the group members acting collectively to ensure all interests and concerns are addressed in a final decision. This quest for unanimity is reflected in the Japanese preference of consensus over majority rule.[22] Any dissention sows doubt into the final decision, which may indicate that the group came to a conclusion not acceptable to all its members. Japanese tradition, therefore, ascribes importance to uniformity among group members, resulting in "people who see things alike."[23] This notion is quite foreign to Westerners who view the role of the individual much differently.

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[18] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 61.

[19] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 10.

[20] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 222.

[21] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 57, 35.

[22] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 10; Ike, *Japanese Politics* 265.

[23] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 65-66.

Human beings are indeed free thinking individuals, so the expectation that every decision is the result of unanimous consensus seems far from attainable. However, Japanese work to achieve harmony, or "an emotional feeling of oneness" in their social discourse.[24] Japanese observers agree that dispute settlement is best handled with compromise, conciliation, and avoidance of open conflict, which could result in embarrassing public defeat.[25] This approach, while promoting unanimity, does not lend itself to expeditious policy making, nor is it a guarantee of absolute consensus in every instance. However, if "different interpretations" are allowed to stand during the decision-making process, the unique result is an example of *tamamushi-iro*, a term referring to an insect whose color varies depending on the angle from which one views it.[26]

Neither consensus nor harmony is achieved without effort. Each member of a decision-making group is made to feel as if he is important to the group through the use of *nemawashi*, when "the action plan is outlined to the members in order to give them the psychological satisfaction that they have been consulted."[27] In this process, decision leaders interact with each member individually "to give the impression that they are ignoring the complainers and other members, and to show the members that they are important in the eyes of the leadership."[28] Again, the idea is to avoid open conflict and to arrive at a consensus that sufficiently accounts for every member's position. *Nemawashi* is, in a sense, the true politics of Japanese politics. Publicly, those involved in decision making stick to ambiguous statements to avoid conflict,

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[24] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 132.

[25] Ibid. 177, 185; Ike, *Japanese Politics* 60.

[26] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 70-71.

[27] Ibid. 57.

[28] Ibid. 69.

acting under the traditional notion that silence is golden.[29] In this way, criticism and responsibility can also be sidestepped, further evincing the theme of ambiguity in Japanese governance. Kyogoku notes that "those who put a premium on unity and harmony" work hard at *nemawashi* to reach consensus and avoid conflict.[30]

The path of least resistance, then, in Japanese politics seems to be the maintenance of the status quo. There is little risk of conflict or public disagreement or disharmony when there is no attempt to change. As one author notes, "being ordinary and simply repeating what had been done before is valued," while another agrees that "the Japanese people want the luxury of reacting only when absolutely necessary."[31] There appears to be a cultural conservatism inherent to Japanese society that favors proceeding down a predetermined path. This environment, of course, does not foster political mobilization and major policy change.[32]

Change in the status quo is possible, though. According to Kyogoku, it can only occur as "a decision based on power play or on consensus."[33] The importance of consensus and the means by which to achieve agreement are consistent ideas in the study of Japanese politics and result from cultural forces. The effort to initiate a policy change, conduct *nemawashi*, or make a "power play," however, requires a different kind of catalyst. This is where the role of leadership in Japanese politics becomes evident. In fact, Kyogoku writes, "one must constantly engage in struggle and seek to win," and if one cannot win, he "had better try to get close to a winner and

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[29] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 70.

[30] Ibid. 71.

[31] Ibid.; Ozawa, *Blueprint* 40-41.

[32] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 286; Noritada Matsuda, "Exceptionalism in Political Science: Japanese Politics, US Politics, and Supposed International Norms," Discussion Paper 4, *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies*, <http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/discussionpapers/Matsuda.html>, 13 August 2003; Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 229-30.

become part of that person's entourage."[34] Ike further observes that the "real issue" in Japanese

organizations is "who is going to be the leader?"[35] Despite the strong pull of culture and societal

norms, individuals can and do affect Japanese policymaking.

Every community in Japan has what Ike calls a *yuryokusha*, or man of influence. This

person is "openly acknowledged as the most intelligent, influential, and capable man in the

community."[36] The character traits representative of a leader--"enterprise, ambition, and

vitality," intellect and courage--surface in Kyogoku's writings.[37] He explains that one can

become an "ideal leader" by "working for the public good at personal expense, showing that one

would not personally profit from engaging in public employment, and impressing others by

being a model for personal sacrifice."[38] These qualities and actions, however, do not guarantee

leadership status. As every successful politician must realize, "even the most exceptional and

effective of leaders can do little without a solid power base."[39] Politicians rely on the support of

constituents, and constituents have expectations for their leaders.

Self-sacrifice is magnified when it comes to leaders. According to Kyogoku, a popular

saying among politicians goes, "All my activities are for the benefit of the people and society.

Nothing is intended for myself."[40] The leader is expected to make decisions and take action in

the best interest of his followers. This includes determining strategy and tactics to deal with the

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[33] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 69.

[34] Ibid. 51.

[35] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 110.

[36] Ibid. 75.

[37] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 49, 70.

[38] Ibid. 72-73.

[39] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 33.

"outer world" in order to achieve goals in support of group, or constituency, interests.[41] If a leader fails to reach these goals or betrays his constituency by taking action for personal gain, he is expected to take final responsibility for failure. If he does not, he risks losing public trust.[42] In other words, the leader can and will be held accountable by the people for his actions.

Japan's culture of harmony resounds through its politics. Subordination of the individual to the group in order to attain unanimity defines the social priority. Maintenance of the status quo offers the least risk in the decision-making process, and *nemawashi* ensures all perspectives are taken into account. Leaders are chosen from among the group and are held accountable to it. These cultural threads weave throughout the formal and informal channels of Japanese government.

The Japanese Diet: A Contrast in Authority and Power

Charles Bingman elaborates on each of the "three rings" of Japanese government mentioned earlier, observing that the Diet is the weakest of the three.[43] In an attempt to ensure sovereignty of the people, the 1947 constitution made the Diet the "highest organ of state power" and the "sole law-making organ of the State."[44] In this regard, the Diet inherited from the imperial leadership the overarching tasks of "diplomacy, defense, and the organization of the government."[45] Institutionally, it appears that the Diet, with its given authority, would wield significant power.

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[40] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 47.

[41] Ibid. 206.

[42] Ibid. 91.

[43] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 11.

[44] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 68.

[45] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 178.

Why, then, does Bingman view the Diet as weaker than the cabinet and the bureaucracy? Several factors affect the Diet's position relative to other government institutions. First is the careful use of limited resources. Each Diet member is responsible for reaching out to his constituency via his own personal support organization, or *koenkai*, for which he must bear operating costs.[46] This plus the day-to-day expenses incurred through official legislative duties force Diet members to prioritize their use of resources. This may result in a lack of staff which, reformer Ichiro Ozawa claims, means that Diet members "rarely have the opportunity to learn much about the policies they are drafting."[47] Some politicians gain policy expertise, however, through extended interaction with other government agencies in the bureaucracy and become members of *zoku*, or policy tribes with "specialized skill and power" in that particular policy area.[48] *Zoku* represent an informal facet of Japanese politics. They are not organized as committees or caucuses in the US Congress might be. Competition for scant resources and the consequences of prioritization, despite informal mechanisms designed to surmount these obstacles, diminish the Diet's real power.

Second, Bingman notes that debates in the Diet are "more of a formality without real substance."[49] The dichotomy of formal and informal, seen and unseen, in Japanese politics is a major factor in the Diet's perceived lack of substance. Despite this characteristic, Kyogoku points out that the public conflicts between ruling and opposition parties in the Diet make a "good show" and serve a "vital function." He contends, "It shows that even with a long-term [Liberal Democratic Party] monopoly of power, we do not have dictatorial politics, and that

[46] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 157.

[47] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 56.

[48] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 117.

[49] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 178.

parliamentary politics…are here to stay."[50] While deeming the institution of the Diet "largely

irrelevant," Bingman concedes that it has "managed to play a respectable role in overall national

policy formulation, and has occasionally risen to the need when major new policies are

warranted."[51] Despite this praise, it seems the Diet exercises less power than formally authorized

it and can be somewhat marginalized in Japan's politics.

<center>Prime Minister and Cabinet: Leadership Potential</center>

The Cabinet, unlike the Diet, "remains by design and in reality an extremely powerful

body."[52] The leader of this group is the prime minister, who also serves as the president of the

leading Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Despite the position of authority, the amount of power

vested in the prime minister is up for debate. Bingman notes that the prime minister "may

dominate by his powers of leadership" but that each cabinet member, including the prime

minister, has only one vote towards decisions traditionally reached in unanimity.[53] Relatively

short tenure due to intra-party factionalism, lack of political leverage, and the confederation of

legislative majority and executive leadership in the same personnel contribute to the prime

minister's weak political leadership, according to Japanese authors Kyogoku and Ozawa.[54] The

latter views the position as "nothing more than master of ceremonies for [cabinet meetings]," and

Aureila George Mulgan agrees, contending that the prime minister simply "acts as a ratifier" of

policies, evidence that "the direction of policy is not from the top down, but from the bottom

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[50] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 179.

[51] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 77.

[52] Ibid. 18.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 103, 104; Ozawa, *Blueprint* 54.

up."[55] Japan expert Chalmers Johnson, however, claims that a change in the prime minister (and

thus the LDP president) is "treated as a major change of style and even of policy orientation."[56]

Personnel turnover in the cabinet at one point occurred almost every nine months—so often that

voters have come to view the transitions as "nothing more than a periodic change of

personnel."[57] Further affecting the leadership of the prime minister is Japan's reliance on cabinet

ministers to "deliver the nation's position," which causes the message to lose impact and "fails to

communicate precisely what it is Japan thinks."[58] Indeed, this message could be skewed by

cabinet members' loyalties to their factional leaders over the prime minister, "making it more

difficult to form a unified, effective cabinet."[59] Instability in the highest ranks of the executive

branch inhibits the prime minister from exercising power commensurate with his granted

authority.

The cabinet, as a body, may exercise influence on policy making not through direct

leadership but through organizations like the Cabinet Office, the Cabinet Secretariat, and the

Cabinet Legislation Bureau. The bureau conducts reviews of all draft bills and cabinet orders

prior to their presentation at cabinet meetings.[60] This review is conducted at least twice during

the process: a "preliminary examination" prior to the request for a cabinet meeting and a final

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[55] Aurelia George Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System: Impediments to Reform in a Crisis Economy," *Government and Opposition* (2003): 84.

[56] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 25; Johnson, *Who Governs* 236.

[57] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 6; Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 182.

[58] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 50.

[59] Tomohito Shinoda, "Koizumi's Top-Down Leadership in the Anti-Terrorism Legislation: The Impact of Political Institutional Changes," *SAIS Review* 23.1 (Winter-Spring 2003): 20.

[60] Government of Japan, Cabinet Legislation Bureau, "About the Cabinet Legislation Bureau," <http://www.clb.go.jp/english/2/2.htm>.

examination before the meeting.[61] In other words, the bureau has at least two opportunities to influence the decision making process before the cabinet primaries formally consider the policy proposal. The bureau itself admits that although the courts ultimately determine interpretation of Japanese laws, it unifies interpretation of law within the executive branch through its "opinion-giving work."[62] Interpretation of the constitution, particularly with respect to issues of national defense, is a crucial function performed by a relative nameless few in the cabinet structure.

The Cabinet Office and Cabinet Secretariat are both involved in policy planing and coordination. The Cabinet Law, revised in June 1999, "states that the Cabinet Secretariat's role is 'to present policy direction for the government as a whole, and coordinate policy strategically and proactively,' and instructs other ministries to recognize that, 'the Cabinet Secretariat is the highest and final organ for policy coordination under the Cabinet.'"[63] In this regard, the prime minister and his cabinet can "initiate and proceed with policy processes independent of the relevant ministry."[64]

By virtue of his position, the prime minister can influence the decision making process; however, a number of factors may prevent him from applying that influence. The Cabinet Legislation Bureau and other cabinet support organizations, on the other hand, have multiple opportunities to affect Japanese government policies.

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[61] Government of Japan, Cabinet Legislation Bureau, "About the lawmaking Process," <http://www.clb.go.jp/english/11/11a.htm>.

[62] Government of Japan, "About the Cabinet Legislation Bureau."

[63] Shinoda, "Koizumi's Top-Down Leadership" 26.

[64] Ibid.

Japanese Bureaucracy: <u>The</u> Government of Japan

Although political authority rests in the Diet and the cabinet, the "mainstream argument of Japanese political science was that Japanese politics had been dominated by the bureaucracy" (the starting point for the previously mentioned "dominant bureaucracy school").[65] Despite the acknowledgement of Japan's bureaucratic prowess, Johnson notes that there is no comprehensive English study of the country's national bureaucracy.[66] One English account, however, does represent a commonly held belief: "the center of gravity for public policy formation lies in the hands of the professional staffs of government agencies rather than in the legislative body."[67] Japanese authors agree, citing the "world-class reputation" of Japan's bureaucrats and referring to lower levels of the bureaucracy as "**the** government of Japan" (emphasis added) and "a true source of pride for the country."[68] This esteemed position actually remains from the prewar system—largely unchanged—and continues to characterize the contemporary Japanese bureaucracy.[69] Writing in 1947, John Maki explains the perpetuity of Japanese bureaucracy: "So long as the bureaucrats are not balanced by another strong political group, they will continue to govern Japan as they see fit."[70] The bureaucracy's ability to influence policymaking is a widely recognized and significant factor in Japanese politics.

Indeed, the bureaucratic organizations "remain powerful and to a considerable degree autonomous actors in decision making," owing to an insulation from political pressures "in a

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[65] Kamikubo, "Bureaucrats"

[66] Johnson, *Who Governs* 116.

[67] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 77.

[68] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 83; Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 217.

[69] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 54; Johnson, *Who Governs* 120, 125.

way that is unimaginable in a country like the United States."[71] No group has significantly

challenged bureaucratic power; they instead, as Kyogoku notes, take a supporting role. He

discusses the LDP's parallel divisions in its Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC), claiming,

"Government agencies will seek out these divisions, will brief their members, and engage in

caucusing activities in order to get the support of the committee members."[72] This is not to say,

though, that "coordination and supervision" of the bureaucracy is undertaken by the LDP, or any

other formal or informal group. Johnson argues, "The evidence to support such a view is quite

thin."[73] Groups recognize the bureaucracy's utility and reach out to it for their gain. Conversely,

Curtis comments that "the bureaucracy is not strong enough to ignore the party in power." The

party cannot "force feed" the bureaucracy either, so each must "accept the legitimacy of the

other's playing a central role in decision making and [develop] close party-bureaucratic

linkages."[74]

   In addition to respect and political insulation, the bureaucracy is characterized by

hierarchical structure and the loyalty of its members. Ike acknowledges that "all bureaucracies

are hierarchically organized," but he goes on to note that "the sense of hierarchy is particularly

acute in the Japanese instance."[75] It is a three-tiered system based on educational level,

preferential hiring dependent upon one's alma mater, and success in the examination for law

positions. Bureaucrats know their respective places, but they also understand that regardless of

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[70] John M. Maki, "The Role of Bureaucracy in Japan," *Pacific Affairs* 20 (1947): 397, quoted in Johnson, *Who Governs* 133.

[71] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 110.

[72] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 117.

[73] Johnson, *Who Governs* 121-22.

[74] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 111.

their positions, their public and private needs will be taken care of by their employers, giving them a sense of loyalty or "group affiliation and a sense of identity," as Kyogoku puts it.[76] Members of the Japanese bureaucracy, then, enjoy more stability and predictability than cabinet officials or legislators.

Bureaucratic institutions have four main goals: retaining power based on traditional authority, expanding functions under their jurisdiction, maintaining leadership in matters under their control, and maintaining autonomy.[77] The clear advantage enjoyed by the bureaucracy in pursuit of these goals is the ability "to engage in policy planning in an organized and systematic way," which other political entities are ill equipped to do. The stability and predictability offered by the hierarchical, insulated system certainly contribute to this advantage. It is the ability to plan that allows agencies to devise fresh proposals every year to ensure their "survival and prosperity."[78]

In fact, according to one account, "the two greatest powers of the bureaucracy are the initiating of legislation and the compilation of the budget," functions which require solid planning.[79] And integral to successful planning is access to information. Curtis writes, "If knowledge is power, the Japanese bureaucracy retains a considerable amount of it…."[80] Much of the government's expertise resides in the bureaucracy, which is structured to permit continuity and can subsequently foster territoriality. For instance, the budget process makes the Ministry of

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[75] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 150.

[76] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 214-15.

[77] Ibid. 104-5.

[78] Ibid. 220-21.

[79] Johnson, *Who Governs* 123.

[80] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 248.

Finance arguably "the single most powerful entity in the national government, and a coveted political post."[81] Specifically, the ministry "prepares the formal Prime Minister's Budget for Cabinet approval and submission to the Diet."[82] To do so, it must acquire information from all government organizations regarding their funding priorities. Then the ministry is in the enviable position of coordinating those priorities for the entire government, an opportunity to influence the government's direction for the upcoming fiscal year.

Notwithstanding the hierarchical structure, decision-making in practice resides in the lower levels of the bureaucracy, where the power to initiate policy has been transferred.[83] Senior leaders look to the mid-level managers and workers to conduct research, amass expertise, draft proposals, and conduct *nemawashi*. By gaining the initiative in the policy making process, the lower levels of bureaucracy can wield power incongruent with its given authority.

The bureaucracy also exercises power through the use of "administrative guidance," a "combination of informal techniques" including "not only regulations and administrative controls but recommendations, suggestions for courses of action, requests, and warnings."[84] One analyst notes, "bureaucrats preside over systems of economic intervention in which they exercise substantial discretionary powers of regulation (granting licenses, permissions and approvals) and allocation...."[85] This approach gives the bureaucracy a chance to interact with clientele—citizens, interest groups, local governments, political parties—giving them an opportunity to say

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[81] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 31.

[82] Ibid. 33.

[83] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 87-88, 218; Bingman, *Japanese Government* 12; Ike, *Japanese Politics* 154.

[84] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 82.

[85] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 81.

no to government proposals or to garner "an enormously attractive array of rewards for cooperation."[86]

Despite its power, Japan's bureaucracy has its problems. Some bureaucrats may avoid taking policy risks and "pass the time without getting into trouble, while waiting for a transfer to another position."[87] As one author puts it, "Japanese bureaucrats…do not endeavor to get things done in a hurry," a trait typical of bureaucratic behavior.[88] In other words, the bureaucracy does not take full advantage of its ability to initiate policy. And it may be obstructed in its ability to conduct planning by the scope of its workload. Ozawa notes, "the central bureaucracies shoulder all responsibilities down to the most detailed tasks. They can barely keep up with the volume of work this approach generates, let alone devote their time to longer-term visions."[89]

Another problem hampering policy initiation and planning is the "high degree of sectionalism and interministerial competition."[90] The desire to remain autonomous promotes segmentation and "makes it difficult to bring about unified and coordinated policies."[91] Different divisions or bureaus or ministries may propose different policies relating to the same issue, and turf wars could ensue. The pull of harmony and unanimity is culturally strong, but this competitive sectionalism could identify losers in the public debate, a position no Japanese official wants.

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[86] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 82, 83.

[87] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 221.

[88] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 155-56. See also Curtis, *Japanese Way* 247.

[89] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 87.

[90] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 247. See also Ike, *Japanese Politics* 152.

[91] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 105.

The Japanese bureaucracy is respected at home and abroad. It is also highly hierarchical and politically insulated, allowing for an environment conducive to stability and long-term planning abilities. These abilities are somewhat hampered by bureaucratic sluggishness and sectionalism, preventing the bureaucracy from fully exercising its power in the policy-making process.

Staying Power: The Liberal Democratic Party

Bingman points out that the Liberal Democratic Party, or LDP, "has controlled the Diet, the Cabinet, and political life in general during the entire post-war period."[92] It exists as "an independent and separate locus of policy-making authority."[93] Indeed, the party's dominance has overseen "vast political as well as economic and social change" in the 60 years since the occupation.[94] One author notes that the "single most impressive characteristic" of the LDP is its "total commitment to the goal of winning Diet majorities and retaining political power."[95] Despite the LDP's longtime ascendancy its position is driven less by doctrine or ideology and more by "a hard, pragmatic coalition of interests and individuals."[96]

The LDP's feat of holding its prominent position is even more impressive when one realizes that party affiliation is not as strong a factor as it is in American politics; voter loyalty is concentrated more on individuals.[97] In fact, local parties are "skeletal" until election time, and each party politician must "build and maintain his own political machine" to succeed in a

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[92] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 9.

[93] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 77.

[94] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 2.

[95] Ibid. 43.

[96] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 10.

[97] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 203.

"system that forces candidates from the same party to compete with one another."[98] Kyogoku notes that electoral success in Japanese politics depends on "efforts of individual candidates," making party achievement "a series of individual victories of politicians in their own districts."[99]

Retaining its powerful position is partly a result of the LDP's "ability to closely track changes in its social and economic environment and to adjust its policies accordingly."[100] The party's roots are in anti-Socialism, and when the Cold War ended, there was a period of adjustment.[101] For instance, according to the LDP's English website, the party revised its platform in 1995 after losing its ruling party status briefly in 1993. The governing principles of the new platform "are well matched to the changing times and changing needs of the Japanese people."[102] And by adapting to the times, the LDP has been successful in its efforts to become "the principal source of client satisfaction," delivering government benefits to their interests, which traditionally have been in agriculture and business.[103]

The truth is that multiple interests are represented even within the party. In fact, Ike notes, "the party is a kaleidoscope of factions and interests within factions, and the pattern of the kaleidoscope and the balance of power is constantly shifting as leaders rise and fall, issues change, and backers reposition themselves."[104] These factions are described as "working

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[98] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 169; Curtis, *Japanese Way* 177.

[99] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 182.

[100] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 45.

[101] Ibid. 2.

[102] Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, "The Liberal Democratic Party's Platform," <http://www.jimin.jp/jimin/english/overview/02.html>.

[103] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 13, 7; Ike, *Japanese Politics* 178.

[104] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 10.

coalitions," or "formal party agencies."[105] The LDP explains them as, "policy groups" whose

primary objective is the election of their respective leaders as party president and thus Prime

Minister.[106] It is true that the Prime Minister, as party president, exerts influence on the party;

however, as Bingman notes, "the party expects and demands that he will see to its interests."[107]

As factions vie for the top executive position, they impact national decision-making. According

to Kyogoku, "The power struggle in Japan takes the form of factional strife within the LDP."[108]

Along with factions, some LDP members belong to *zoku*, or policy tribes. This is

certainly a case where Bingman's "three rings" intersect. According to Matsuda, these are

"experts on specific issues due to their experience in committees within the government and the

LDP" who "represent the interests relating to a particular issue, rather than national interests."[109]

Zoku allow LDP Diet members to be involved in policy decisions, concentrating "their

intervention in particular ministries where they command some expertise and good personal

connections."[110] This intervention, according to some Japanese scholars, represents *party* access

to a process "previously dominated by the bureaucracy."[111]

Another, more formal LDP group is the Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC). This

is the "mechanism for assembling and negotiating the policy positions of the LDP and lobbying

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[105] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 177; Matsuda, "Exceptionalism"

[106] Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, "LDP Policy Groups (Factions)," <http://www.jimin.jp/jimin/english/overview/10.html>.

[107] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 17.

[108] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 191. Also, Bingman 9.

[109] Matsuda, "Exceptionalism"

[110] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 115.

[111] Kamikubo, "Bureaucrats"

the ministries, the Cabinet, and the Diet to gain acceptance of the party's views."[112] Presently,

the PARC has twelve divisions, one for each government ministry and agency. It is "not only a

forum for creating, discussing, and deliberating policy, but also serves as an approval-granting

body" which facilitates formulation of all the party's policies and campaign pledges.[113] The

PARC plays a "pivotal role" in de-conflicting intra-party policy differences, and thus in

determining the official LDP position.[114] It provides the party with its ever-so-important

harmonizing function. It also provides the LDP with "a vital veto point for all major policies and

legislation" in Japan's "advance screening-cum-prior-approval process."[115]

All these entities have contributed, according to Curtis, to the "central role" played by the

LDP "in setting the framework for the formation of policy, articulating national goals and policy

priorities and helping build a national consensus behind them."[116] While the bureaucrats may

initiate policy, the LDP sets the context in which proposals are made. Mulgan argues that the

LDP "is the only political institution with sufficient power to bargain and negotiate with

bureaucrats," and that "policy is made in the interaction between these two functionally

interdependent structures."[117] Indeed, as one scholar puts it, "if the LDP doesn't want a proposal

to advance, it probably won't."[118]

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[112] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 13

[113] Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, "The Organizational Components of the Liberal Democratic Party and its Policymaking Processes," <http://www.jimin.jp/jimin/english/overview/07.html>.

[114] Matsuda, "Exceptionalism"; Curtis, *Japanese Way* 116.

[115] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 77.

[116] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 106.

[117] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 80.

[118] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 12.

One of the ways the LDP fulfills its role in the policy-making process is by serving as a link between interest groups and the bureaucracy.[119] Japanese scholars Sato and Matsuzaki see Japanese politics as a "pluralism" shared by the LDP and the bureaucracy; however, they note that "the LDP's politicians gradually improve their leadership over the bureaucrats in the policy-making process."[120] Ramseyer and Rosembluth echo the argument, claiming that while LDP members rely on bureaucrats for their "expert knowledge and abilities in policy-making and its execution," they also monitor policy execution in order to "look after their own interests." This oversight has allowed the LDP to take control of the initiative in the policy process.[121]

One example is the LDP's involvement in the budget process. Bingman writes that the LDP "exerts perhaps more influence on budget formation than the national Diet."[122] And Curtis counts the "ultimate control over the government budget" as one of the LDP's most important resources.[123] The LDP role in budget formulation seems to rival that of the Ministry of Finance, highlighting the relationship between the party and the bureaucracy.

It is clear, then, that the LDP is influential in a majority of Japan's policy decisions and that the party's interaction with the bureaucracy and the legislature can shape the government's official positions. Ike notes that even officials of the Allied occupation recognized that "political

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[119] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 187.

[120] S. Sato and T. Matsuzaki, *Jiminto Seiken (The Liberal Democratic Party Administration)* (Tokyo: Chuo Koron, 1986), quoted in Kamikubo, "Bureaucrats."

[121] J.M. Ramseyer and F.M. Rosembluth, *Japan's Political Marketplace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), quoted in Kamikubo, "Bureaucrats."

[122] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 43.

[123] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 45-46.

parties manage the Diet: every action is a party action, every vote a party vote, every decision a party decision. The individual member stands for nothing."[124]

Informal Influences

While the executive and legislative branches and political parties comprise the formal decision-making apparatus in the Japanese government, there are many informal influences which affect the overall process. Ike writes, "formal institutions in the Japanese political context often serve as a façade, giving legal sanction to what has already been decided by informal and covert techniques."[125] Johnson agrees, and explains the difference between *omote*, or the visible side of the political process, and *ura*, its invisible aspect. He contends that "*ura* is much more important for actual decision-making," taking place in private meetings between bureaucrats, Cabinet officials, party members, and *zaikai*, or big business interests. "Everyone knows of its existence," he notes, "even if he or she never knows exactly who participates or how decisions are made."[126] Add to this the advice that individuals—anonymously or otherwise—provide to politicians, faction leaders, cabinet ministers, and prime ministers, and looking inside the Japanese political process presents an even greater challenge to interested researchers.[127]

There are those who are involved in the process, and there are those who desire to be involved. According to Matsuda, the main target of lobbyists and special interests is not the bureaucracy but political parties, particularly the LDP.[128] As previously discussed, the LDP is an

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[124] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 184.

[125] Ibid. 74.

[126] Johnson, *Who Governs* 160; see also Ike, *Japanese Politics* 183, and Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 222.

[127] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 224.

[128] Matsuda, "Exceptionalism."

influential actor in the policy-making process, and its practice of clientele politics serves this relationship.

Another avenue for entering the process is direct interest-to-government connections, as is the case with many business interests. Ike notes that businessmen, whom he describes as "pillars of community" with "easy entry into the most respected levels of society," have a worthwhile interest to "establish personal and cordial relations with key figures in government agencies."[129] Johnson elaborates and cautions against viewing Japanese government and business as two distinct entities, noting that this perspective "overlooks the fact that in many critical industries, the businessmen who have dealings with government officials are themselves retired government officials." Indeed, the 'government-business' consensus is much more prevalent in industries where large numbers of retired bureaucrats work—steel, petroleum, electric power, and banking.[130] Ozawa warns that the "obvious danger is that the government and bureaucracy become the defenders, advocates, and, in extreme cases, hostages of various special interests."[131]

Interests outside Japan also penetrate the decision-making process. In Japan, Kyogoku explains, "if one's reputation in the outer world of strangers rises, then that person's ratings among kin will also rise."[132] In other words, a Japanese politician viewed with favor by the outside world—international community or allies—should garner popularity at home as well. This puts the outsiders in a position to influence Japanese policy. Kyogoku also notes that "intellectual dependence on the outside world" translates into groups "working hard at importing

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[129] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 82, 160.

[130] Johnson, *Who Governs* 141.

[131] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 39.

[132] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 67.

information." This results in increased authority and psychological and economic capital for leaders.[133] Japanese decision-makers, then, have something to gain from incorporating foreign ideas into domestic politics.

Foreigners also have an interest in gaining access to the Japanese policy process. Curtis points out that "foreign pressure is often effective in getting the Japanese government to make a policy decision" because it "drives issues into the political arena and thus brings into play the views of political leaders attuned to the game of compromise, deal making, and getting things done."[134] Afraid of losing face once the issue is raised, Japanese officials will work hard to address that foreign government's concerns. This approach does not guarantee favorable results, as Japan's neighbors have discovered concerning the country's handling of its past. It is, however, another input to Japan's decision-making mechanism.

Ike raises the role of public opinion in Japanese politics, noting that overall "the Japanese masses are quiet and have a sense of resignation toward great issues."[135] He goes on to explain that "for many people, government remains something remote, something not intimately connected with their lives."[136] This disconnection could be due to Ike's contention that there is "no agency within the Japanese government which serves as the defender of the public interest." He argues that the likelihood of special interests making gains "at the expense of the public interest" remains quite real.[137]

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[133] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 67-68.

[134] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 247.

[135] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 230; Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 24, also notes a lack of voter interest in Japanese politics.

[136] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 285.

[137] Ibid. 286.

Kyogoku writes, however, that local elections provide the people with "an opportunity to participate."[138] Local elections are competitive, as previously mentioned, so politicians must "provide constituency service and respond to requests from the local people and businesses without questioning the merits of such requests."[139] The resulting mutual gain is what Kyogoku refers to as "the politics of benefits" in which "the benefits to the constituents are being provided in exchange for the votes."[140]

Ike claims that public opinion in Japan is more accurately characterized as public "mood," changes which are "usually not preceded by a 'great debate' in which the issue or issues get a widespread and heated public hearing." These changes in mood are reflected in (and may even originate, at least in part, from) the mass media.[141] Japanese family preference for a single newspaper, according to Kyogku, is "quite stable," and has political implications if those readers act on queues provided by the print media. In this case, "political journalism itself becomes 'public opinion.'"[142] In Japan, as in other liberal democracies where freedom of the press is valued, the media is expected to act as a government watchdog. Kyogoku notes that "there is a long tradition, dating back to the Meiji era, for the press to be critical of the government in power."[143] Fulfilling this function may not necessarily converge with the actual mood of the public. In fact, "the days when politics and confrontation between the conservatives and the

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[138] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 205.

[139] Ibid. 121.

[140] Ibid. 106.

[141] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 231.

[142] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 196-97, 199.

[143] Ibid. 200.

leftists were the main concerns of the people, especially the young, have come to an end."[144] The lack of active participation and interest, coupled with difficulty faced by politicians in mobilizing the public sector, make public opinion somewhat of a wildcard in Japanese policy making.[145]

Special interests, foreign pressure, mass media, and public opinion all participate in Japanese government decision-making at the *ura* level. Their contributions to unseen forces may have a notable, if not direct, impact on policy. Contacts with the LDP, the bureaucracy, Diet members, and perhaps even cabinet officials allow these informal influences into the process.

Reform: Same as It Ever Was

In her comparison of Japan's parliamentary politics to Great Britain's "Westminster" system, Aurelia George Morgan declares, "Japan's political system has rarely produced rapid change or fundamental transformations of existing structures. In fact, it is renowned for exactly the opposite: for delivering 'reform' that represents no change and for suffering a kind of structural paralysis or policy immobilization."[146] None of this is to say, however, that—given LDP dominance, public apathy, and cultural resistance—change is impossible in Japanese policy making.

Kyogoku explains that there are two types of change: one that starts with a demand for policy change which leads to a revision of the definition of reality, and another in which reality is revised and requires a subsequent adjustment of policy. In the second case, "the power struggle is over recognition of the new reality, which leads to a choice of one policy over another."[147]

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[144] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 202.

[145] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 286.

[146] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 73.

[147] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 208.

During the 1990s, according to Tomohito Shinoda of the International University of Japan, a new reality of recession and various crises made the lack of strong leadership a "focal issue for Japanese politics."[148] He writes, "In addition to the 1995 earthquake, the government's response to the 1996-1997 hostage crisis in Peru and the 1997 oil spill disaster in the Sea of Japan made strengthening the prime minister's power, especially in crisis management, a top priority issue."[149] How those involved in the Japanese policy process perceive reality greatly impacts that process.

In the 1994 English translation of the controversial *Blueprint for a New Japan: The Rethinking of a Nation*, Ichiro Ozawa addresses the need for reform in the post-Cold War world, given that "Japan has become a global power that cannot avoid the responsibilities that come with power."[150] This "global responsibility," he argues is "to frame active, comprehensive, long-term, dynamic and consistent policies." Policies now are "passive, partial, and short-term," and they "tend to be the product of last-minute decisions." [151] While questions remain over whether Ozawa actually authored *Blueprint* and, if he did, over his motivations for doing so, it offers valuable insight into Japan's post-Cold War direction for reform.[152]

Ozawa, regarded by some as "the single most influential politician in Japan" in the 1990s,[153] advocates establishing political leadership by ensuring "that the policy-making process

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[148] Shinoda, "Koizumi's Top-Down Leadership" 20, 25.

[149] Ibid. 26.

[150] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 21.

[151] Ibid. 22.

[152] Chalmers Johnson, rev. of *Blueprint of a New Japan: The Rethinking of a Nation*, by Ichiro Ozawa, *Monumenta Nipponica* 49.3 (Autumn 1994): 379-81. Johnson notes that the book could have been the result of a study group that held 100 meetings, 80 of which Ozawa actually attended. He also claims that the book could have been written to distract the public from Ozawa's own political corruption, though he offers no further information regarding the claim.

is clear, and show [Japanese] citizens and the world who bears political responsibility in Japan, what they think, and what their larger visions are."[154] Reform should increase the real authority of the prime minister. "Instead of defining only what the prime minister must not do," contends Ozawa, "we must develop a vision of what it is the prime minister *must* do."[155] One example is the need for "immediate reaction by the prime minister during national emergencies."[156] As the 9/11 attacks demonstrated, governments must be prepared and equipped to respond quickly to unforeseen events, and, as Shinoda points out in 2003, "The piecemeal institutional changes of the 1990s have created a new environment within the Japanese government that encourages top-down leadership by the prime minister."[157]

These piecemeal changes include electoral reform in 1994 and administrative and institutional reform in 1999 and 2001. Electoral reform centered on forming single-seat or single-member districts out of multi-member districts, resulting in an alteration of "the nature of special-interest representation by the LDP," and "a significant shift in the power balance within the LDP that indirectly weakened factional influence over the prime minister."[158] Indeed, the 1994 reforms encouraged "empowered young LDP members from across the different factions" to form "'The Group to Build a Japan for Tomorrow,' calling for drastic reform of the LDP."[159]

Along with the LDP, the bureaucracy and Japanese policy-making itself were affected by the turn-of-the-century reforms. Since 1999, "bureaucratic assistance [to the Diet] has been

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[153] Johnson, rev. of *Blueprint* 379.

[154] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 12.

[155] Ibid. 34.

[156] Ibid. 85.

[157] Shinoda, "Koizumi's Top-Down Leadership" 33.

[158] Ibid. 22; Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 81-82.

limited to providing 'government witnesses,' who answer only highly technical questions, and only upon the specific request of a Diet committee." This development "has forced the prime minister to select politicians with deeper policy expertise for cabinet seats," indicating the bureaucracy's hold on policy issues could be waning.[160] And overall, Mulgan notes, "the government reorganization that took place in January 2001…modified Japan's traditional policy-making structure to some extent."[161]

It appears that Junichiro Koizumi is the first prime minister to take advantage of these reforms. He is the "first LDP president and prime minister to be selected outside of the traditional factional power struggles," and according to John H. Miller, he impressed American observers "not only by his extraordinary popularity with the Japanese public but by his talk of dispensing with politics as usual, implementing bold economic reforms, and revitalizing the American alliance."[162] His "view of structural reform entails fundamental changes to existing systems—institutions, rules, traditions and norms—in order to move Japan in the direction of smaller government…"[163] Some of these existing systems include his own LDP, telling its members in 2001 that "the existing decision-making process should be reformed to grant the cabinet sole authority in laying down government policy."[164] As LDP president, he established the "National Vision Project Headquarters" to undertake such reforms from a party perspective. The Headquarters presented their final report to Koizumi in 2002, noting "three main principles

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[159] Shinoda, "Koizumi's Top-Down Leadership" 22.

[160] Ibid. 25.

[161] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 86.

[162] Shinoda, "Koizumi's Top-Down Leadership" 23; John H. Miller, "The Glacier Moves: Japan's Response to U.S. Security Policies," *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 30.2 (Summer 2003): 136.

[163] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 73.

for the creation of a new policy decision-making system: leadership by the Cabinet, centering around the prime minister; elimination of the influence of bureaucrats in the process, and putting an end to party lobbies' ability to influence policy...."[165] Koizumi seemed to seize the subtle wave of reform making its way through Japanese politics since the 1990s.

The attraction of cultural and historical forces, however, represents a continuing challenge to serious change in Japan. Mulgan observes, "Koizumi is pitted against too many opposing power structures representing profoundly anti-reform interests."[166] She goes on to note that "individual LDP Diet members" retain the ability to "block those reform proposals that directly attack the vested interests of their supporters before they even reach the Diet or can be submitted for cabinet approval."[167] Despite calls for reform and change, the traditional undercurrent in Japanese politics still runs strong.

While examining Allison's models, this research aims to shed some light on the subsystemic level of Japanese policy making. Policy responses to a changed reality— characterized by Japan's evolving role in an unpredictable global environment and its current "maverick" leadership—offer observable evidence of how Japanese culture continues to influence its politics.

Conclusion

Japanese policy making is a complicated process resulting from multiple interactions between formal and informal institutions and heavily influenced by cultural norms. The "three rings" of power—the LDP, the Diet, and the bureaucracy—along with the executive branch, each

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[164] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 90.

[165] Ibid.

[166] Ibid. 75.

[167] Ibid. 79.

impact decision-making at different times and with varying strengths. The actual details of the process, however, remain somewhat out of reach due to an opaque, ambiguous system and inadequate comprehension of the Japanese language.

This chapter serves to establish the foundation of this research project. A basic understanding of Japanese policy making—a survey of formal and informal structures and cultural dynamics—allows further examination of specific policies. The remainder of this research focuses on Allison's decision-making models and the ongoing missile defense issue in Japan.

CHAPTER TWO

THE MISSILE DEFENSE CLIMATE IN JAPAN

In May 2003, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi "indicated both that missile defense was an important issue for Japan's defense policy and that he planned to 'accelerate consideration' of his country's participation in the United States missile defense program."[168] Given Koizumi's stated position and the government's December 2003 approval, the mechanics of the Japanese policy-making process warrant examination. A report by the Stanley Foundation and the Center for Nonproliferation Studies notes, "Debates about [missile defense or MD] in Japan occur within three circles: government agencies, the Diet and the Japanese public." Government deliberations, while more consistently supportive of MD than the legislative or public debates, focus primarily on financial and military concerns. On the other hand, the latter forums are attentive to a "mix of issues, including financial concerns, threat perceptions and the scope of US influence over Japan."[169] Reports by RAND, the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies and the Center for Defense Information all site similar, consistent issues.[170]

This chapter frames the Japanese missile defense debate in the current strategic context and Japanese defense policy climate. Each of the issues surrounding the debate is addressed individually in order to assess its impact on the decision-makers.

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[168] David Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious about Missile Defense: North Korean Crisis Pushes Debate," *Asia-Pacific Security Studies* 2.4 (June 2003): 2, <http://www.apcss.org/Publications/APSSS/Japan%20Gets%20Serious%20About%20Missile%20Defense.pdf>.

[169] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security: Views from Washington, Beijing, and Tokyo," Evan S. Medeiros, rapporteur (The Stanley Foundation and Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, April 2001) 17, <http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/eanp/bmdrep/bmd_web.pdf>.

[170] See Michael Swaine, Rachel Swanger, and Takashi Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* (Rand, 2001), <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1374/>, Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious," and Rui Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up in Missile Defense," Center for Defense Information, <http://www.cdi.org/friendlyversion/printversion.cfm?documentID=1725>, 10 October 2003.

The Strategic Environment: New Era, New Rules

Changes in the global security climate over the last two decades have been truly historic, but in their totality they are outside the scope of this research. Two events, however, have had a profound effect on how the international system is viewed and are worth mentioning. First is the end of the Cold War. The collapse of Soviet communism eliminated the bipolar character of international politics and security, leading to the most significant redistribution of power since World War II. John H. Miller, writing in 2003, surmises that "with the waning of the Cold War…those who advocated shouldering 'normal international political and military responsibilities acquired increasing influence over Japanese policymaking."[171]

Second, many agree with the former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Thomas R. Wilson, that "the catastrophic events of 11 September (and their aftermath) brought a new dynamic to the global situation."[172] Wilson describes the end of an era and the beginning of another, claiming, "The 'Post Cold War' period ended on 11 September."[173] Indeed, Miller asserts that the 9/11 attacks "abruptly transformed Japan's domestic and international environment."[174] Japan's "National Defense Program Guideline for FY2005 and After" (NDPG) acknowledges the effects of 9/11, noting that the terrorist attacks demonstrated non-state actors "have emerged as a serious threat in today's security environment in addition to the traditional problems such as inter-state military confrontations."[175]

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[171] Miller, "The Glacier Moves" 133.

[172] Thomas R. Wilson, "Global Threats and Challenges," Statement for the Record, Senate Armed Services Committee, Washington, DC, 19 March 2002, 2.

[173] Ibid. 3.

[174] Miller, "The Glacier Moves" 137.

[175] Government of Japan, *National Defense Program Guideline for FY 2005 and After*, 10 December 2004, <http://www.jda.go.jp/e/policy/f_work/taikou05/e17taiko.pdf>, 1.

The end of the Cold War also facilitated the collapse of "the convenient separation between domestic and international affairs."[176] Lines drawn between the Western and Soviet blocs blurred, eliminating barriers to state-to-state engagement. Shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Japanese scholar Jun-ichi Kyogoku noted, "The pragmatic evaluation of whether a combination of new political leadership and new policies in response to new international trends would be appropriate has become an important factor in domestic politics."[177] States, and their populations, were increasingly attuned to and affected by events taking place outside their borders. Yet this did not signal a warm welcome of new relationships. According to Japan's NDPG, "Against the backdrop of ever-deepening interdependence among states and globalization, new threats and other various situations that affect peace and security…pose an imminent challenge to today's international community."[178] Japan's domestic policymaking, already sensitive to foreign pressures, now faces further encroachment with the removal of Cold War barriers.

As one observer notes, "The most important goal of a national strategy remains to prevent a given community from falling under the domination of another."[179] In Japan, reformer Ozawa observed rising defense budgets in countries like China and India and concluded that the security environment after the Cold War may have actually worsened. He writes, "Not only is there no 'peace dividend,' but the international situation is, if anything, growing more

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[176] Jean-Marie Guehenno, "The Impact of Globalization on Strategy," in *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, eds. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001) 84.

[177] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 207.

[178] Government of Japan, NDPG 1-2.

[179] Guehenno, "Impact of Globalization" 87.

precarious."[180] Indeed, regional conflict, international terrorism, arms proliferation, and weapons of mass destruction have dominated the global security scene since the end of the Cold War.

Ozawa also believes that after World War II, Japan "reaped the harvest of peace and free world markets more than any other nation" without having to "pay the costs of peace and freedom."[181] With the threat of Soviet attack diminished, the United States has, according to one author, impressed "a constant systematic pressure" on Japan to "take more responsibility for global security issues."[182] Ozawa sees an increased role for Japan and argues that it is in the country's interest "because Japan needs a stable and peaceful world environment for the free trade on which it depends."[183] To be sure, Japan's defense policies are changing in light of the rising challenges of a new era.

Japan's Defense Policy: New Era, New Roles

A researcher for the Japan Institute of International Affairs notes, "MD itself comes at a time when Japan has been making a surprisingly swift degree of change over a very short period to carve a role for itself outside the traditional barriers of self defense."[184] These customary restraints were put in place by the Allied forces and adopted by the Japanese government after World War II. Subsequently, they have fostered a culture in which military strength is "treated

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[180] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 102.

[181] Ibid. 96. Chalmers Johnson also discusses Japan's "free ride" in *Japan Who Governs* 266.

[182] Hiromichi Umebayashi, "Does Japan Need Missile Defense or Missile Control?" *Bulletin 19 – Missile Defense and North-East Asia*, International Network of Engineers and Scientists Against Proliferation, <http://www.inesap.org/bulletin19/bul19art18.htm>.

[183] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 51.

[184] Tara Kartha, "Managing the Shift: Missile Defense and Japan's Options," (The Japan Institute for International Affairs: Tokyo, March 2003) 5-6, <http://www.jiia.or.jp/pdf/fellow/tara.pdf>.

as a liability" and distrusted by the public.[185] Japan expert Chalmers Johnson contends that these

"popular attitudes" reflecting fears about revived militarism are the "greatest single obstacle to a

realistic defense policy in Japan."[186] In order to maintain harmony, Japan has built upon war-

renouncing Article 9 of it constitution and imposed restrictions on its own ability to wage war:

denying the acquisition of "highly effective offensive capabilities," announcing three non-

nuclear principles, and capping defense expenditures at 1 percent of gross national product.[187]

While these constraints remain in place, Japan defense policy is evolving.

The National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) adopted by the Cabinet in 1995 calls for

a restructuring of the defense capability in order to "effectively respond to a variety of situations

and simultaneously ensure the appropriate flexibility to smoothly deal with the development of

the situations." Under the heading, "Contribution to creation of a more stable security

environment," the NDPO urges "participation in international peace cooperation activities."[188]

The United States recognized this expanded direction in the 2003 Department of Defense Report

on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense. The report states, "Japan's evolving

international role means greater involvement in multinational efforts to promote regional and

global stability," noting Japan's 2002 deployment of 650 troops to East Timor.[189] As the Self-

Defense Forces (SDF) adjust to this broadened role and modern threat, the government of Japan

realizes that its "future defense capability should be a multi-functional, flexible, and effective

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[185] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 42.

[186] Johnson, *Who Governs* 279, 265.

[187] Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* and Johnson, *Who Governs* 265.

[188] Government of Japan, "Security of Japan and Roles of Self Defense Forces," *The National Defense Program Outline in and after FY1996*, 28 Nov 95, <http://www.jda.go.jp/e/policy/f_work/taikou96/3_e.htm>.

force with high level of readiness, mobility, adaptability and multi-purpose capability, and be equipped with advanced technologies and intelligence capabilities comparable to global military-technological level."[190]

Part of this capability addresses Japan's response to a ballistic missile attack. The Japan Defense Agency (JDA) "hopes to acquire the systems as early as 2006, and after test launches, to deploy them in 2007 at the earliest."[191] Indeed, the NDPG for 2005 promulgates Japan's commitment to "establish necessary force structure, including the introduction of ballistic missile systems, to cope effectively with ballistic missile attacks."[192] The balance of this chapter deals with the issues faced by decision-makers as they determined Japan's need for this missile defense capability.

Issues: Considering Japan's Missile Defense Approach

Given the Japanese penchant for political harmony and unanimity, the decision to develop and field a missile defense system involves a number of participants and covers a variety of their concerns. The Center for Nonproliferation Studies asserts that "Japan has not yet had a serious public debate" on MD.[193] While there has not been a dominant public outcry for or against MD, the government recognizes "the reality of public concerns," and, in fact, "several foreign ministry and defense officials stated that public opinion is a major constraint on missile

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[189] United States, Department of Defense, "Report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense: A Report to the United States Congress by the Secretary of Defense" (July 2003) II-21, <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/allied_contrib2003>.

[190] Government of Japan, NDPG 6.

[191] Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up"

[192] Government of Japan, NDPG 8.

[193] East Asia Nonproliferation Program, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, *Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) in Northeast Asia: An Annotated Chronology, 1990-Present* (Monterey Institute of International Studies, 13 March 2003), <http://cns.miis.edu/research/neasia/bmdchron.pdf>.

defense planning."[194] Public views generally fall into one of three categories: the "anti-China group" (favoring MD), the "arms control group" (having MD concerns), and the "pacifist group" (opposing MD).[195] The characterization of these groups is broadly representative of concerns and positions held by all the players in the missile defense decision.

According to a RAND study, there are eight major domestic entities involved in the MD decision. Each is drawn from the formal and informal institutions of Japanese government, demonstrating the relationship between vested authority and real power. They include: the Prime Minister and his Cabinet; JDA and the SDF; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA); the Ministry of Finance (MOF); the Diet; political parties; the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) and private business; and the public and the media.[196] Each of these entities emphasizes certain MD considerations over others, but many observers agree that there are several themes encompassed by the debate. Common among these are the impact on the US-Japan alliance, regional security concerns and threat perceptions, compatibility with legal and constitutional issues, cost, and the system's technical effectiveness.[197] Each area of concern is further examined below.

The US-Japan Alliance

The bilateral relationship between the United States and Japan is "the key to [US] security strategy in the Asia-Pacific region" and is "indispensable to Japan's security," according

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[194] Umebayashi, "Missile Defense or Missile Control?" and "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asia Security" 17.

[195] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asia Security" 17.

[196] Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* 41.

[197] Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up"; East Asia Nonproliferation Program, *Annotated Chronology* 2, 5; "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asia Security" 17; Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 2; Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* 63.

to the two governments.[198] The current collaborative relationship between them indeed contrasts the Asian partner's 1991 Gulf War stance, widely derided as "cheque book diplomacy."[199] Japanese lack of action and slow response came at a time when Washington was beginning to push Tokyo to accept a new role, and the relationship was criticized as lingering "only through inertia, without any foundation in grand strategy or in response to a common threat."[200] Miller in 2003 states that Japan's decision to participate in joint development of a missile defense system and their willingness to commit forces to regional conflicts served as "key markers of progress" for Washington toward a revision of the relationship.[201] Francis Fukuyama and Kongdan Oh assert that the collapse of the Soviet Union and this Gulf War criticism of Japan led the country to reassess that relationship with the United States. In their words, "In the aftermath of the Gulf War, Japan has begun to consider whether it wants to continue playing a subordinate role to the United States, or whether it should seek a more independent and prominent role in world affairs."[202] The changing global security environment in the early 1990s led the Japanese to scrutinize the relationship more than they had at any other time since its inception. Policy reacted to a new reality.

Japan chose, of course, to maintain harmony within the alliance, and took incremental steps to increase its own contributions. Miller, writing for the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in 2000, discusses one of those steps. "As elaborated in the 1997 U.S.-Japan Guidelines

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[198] Department of Defense, "Allied Contributions," II-20; Government of Japan, NDPO, 28 Nov 95.

[199] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 6.

[200] Francis Fukuyama, "Re-Envisioning Asia," *Foreign Affairs* 84.1 (Jan/Feb 05): 78; Johnson, *Who Governs* 296.

[201] Miller, "The Glacier Moves" 132.

[202] Francis Fukuyama and Kongran Oh, *The U.S.-Japan Security Relationship after the Cold War* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1993) ix.

for Defense Cooperation," he notes, "Japan's willingness to cooperate militarily with the U.S. in promoting regional security represents another 'breakthrough' in Japanese security thinking."[203] The Japanese recovered from their Gulf War misstep and opened the door for increased teamwork in the alliance.

Nowadays, the "close cooperative relationship…plays an important role in facilitating international efforts to prevent the new threats and various situations, such as terrorism and ballistic missile attacks, from emerging, and to cope with them if necessary."[204] To this end, the two countries have been working together in a joint program on missile defense research since 1999.[205] This followed the announcement of a unilateral US policy on deployment of a MD system for the purposes of defending the homeland. Regardless of allied cooperation, the US planned to field a defense. Japan was faced with a choice between building upon the progress in its relationship with the US after the Gulf War or jeopardizing ties by not participating in the research effort. Japanese leadership, consistent with the cultural proclivity for importing foreign ideas, had the opportunity to enhance Japan's image internationally and possibly as a result, domestically. Kim Holmes of the Heritage Foundation points out, "Americans conscious to the threats to their own nation from ballistic missiles will welcome a change that allows Japan to be a stronger, more active, and equal alliance partner."[206] And the US government has an interest in protecting the tens of thousands of American military personnel and their families stationed in

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[203] John H. Miller, "Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Security," in *Domestic Determinants and Security Policy-Making in East Asia*, eds. Satu P. Limaye and Yasuhiro Matsuda (National Institute for Defense Studies and Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2000) 17.

[204] Government of Japan, NDPG 6.

[205] Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up"

[206] Kim R. Holmes, "US-Japan Cooperation and Ballistic Missile Defense," <http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed082801.cfm>, 28 August 2001 (originally published in the *Asahi Shinbun*, according to the website).

Japan. Certainly, any future MD moves in Japan will impact the security alliance with the United States. Any "perception of erosion" of the alliance "might have significant implication in the regional security policy of Japan," including its MD position.[207]

Regional Security

The Higuchi report, Japan's first official look at its security environment after the fall of Soviet communism, declares that Asia came out of the Cold War in a different situation than Europe, citing "no evidence that the level of military tension in this part of the world has rapidly declined." The report continues, "nations of this region are generally more concerned about security problems…and are devoting a considerable portion of their resources to the improvement of military power."[208] These improvements, for some states, included the development of ballistic missiles. Donald Rumsfeld, who chaired the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States, comments on the attractiveness of ballistic missiles, noting, "they are quite cheap compared to armies, navies and air forces." He explains, "To the extent a country wants to assert influence in the region and does not want to be dissuaded from doing that by a Western country, clearly a ballistic missile with a weapon of mass destruction is attractive."[209] Reports and testimony such as this underscore the "potential size and sophistication of the ballistic missile threat confronting Japan."[210]

In 2003, Japan's Cabinet Office conducted a survey that indicated nearly 80 percent of the respondents believed Japan could be drawn into war and 74 percent "cited North Korea as the

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[207] Umebayashi, "Missile Defense or Missile Control"

[208] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 4.

[209] Donald Rumsfeld, Barry M. Blechman, William R. Graham, and Thomas Moore, "The Growing Ballistic Missile Threat: How Much, How Soon, and How Dangerous?" *Heritage Lectures* No. 632 (1 February 1999): 5.

[210] Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* 24.

biggest area of security concern."[211] Since the end of the Cold War, North Korea has repeatedly

challenged Japanese feelings of security. In the early 1990s, it tested and fielded its first missile

capable of ranging Japan, the No Dong.[212] The first North Korean nuclear crisis occurred in

1993-1994, and in August 1998, the North test fired a Taepodong-1 missile over Japan. A

suspicious North Korean boat was sunk in Japanese waters in 2001, and Kim Chong-il, in 2002,

admitted that North Korean agents had been responsible for abducting a dozen Japanese citizens

to train spies during the 1970s. His announcement was followed a month later by a new nuclear

weapons program revelation. These events, laid against the backdrop of the 9/11 attacks on the

United States, left many Japanese feeling increasingly vulnerable.

If any of these episodes could be singled out, many agree that North Korea's 1998 missile

launch over Japan "had a defining influence" on Japanese support for MD.[213] Prior to the

launch support for MD programs was confined to "select government ministries" and the

"defense establishment."[214] The event, however, brought the MD issue onto the national scene

by igniting "public concern about the country's vulnerability to ballistic missile attacks."[215]

This popular concern translated into political action and four months after the launch, Japan's

leaders decided to enter the joint MD research program with the US.[216] One author notes that the

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[211] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious," 2.

[212] The Claremont Institute, "Missiles of the World: No-dong 1," <http://www.missilethreat.com/missiles/no-dong-1_north_korea.html>.

[213] East Asia Nonproliferation Program, *Annotated Chronology* 2, 6; Toshiro Ozawa, "Regional Perspectives: Northeast Asia," *Occasional Paper No. 5: International Perspectives on Missile Proliferation and Defenses* (Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute for International Studies, March 2001): 71, 74, <http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/opapers/op5/op5.pdf>; Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 2.

[214] East Asia Nonproliferation Program, *Annotated Chronology* 2; Toshiro Ozawa, "Regional Perspectives" 74.

[215] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 2.

[216] Toshiro Ozawa, "Regional Perspectives: Northeast Asia" 74; Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 2.

decision to join the effort "was imminent, if not already taken internally."[217] This would be a clear case of the *omote* side of politics catching up with—or publicly representing—the *ura*.

Though North Korea remains a threat to Japan, observers claim that "public concerns have begun to shift…toward China," and that "many Japanese see China as a potential enemy."[218] According to a poll taken from 1988 to 1996, Japanese trust in China fell from 76 percent to 37.3 percent, indicating a increased threat perception despite heightened familiarity.[219] Much of the Japanese population's newly found knowledge about China is based on increasing economic ties; however, as Fukuyama notes, this growing interdependence "has not mitigated nationalist passions, but exacerbated them."[220] This public sentiment reached the political scene, and Japan issued its strongest official position on China to date in its NDPG. It states, "China, which has a strong influence on security in this region, has been modernizing its nuclear and missile capabilities as well as naval and air forces, and expanding its area of operation at sea. We have to remain attentive to its future course."[221] And in a remarkable move, Japan publicly and officially acknowledged that it shared the US strategic objective of peaceful resolution of the Taiwan Strait issue.[222]

With regard to Japan's MD plans, China is outspokenly opposed. In a 1993 bilateral meeting of defense ministers, the Chinese side indicated that the system "could undermine global strategic balance and start a new arms race." Furthermore, Japan's efforts could "tip the regional

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[217] Toshiro Ozawa, "Regional Perspectives: Northeast Asia" 71.

[218] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security" 18.

[219] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 30.

[220] Fukuyama, "Re-Envisioning Asia" 81.

[221] Government of Japan, NDPG 3.

balance of power by impeding the strength of China's own ballistic missile force."[223] Antithetically, many Japanese see the Chinese contention as an indication "that China is targeting them, possibly with nuclear weapons." As this public mood toward China persists it becomes increasingly apparent that greater Chinese opposition to MD will be met with greater Japanese support for the system.[224]

No matter the source of Japanese anxiety, threat perception based on the regional security situation is likely to be a major factor in missile defense decisions. Deliberations about Japanese MD are already "occurring against the backdrop of broader discussions about Japan's role in regional security." As the threat and Japanese defense policy evolve, Japan's new role may necessitate changes in the country's constitution.[225]

Legal Considerations

According to Ichiro Ozawa, the 1947 Japanese constitution lacks "clear guidance governing Japan's response to international developments." The void, he argues, is why the Japanese are consistently "mired in arguments about constitutional interpretation."[226] This position has gained support, and "there is growing consensus in Japan that Article 9 of its postwar constitution…should be revised, even if the process stretches out over a number of years."[227] A non-partisan committee on constitutional revision was formed by the Diet in 1999 and began holding public hearings in January 2000. However, as one observer notes, "while

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[222] U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee, "Joint Statement," Washington D.C., <http://www.jda.go.jp/e/pab/joint/20050219.htm>, 19 February 2005.

[223] Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up."

[224] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security" 18, 20.

[225] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security" 18; Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 5-6.

[226] Ichiro Ozawa, *Blueprint* 110.

there is broad support for changing Article 9, there is no consensus yet on how it should be changed."[228] In the meantime, Japan has taken "small but definite steps leading towards enlarging the highly restrictive constitutional envelope within which SDF have so far been allowed to act."[229]

The main legal issue pertinent to a Japanese missile shield is the country's engagement in collective defense. Yuki Tatsumi of the Center for Strategic and International Studies contends that "Japan may have reached the limit of what it can do under the current legal framework." Debates in the Diet over the definition of a "non-combat zone," the determination of a missile's intended target, and whether an American shoot-down of a missile—conducted based on Japanese-provided information—constitutes the exercise of collective defense indicate a need to untangle the collective defense issue.[230] In response to critics, Japan's chief cabinet secretary has remarked that the MD "will be operated based on Japan's independent judgment, and will not be used for the purpose of defending third countries. Therefore, it does not raise any problems with regard to the issue of the right to collective self-defense."[231]

Japan indeed has some legal hurdles to negotiate before a MD system is fielded. It is possible that this very initiative will translate into higher-level changes in the Japanese system. In his general policy speech in January 2005, Prime Minister Koizumi told the 162nd session of the Diet that he believes "that it is now time to actively engage in discussion on the modalities of

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[227] Fukuyama, "Re-Envisioning Asia" 78.

[228] Miller, "Changing Japanese Attitudes" 43.

[229] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 43.

[230] Yuki Tatsumi, "The Future of the U.S.-Japan Alliance," *Japan Watch* (23 February 2005): 1, <http://www.csis.org/japan/japanwatch/jw050223.pdf>.

[231] Fukuda, Statement.

the Constitution in a new era."[232]

Cost and Budgeting

A decision to participate in a MD program cannot bear fruit unless and until funds have been committed to acquire the necessary hardware, personnel, and architecture. As mentioned earlier, government debates about MD generally center on monetary issues. For instance, the Finance Ministry, in charge of drafting the Prime Minister's official budget, may "oppose the initiation of a large weapons program during a recession." Also, officials in the defense establishment "have concerns about the tradeoffs associated with [MD] development."[233] Budgets are, of course, finite, so one party's loss is another's gain, and vice versa.

According to the Ministry of Finance, MD-related expenditures of 106.8 billion yen were "incorporated in the FY2004 Budget." This amount was part of an overall defense budget totaling 4.903 trillion yen, down 1 percent from the previous year.[234] A Center for Defense Information analyst notes that by the end of FY2010, the Defense Agency "expects to spend at least 500 billion yen on MD. Critics include maintenance and operating costs, claiming MD expenses "could exceed 1 trillion yen."[235]

A notable constraint on Japan's financial planning is the "long-standing policy limit" whereby only 1 percent of the budget may be spent on national defense.[236] This amount must then be divided among air, ground, and maritime self-defense forces, as well as bureaucratic

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[232] Junichiro Koizumi, General Policy Speech to the 162nd Session of the Diet, Tokyo, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/koizumispeech/2005/01/21sisei_e.html>, 21 January 2005.

[233] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asia Security" 17.

[234] Government of Japan,. Ministry of Finance, "Understanding the Japanese Budget 2004," <http://www.mof.go.jp/english/budget/brief/2004/2004e_03.htm#5>.

[235] Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up"

[236] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 22.

elements of the defense establishment. Also budgeted are costs of hosting American forces. The US Defense Department reports that Japan provides a greater level of direct cost sharing than any other US ally ($3.5 billion, or roughly 350 billion yen, in 2002).[237] Policy makers in Japan will have to balance any new commitment to MD with its traditional defense costs, a prospect that surely factors into the MD decision.

Technological Feasibility

Spending a great deal of money on a system that does not even work is obviously not a good investment. The government of Japan recognizes this and considered this element in their MD decision process. In December 2003, Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda cited "rapid progress on the relevant technologies" of MD, leading to "high" technological feasibility. He argues that it "has been verified through the results of interception tests and various performance evaluations in the United States and also through our own simulation results."[238] This position was likely influenced by the US and allied Patriot systems performance during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Defense Science Board Task Force on Patriot System Performance reports that both the PAC-2 and PAC-3 interceptors were successful, engaging nine enemy tactical ballistic missiles and preventing any damage or loss of life.[239] A concept that had been proven in battle would provide a less controversial option toward strengthening the country's defenses.

Japanese scholar Kyogoku notes, "There are many examples where political criticism based on specialized knowledge has elicited a technical rebuttal in that specialty, and where a political problem was settled by a specialized decision that only specialists could understand."[240]

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[237] Department of Defense, "Allied Contributions" II-5; conversion of dollars to yen was based on an exchange rate of 100 yen to one US dollar

[238] Fukuda, Statement.

[239] Defense Science Board Task Force on Patriot System Performance, Report Summary, January 2005.

Sometimes a lack of public knowledge on a topic precludes widespread debate, and it is possible that this is the case in Japan. It seems that the notion of technical feasibility is less controversial than it has been in the United States. However, it remains an influence on the policy making process.

Conclusion

A shifting security environment on the international stage and emerging roles for the defense community in Japan provide the backdrop for public and private missile defense debates. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the terrorist attacks of September 11th likely have increased feelings of vulnerability and uncertainty in extra-state affairs. Furthermore, these sweeping changes have offered an opportunity for the Japanese to re-think traditional approaches to their security. The external influence of world events and the internal pull of Japanese culture undoubtedly affect the Japanese worldview and the country's interpretation of issues surrounding defense decisions.

This chapter outlined major considerations in the MD decision. The following chapter begins the examination of how Japanese decision-makers viewed these issues through different lenses and processes.

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[240] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 141.

CHAPTER THREE

JAPAN'S RATIONAL DECISION ON MISSILE DEFENSE

According to the rational actor model, policy is based on the choices leaders make when

presented with all their options. Those who are unable to make decisions "will simply be

dragged along by events," as Ichiro Ozawa notes in his critique of Japanese political

leadership.[241] As Graham T. Allison explains, "Governments select the action that will

maximize strategic goals and objectives."[242] Jun-ichi Kyogoku agrees, noting maximization of

advantages and options in order to survive in an unpredictable world system dominated by the

strong.[243] And Charles F. Bingman observes rational choice in the Japanese bureaucracy's issue

of administrative guidance. He writes, "It is more a function of leadership and judgment about

what is needed than it is the execution of some law or regulation."[244]

> Allison's proposal rests on the notion that
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> the likelihood of any particular action results from the combination of the nation's (1) relevant values and objectives, (2) perceived alternative courses of action, (3) estimates of various sets of consequences (which will follow from each alternative), and (4) net valuation of each set of consequences.[245]

Kyogoku sees this model in his leader-follower paradigm, citing "the ability to compare the

various alternative scenarios and take the one that is most appropriate according to one's

standards, even though that course of action may not be risk free, and thereby confront the

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[241] Ichiro Ozawa, *Blueprint* 26.

[242] Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *The American Political Science Review* 63.3 (September 1969): 694.

[243] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 131, 186-87.

[244] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 85.

[245] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 694.

unknown future." A key element to this approach is to "think beforehand what would be the worst possible outcome."[246]

It is appropriate here to raise a couple cautionary notes on the rational actor model. Kyogoku acknowledges that "human behavior is not based solely on cold, rational considerations," but also on "urges and impulses." Leaders must use imagination to "figure out the direction and strength of pressures" caused by those urges and impulses.[247] This will not always be an easy task and could, of course, affect policy decisions. Another pitfall of this model is the assumption of access to adequate information. Tara Kartha, Visiting Fellow at the Japan Institute for International Affairs, warns that a "selected decision may not be the best available" if reliable information is not obtainable.[248] Indeed, "human beings are finite creatures," and we have "no alternative but to make choices and decide here and now."[249]

This chapter examines Japan's missile defense policy through the lens of Allison's rational actor model. As Allison suggests, the first step is to determine Japanese values, objectives, and interests. Chapters 1 and 2 provide the cultural, structural, and contextual foundation for this discussion. The next step is an exploration of Japan's options and resultant consequences with regard to alliance politics, regional threats, budget priorities and financial stakes, and technology. The final step involves ascertaining how Japan receives maximum value through its ultimate decision on missile defense. As Allison notes, "The rational agent selects the alternative whose consequences rank highest in terms of his goals and objectives."[250]

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[246] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 91.

[247] Ibid. 88-89.

[248] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 9.

[249] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 184.

[250] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 694.

Japan's National Interest

The concept of national interest can escape definition yet garner a widespread understanding. Generally, national interest consists of those elements of a society that must endure to ensure the survival of that society. According to Kartha, discussions on national interest in Japan are rare, and Ozawa blames Japan's "political weakness" on the "inability to define the national interest." However, since the end of the Cold War, discourse has been on the rise.[251]

A fundamental interest for an overwhelming majority of nations, as Kyogoku notes, is to "guarantee the lives and security of the people."[252] These terms can be taken literally (i.e. protection from physical death or conquest), or they can expand to include topics such as economic security. In his first policy speech to the Diet as Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi declared, "the top priority that I must address is to rebuild our economy and reconstruct our society as one in full of [sic] pride and confidence." He goes on to say economic rebirth is the *nation's* top priority, as well, and devotion to international cooperation is essential to continued "prosperity in peace."[253] The Prime Minister has maintained this agenda throughout his time in office.

Ozawa also links prosperity to international engagement, warning, "If Japan loses the ability to trade, it will lose the very source of its prosperity." Therefore, he declares, "Japan must do all it can to maintain global stability, peace, and freedom" by assuming international responsibility and becoming a "global state."[254]

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[251] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 18, and Ozawa, *Blueprint* 39, 41.

[252] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 138.

[253] Junichiro Koizumi, General Policy Speech to the 151st Session of the Diet, Tokyo, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/koizumispeech/2001/0507policyspeech_e.html>, 7 May 2001.

As enunciated, then, by political leadership and scholars, Japan's national interest includes economic prosperity, peace and security, and position in the international community. Japan should seek to maximize the benefit to these interests when considering its options regarding missile defense.

Alternatives and Consequences: Look Before You Leap

Standing national interests, goals, and objectives define an end state that should be attained or maintained given a strategic problem. Policy makers must devise a "spectrum of options" in response to the problem and examine each option's costs and benefits.[255] Noting that Japan seeks to ensure its security and prosperity and improve its global standing, its decision-makers have three options regarding missile defense: refusal, pursuit of a limited system, or pursuit of a full, or layered, system.[256] A limited system may consist of sea-based assets and radar sites providing lower-tier MD. This would be employed to engage endo-atmospheric missiles in order to defend a smaller area against shorter-range missiles. Adding an upper-tier system would create a layered defense with the capability of protecting a larger area against exo-atmospheric, longer-range missiles.[257] Based on cultural considerations and Japanese government dynamics, these options likely enjoy varying degrees of support from each of the actors involved in the missile defense debate.

Beyond interests, Japan must also consider the elements of the missile defense debate—alliance politics, regional security, legality, cost, and technology. As Ozawa puts it, "Our choice of concrete methods of peace maintenance will depend on global developments and, more

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[254] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 94.

[255] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 694.

[256] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 63-73.

[257] East Asia Nonproliferation Program, *Annotated Chronology.*

particularly, on Japan's neighboring environment."[258] Each issue carries a number of costs and

benefits to be examined through Japan's unique cultural and historical filters with an eye on

maximizing value.

 US-Japan Alliance

The United States "provides for the territorial integrity of Japan—and the safety of its

peoples, the most vital national interest of all."[259] Thus, this arrangement "has strongly

influenced" bilateral relations, foreign and defense policy, and even domestic politics. Kyogoku

notes that, in fact, "Japan's defense capability is subject to the advice of the United States."[260]

In the post-9/11 world, though, Kartha observes "a perception that Japan's importance may be

waning in an environment where the US has 'friends' depending on regional contingencies." In

order to ensure that its own interests are addressed within the alliance, Japan must "make itself

'vital' to the US."[261] And the Japanese people may already realize this condition; Ozawa notes

that the public has the impression that "they have no choice but to contribute [internationally] if

they want to protect domestic interests."[262]

The benefits of a Japanese participation in a MD system include continued protection by

US forces and reassertion of the vitality and credibility of the alliance. The US reportedly

informed Japan that it would begin deploying MD in 2008, a move that could include sending

Patriot PAC-3 interceptors to Japan to defend US troops stationed there.[263] This initiative, of

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[258] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 103.

[259] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 20.

[260] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 18, 16.

[261] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 54.

[262] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 42.

[263] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 48; East Asia Nonproliferation Prorgam, *Annotated Chronology* 7.

course, would require Japanese concurrence, but it undoubtedly indicates American intent. And while this declaration "would have put further pressure on Tokyo to come to a decision," it would also mean "Japan would be protected under the umbrella of the US missile defense system before building its own system."[264] The near-term advantage of increased protection of territory and population from missile attack carries political consequences as well.

A missile defense system "might strengthen the credibility of the U.S. defense commitment to Japan and improve political cooperation and military coordination between Tokyo and Washington."[265] One author goes so far as to claim that "the most important benefit of MD could be the political signal it gives—of alliance vitality . . . and in turn the importance of Japan in the post cold war order."[266] Japanese interest in a MD system could "impress the Americans as an indication of the resolve…to defend themselves and…U.S. troops stationed in Japan as well."[267] Beyond the political realm, Japanese collaboration could further enhance the security relationship by drawing the two countries' defense industries closer."[268] Conversely, assured defense of Japan from missile attack and the continued health of the alliance could be jeopardized if Japan's chooses not to participate.

If there were a perception that Japanese missile defense efforts "would do more harm than good to their security, then they would not proceed."[269] Some analysts agree that MD "could cause political problems for the alliance in both countries" if the issue was handled

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[264] Kartha, "Managing the Shift," 48; Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up"

[265] Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* 5.

[266] Kartha, "Managing the Shift," 64.

[267] Umemoto Tetsuya, "Japan-U.S. Cooperation in Ballistic Missile Defense," U.S.-Japan Track II Meeting on Arms Control, Disarmament, Nonproliferation, and Verification, Washington, D.C. (27-28 March 2002) 2, <http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/dc/track2/2nd/tet.pdf>.

[268] Ibid.

poorly.[270] Even pursuit of the system could have negative consequences. Kartha warns of strain on the alliance "if Japan is pushed forward at a speed which is politically and operationally impossible." And there is a danger of "Japan being pulled into the vortex of US interests," threatening Japan's successful diplomacy based on its "no war" principle.[271] Furthermore, Japan "would be part of the constraints and demands that is part of a defense/security umbrella even when its own vital interests are not involved or are contrary to the US objectives."[272]

One potential US objective Japan may wish to avoid would be escalation in a regional conflict with China. The U.S. may be reluctant to fully engage China if Japan does not maximize its cooperation in the protection of American troops. According to Kartha, this notion "translates to the undeniable fact that a degree of US vulnerability is in Japanese interests."[273]

Japan would also face significant challenges if it decided to autonomously pursue a MD system. While Washington welcomes a more assertive Japanese self-defense role, it might look with disapproval at any uncoordinated attempt to enhance security from missile attack. Indeed, "Tokyo is well aware that it risks strong US reaction if it goes too far."[274] Even if a system is fielded, autonomous Japanese control could "do irreparable damage to its security relationship with Washington" by refusing to intercept a missile it has determined is headed for the US and not Japan.[275]

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[269] Tetsuya, "Cooperation" 2-3.

[270] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asia Security" 21.

[271] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 54.

[272] Ibid. 72.

[273] Ibid. 71.

[274] Umebayashi, "Missile Defense or Missile Control."

[275] Tetsuya, "Cooperation" 4-5.

Maintaining harmony in its relationship with the US is an important factor in the Japanese MD decision that yields collateral domestic and international benefits. As Ozawa notes, "The most rational and effective way for Japan to contribute to world peace is by cooperating with America."[276]

Regional Security and Threats

The U.S.-Japan alliance is not the sole relationship affected by a Japanese decision to pursue missile defense. Japan's analysis of the need for MD includes scrutinizing the intentions of and threat posed by its regional neighbors. One report notes that "the promotion of defenses [in Japan] has been a response to the presumed growth of threats."[277] Most Japanese analysts agree that "in case of tensions either with North Korea or China, it would be Japanese territory that would first be held hostage, and the most vulnerable." Here, even limited MD would be "better than nothing."[278] Indeed, it would "provide reassurance to the Japanese public about deterrence and defense against Chinese or North Korean strike with theater ballistic missiles."[279] Limited MD would also offer a "psychological advantage during negotiations," since it is "precisely configured to deny" the use of missile blackmail or extortion.[280] A successful Japanese system may also aid in reducing global and regional missile proliferation by convincing others that ballistic missile efforts are "worthless and wasteful."[281] While MD provides

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[276] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 104.

[277] Tetsuya, "Cooperation" 3.

[278] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 55.

[279] Tetsuya, "Cooperation" 1.

[280] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 64.

[281] Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* 6-7.

advantages against multiple adversaries and challenges, it also addresses concerns about specific countries.

A panel of scholars agree that North Korea's 1998 missile launch over Japan "merely provided an opportunity to *easily* make a public case" for MD. In fact, the Defense Agency had been "concerned about the North Korean threat based on other North Korean missile activities dating back to 1993."[282] In addition to the missile activity, the most recent "North Korean nuclear crisis has created a sense of vulnerability among the Japanese people that has for the most part silenced criticism" of MD with respect to Japan's pacifist policy.[283]

Should hostilities ever materialize between North Korea and Japan or between North Korea and US forces stationed in Japan, the "lack of MD leaves Japan with fewer military or political options." Japan could not rely on the offensive capability of its protectors alone. As Operation Desert Storm showed, attacking mobile missiles employed with a "high degree of camouflage and innovativeness [sic]" can be less than effective. Rather, "a proven ability to defend against DPRK missiles," argues Kartha, "would underline to Pyongyang that is has run out of options" itself, depriving North Korea of "its most powerful tool."[284] Beyond the near-term challenge posed by North Korea, "a unified nuclear capable Korea would be a serious threat" to Japan as well.[285]

Many analysts agree that North Korea poses the "immediate" threat to Japan, but they see it "as more of a side show with Beijing as the more serious one."[286] This emerging concern lies

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[282] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security" 17-18.

[283] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 1 and Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up."

[284] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 57-58, 66.

[285] Ibid. 21.

[286] Ibid. 24.

in the prospects of a U.S.-China confrontation over Taiwan and China's ongoing military

modernization. In a cross-strait conflict, "a central Chinese goal is to limit U.S. involvement;

minimizing Japanese assistance to U.S. military forces is a key way of doing this."[287] And

minimizing assistance could involve threatening those forces or Japan itself with missile strikes.

Prior to such a dispute, China would seek to increase quickly its short and medium range ballistic

missile inventory, "ensuring that all neighbors would remain under the shadow of these

missiles."[288]

China's quantitative increase in its missile force is accompanied by qualitative

improvements in capabilities. Several defense experts concur that China's missile modernization

efforts were underway before the Japanese interest in MD and were "inevitable," assigning doubt

to the argument that MD would spark an Asian arms race.[289] Some Japanese policy makers hope

to use MD as "important leverage in bringing China to the disarmament table," while others are

"highly skeptical about the prospects for success" of an arms control solution.[290] The perception

of Chinese intentions and capabilities certainly influences the Japanese MD cost-benefit analysis.

An improved capability to handle these regional challenges is also a likely benefit of

fielding a MD system. A RAND study claims that a Japanese MD system would "compel the

modernization and integration of Japan's self-defense forces in critical areas, especially

regarding [command, control, and communications] infrastructure." Furthermore, this effort

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[287] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security" 19.

[288] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 35.

[289] Ibid. 73; Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 4; "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security" 20.

[290] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 67; "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security" 20

"could strengthen Japan's ability to adopt a more independent defense posture, should the need arise."[291]

The introduction of a new defensive system could result in better security for Japan by offering psychological benefits, increased political and military options, and greater physical protection from growing threats. Some may argue that a classic security dilemma situation will occur, making Japan actually less secure. Either way, decision makers must consider regional security when weighing alternatives.

Legal Considerations

Legal costs and benefits associated with Japan's MD are varied, but the notion of reform seems to be at the forefront of the arguments. How Japan handles the collective defense issue is key. Kartha claims that a limited MD is "less likely to strain" Japan's longstanding "no war" policy. The system can "with some credibility be called 'defensive' as long as it only protects the Japanese homeland or Japanese troops."[292] Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda clearly stated in December 2003 that MD would be "operated based on Japan's independent judgment" and therefore would "not raise any problem with regard to the issue of the right of collective self-defense."[293] A Japanese interceptor launched against a missile targeting a third country would be considered illegal under the current collective defense restrictions; however, "JDA officials insist that they will be able to distinguish incoming missiles targeting Japan from the others."[294] Yet

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[291] Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* 5, 6.

[292] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 65.

[293] Fukuda, Statement.

[294] Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up."

even the United States, through a bipartisan policy report, encouraged Japan "to alter its interpretation of the Peaceful Constitution that collective self-defense is unconstitutional."[295]

The potential revision of the "collective self-defense" rules of engagement demonstrates but one reform resulting from MD participation. In addition, there has already been serious discussion about granting the Prime Minister greater control under emergency laws to react quickly to missile launches that occur with little-to-no warning.[296] Taken together, constitutional and defense law reform could allow Japan the latitude to function more as a "normal" state. In his 1963 volume *Sekai to Nihon* ("The World and Japan"), former Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida argues that "even a Japan that stands in the world's top ranks economically, technically, and scholastically will remain something of a crippled nation if it remains dependent on others for its own defense."[297] MD, because of its unique capabilities and command and control requirements, could offer the impetus for Japan to change the restrictions on its defense, thereby raising its status among the community of nations.

The Economics of MD

The examination of the economic costs and benefits of missile defense involves the consideration of "what constitutes necessary and cost-effective equipment."[298] Some argue that a "commitment of resources" to MD "may seem wasteful" since adversaries, like North Korea, are "clearly open to other means of persuasion."[299] Also, the budgeting decision of assigning MD-related roles to the self-defense forces "could make it more difficult for them to discharge

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[295] Umebayashi, "Missile Defense or Missile Control."

[296] Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up."

[297] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 98-99.

[298] Ibid. 107.

[299] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 70.

their more traditional responsibilities."[300] As previously noted, however, the need to maintain

conventional forces to defend against a Soviet-style invasion of Japan may no longer be relevant

in a post-Cold War, post-9/11 environment. The Japanese may get "more bang for their buck"

by investing in a MD system.

Certainly, Tokyo's 1999 decision to participate in joint research on MD enabled Japan to

get in on "the last military business opportunity" of the 20th Century.[301] And a limited MD

system "would naturally strain Japanese budgets far less" than an autonomous full, layered

defense.[302]

Technological Feasibility

Obviously, the greatest benefit of having a technologically feasible system is having a

system that actually works as advertised. Politically, effective technology can increase the

"technical credibility" of MD systems, and, in turn, help win over the system's opponents, as

U.S. Patriot batteries did during Operation Iraqi Freedom.[303] Such was the case with opposition

leader Naoto Kan, who, after observing Patriot performance, "announced that he no longer

doubted its feasibility," clearing a "major roadblock" to Japan's MD quest.[304]

Deployment of a fully functional MD system could translate into a wider improvement of

Japan's overall defense capabilities. Introduction of such a system could "facilitate the

acquisition of sophisticated technologies and industrial capabilities, such as software and systems

[300] Tetsuya, "Cooperation" 5.

[301] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 45.

[302] Ibid. 67.

[303] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 1.

[304] Ibid. 3-4.

integration and missile technology."[305] Technological feasibility also adds credibility to MD's

deterrent factor. Other states may abandon their missile programs (or at least their targeting of

Japan) if they deem their own weapons ineffective against Japanese defenses.

Even functioning systems have their deficiencies. For instance, "protecting the entire

archipelago around the clock is impossible" with a limited system.[306] A full, layered system

undertaken with the U.S. could be an option for overcoming this insufficiency; although, a full

system has yet to be proven.

There is no alternative regarding technological feasibility. The system under

consideration either works or it doesn't. The cost-benefit analysis decision-makers must perform

in this instance involves the effects of having a technically viable defense.

Maximizing Value: MD or not MD?

Allison writes, "The international actor…is simply a value-maximizing mechanism for

getting from the strategic problem to the logical solution."[307] This approach is evident in Japan's

decision to pursue a MD system. While Japanese decision making relies on consensus building

and harmony, external circumstances do not always afford the luxury of time in coming to a

conclusion. Kyogoku observes, "one way to get the decision made is to wait for a consensus to

form after something has happened. Of course, there is the risk that the decision may come too

late, resulting in harm."[308] One could argue that with the North Korean missile activity in 1998

something has already happened to spur a consensus, yet careful examination shows that this is

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[305] Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* 6.

[306] Kotani, "Japan's Recent Step-up."

[307] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 695.

[308] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 69.

not the only occurrence considered with respect to MD. Table 1 summarizes the costs and

benefits associated with Japan's MD courses of action.

These consequences are only those that are available in the public realm, limited further

by the researcher's lack of proficiency in the Japanese language. However, Allison notes that the

rational actor model relies on a "dominant inference pattern," particularly, "if a nation performed

a particular action, that nation must have had ends towards which the action constituted optimal

means." He further explains, "Puzzlement is relieved by revealing the purposive pattern within

which the occurrence can be located as a value-maximizing means."[309] One can infer a

purposive pattern by reviewing the summary in Table 1.

	LIMITED MD	FULL MD	MD REFUSAL
BENEFITS	- Population/territory protection - Net increase in options vis-à-vis North Korea and China - Strengthened U.S.-Japan Alliance - Spur constitutional/legal reform - Wider military improvement	- Population/territory protection for all of Japan - Net increase in options vis-à-vis North Korea and China - Strengthened U.S.-Japan Alliance - Spur constitutional/legal reform - Wider military improvement	- Avoid monetary costs - Avoid legal debates - Maintain regional harmony - Avoid potential Asian arms race
COSTS	- "Vortex" of U.S. interests - Budgetary tradeoffs - Inability to defend all of Japan	- "Vortex" of U.S. interests - Budgetary tradeoffs - Greater monetary cost than limited MD	- Maintain vulnerability - Damage to security relationship with U.S.

Table 1: Japan's Missile Defense Alternatives

Each of the costs and benefits listed in Table 1 has a degree of significance; therefore,

simply comparing the number of "pros" and "cons" oversimplifies the issue. Japan's MD should

further the country's interests. Safeguarding economic interests, protecting society, preserving

peace, and raising the nation's international status are all goals of the current government. The

consequences of each option that support the achievement of these objectives clearly carry more

weight in the decision making process. In other words, "A decrease in the costs of an alternative, i.e., an increase in the value of the set of consequences which will follow from that alternative, or an increase in the probability of attaining fixed consequences, increases the likelihood of that action being chosen."[310] Simply put, the option that offers the greatest qualitative benefit in pursuit of national interests and objectives should be the one chosen by decision-makers. This is the case with Japan's missile defense. Limited MD is a low-cost, effective alternative intended to protect Japanese people and borders, thereby strengthening the U.S.-Japan security alliance and spurring reform that could raise Japan's international reputation.

Conclusion: The Rational Actor Model and Japanese Dynamics

Allison's rational actor concept appears to provide a rather straightforward model for analysis, yet it requires further qualification. Authors Alexander George, Robert Jervis, and Irving Janis offer further insights into decision making that, when applied to Japan's MD policy against its cultural dynamics, reveal there is more to rational behavior than weighing costs and benefits.

Alexander L. George claims that when it comes to rational decisions, the following elements are required:

> (1) *information* about the situation; (2) *substantive knowledge* of cause-and-effect relationships that is relevant for assessing the expected consequences of alternative courses of action; and (3) a way of applying the *values* and interests engaged by the problem at hand in order to judge which course of action is 'best' and/or least costly and which, therefore, should be chosen.[311]

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[309] Allison, "Conceptual Models," 694.

[310] Ibid.

[311] Alexander L. George, "Adapting to Constraints on Rational Decisionmaking," in *Understanding International Relations: The Value of Alternative Lenses*, eds. Asa A. Clark IV, Thomas F. Lynch III, and Rick Waddell (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993) 430.

He goes on to note that decision-makers must often deal with "value-complexity," or "the presence of multiple, competing values and interests" in a single issue, and uncertainty, or the "lack of adequate information about the situation at hand."[312] Decision-makers can never have perfect knowledge of a situation, so they must rely on the information available to them through multiple sources. Actors from *zoku* to LDP committees to elements of the bureaucracy to the mass media to alliance partners (like the U.S.) undoubtedly furnished Japan's Cabinet with a good deal of data on the MD problem. For instance, American PAC-3 proved their worth in Kuwait in 2003, and North Korea five years earlier verified its capability and intent to launch ballistic missiles toward Japan. These details helped build the "knowledge of cause-and-effect relationships" necessary for rational decision-making; if Japan did not explore missile defense, then it would remain vulnerable to missile attack.

The danger with inadequate information, of course, is misperception on the part of the policymaker. Robert Jervis in "Hypotheses on Misperception" points out that "the actor may, for a number of reasons, misperceive both others' actions and intentions."[313] One hypothesis relevant to the MD issue is "that there is an overall tendency for decision-makers to see other states as more hostile than they are."[314] This could be the case with Japan's view of the rising threat posed by China. Does China's military modernization indicate hostile intent toward Japan? Decision-makers in Tokyo must rely on the best available (versus the best) information regarding the path Beijing plans to take.

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[312] George, "Adapting to Constraints" 430-31.

[313] Robert Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," in *Understanding International Relations: The Value of Alternative Lenses*, eds. Asa A. Clark IV, Thomas F. Lynch III, and Rick Waddell (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993) 462.

[314] Ibid. 470.

There was, to be sure, a value-complexity associated with Japan's MD decision. Post-war pacifism clashed with the concept of collective self-defense. Improved defenses in Japan risked upsetting the regional status quo. And refusing to cooperate could have jeopardized one of the staunchest security relationships in the world. It is unlikely that a single alternative would adequately address every value evident in the MD problem. George notes that since "the highest possible payoff is often impractical, most people settle for a course of action that is 'good enough,' one that offers a sufficient rather than a maximum payoff."[315] Limited MD seems to offer a solution to the problem that is "good enough" to further objectives while addressing some values.

Given Japan's cultural characteristics, it is likely that consensus politics played a prominent role in the MD decision. George explains, "In the search for an effective decision there is often a potential trade-off between the substantive 'quality' of a decision and its 'acceptability' to those whose support the decision maker feels he would like to have or, indeed, must have."[316] The consensus building so prevalent in Japanese politics serves to maintain harmony, but it could lead to less than optimal policy decisions. Irving L Janis is likely to characterize this behavior as "groupthink," or "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action."[317] The desire for consensus in Japanese politics is strong and may cloud the opinions of group members. Yet consensus may simply represent the *omote*, or visible side, of public policy in Japan. Surely, a

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[315] George, "Adapting to Constraints" 437.

[316] Ibid. 438.

[317] Irving L. Janis, "The Problem of Groupthink," in *Understanding International Relations: The Value of Alternative Lenses*, eds. Asa A. Clark IV, Thomas F. Lynch III, and Rick Waddell (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993) 476.

great deal of *nemawashi* is conducted to achieve unanimity and to address the concerns and interests of all group members involved in the decision. Ozawa, however, warns, "'Unanimous consensus' turns out to mean the tyranny of the minority," reflecting a danger in Japanese governance and his fear that the majority could be led by a powerful, strongly opinionated, vocal faction. Again, the researcher's lack of Japanese language skills and a degree of secrecy in closed-door Japanese politics inhibit a full understanding of potential groupthink in the MD decision.

Value-complexity, uncertainty, misperception, and groupthink all serve to further characterize the rational decision made by Japanese leaders on the country's MD plans. While these concepts may call into question the pure application of Allison's model, they do not disprove the notion that the MD decision was the result of policymakers weighing the best possible alternative given the information available.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONSIDERING THE ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS MODEL

The organizational process model, in contrast to the rational actor model, is useful in showing government behavior "less as deliberate choices of leaders and more as *outputs* of large organizations functioning according to a standard pattern of behavior."[318] Allison argues the government "consists of a conglomerate of semi-feudal, loosely allied organizations, each with a substantial life of its own."[319] A review of Chapter 1 of this research readily demonstrates the complexity of the Japanese government "conglomerate" and policymaking process, complete with cultural considerations and both formal and informal institutions. Various organizations, inside and outside the government, likely influenced the missile defense decision. The organizational process model characterizes that decision as the output of the standard interactions of all involved parties.

Allison argues effective policy requires that "primary power must accompany primary responsibility."[320] In other words, those organizations charged with handling a specific policy issue (or part of an issue) must be endowed with the power to accomplish related tasks. In Japanese politics, as noted earlier, there is a difference between authority and power. Authority in policy making is often at the higher levels of a Japanese organization, while the actual power—of initiating policy—is deferred to lower levels, particularly in the bureaucracy. This characteristic dovetails with Allison's assertion that "each organization perceives problems, processes information, and performs a range of actions in quasi-independence (within broad

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[318] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 698.

[319] Ibid.

[320] Ibid. 700.

guidelines of national policy)."[321] Prime Minister Koizumi enunciates the national priorities as economic prosperity, peace and security, and position in the international community; it is up to each organization to handle their relevant portions in pursuit of these goals.

Organizational "quasi-independence" fosters a degree of insulation in decision-making. Allison notes, "Primary responsibility for a narrow set of problems encourages organizational parochialism."[322] The sectionalism and competition among the Japanese bureaucracy is consistent with this notion. Each of the eight entities involved in the MD decision maintains its own organizational goals, processes, and points of view. For instance, the Defense Agency and Self-Defense Forces organizationally approach MD differently than the Ministry of Finance, concerned primarily with how the new system fits into the government budget. On the other hand, in Japanese politics it is often difficult to discern between decision-makers in the Cabinet, the bureaucracy, the Diet, and the LDP due to the parliamentary-style government and unique interaction of the three rings of power. Parochial priorities, however, influence organizational outputs.

This chapter aims to apply the organizational process model to the MD problem, focusing on Allison's general propositions of organizational action, flexibility and change, and administrative feasibility. A valuable addition to future research in this area would be consideration of Japanese management processes in the 1980s, upon which many contemporary Japanese official processes are modeled.[323]

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[321] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 700.

[322] Ibid.

[323] Dr. Charles Walcott of Virginia Tech's Political Science Department recommended this approach.

Existing Organizations and Fixed Procedures

U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld remarked to a group of soldiers in Southwest Asia, "You go to war with the army you have, not the army you wish you had." Aside from the domestic political fallout from this comment, he raises an important point about the organizational process model. Allison writes,

> At any given time, a government consists of *existing* organizations, each with a *fixed* set of standard operating procedures and programs. The behavior of these organizations— and consequently of the government—relevant to an issue in any particular instance is, therefore, determined primarily by routines established in these organizations prior to that instance.[324]

Current government structures must implement standing procedures to deal with situations as they arise. This fit is not always perfect as human beings cannot anticipate and plan for all future events. The response to the 9/11 attacks represents an example in the American experience when organizations like the Department of Defense, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to name a few, had to confront an unprecedented instance with fixed operating procedures. The MD decision in Japan can be examined in the same light.

In Japan, as elsewhere, existing organizations each have their own missions and goals. Japan's Basic Policy for National Defense, decided by the Cabinet in 1957, outlines guidance for JDA the SDF. It reads, "The objective of national defense is to prevent direct and indirect aggression, but once invaded, to repel such aggression thereby preserving the independence and peace of Japan founded upon democratic principles." The objective is further qualified with several principles, including the incremental development of "effective defense capabilities" and

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[324] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 698.

dealing with "external aggression on the basis of the Japan-U.S. security agreements."[325] Since

the goal of the JDA and SDF is to defend Japan, all their processes and procedures are developed

and maintained with that end in mind.

Another organization involved in the MD decision, however, exists under different

guidance. The mission of the Ministry of Finance (MOF) in fiscal 2003, when the Cabinet

promulgated the MD decision, was to

> Maintain a Stable, yet Dynamic Economy and a Peaceful and Prosperous Society by
> Managing the Overall National Finances through Efficient and Transparent
> Administration in the Interest of the People as Taxpayers, and Promote the Sustainable
> Growth of the World Economy.[326]

The Finance Ministry, like the JDA and the SDF, is concerned with the broad national goals of

prosperity, peace, and stability in the international community, but the approach each

organization takes is markedly different. A survey of other ministries and government agencies

would yield similar results, yet Allison claims, "operational goals of an organization are seldom

revealed by formal mandate."[327] The stated mission and goals simply provide guidance to each

organization.

Instead, Allison argues that goals are "a set of constraints defining acceptable

performance" which "emerges from a mix of expectations and other demands from other

organizations in the government, statutory authority, demands from citizens and special interest

groups, and bargaining within the organization."[328] A public mission statement or basic policy

may come about as the result of these constraints. One example would be the expectation of the

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[325] Government of Japan, Basic Policy for National Defense (Decided by the National Defense Council and by the Cabinet on May 20, 1957), <http://www.jda.go.jp/e/policy/f_work/frame21_.htm>.

[326] Government of Japan, Ministry of Finance, "The Mission and Policy Goals of the Ministry of Finance," (FY2003), <http://www.mof.go.jp/english/hyouka/15nendo/hyouka4.htm>

[327] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 700.

Japanese people and the Diet that the JDA and SDF will provide for Japan's defense within the controls of the Peace Constitution and subsequent government interpretations, greatly influenced by the LDP. It is within these constraints that the "rank-and-file" of Japan's government "often have to endure difficult situations without complaint and devote themselves wholeheartedly to the performance of their tasks."[329] And these tasks are accomplished within the boundaries of the organization's standard operating procedures.

Allison defines standard operating procedures, or SOPs, as "routines for dealing with *standard* situations" which "allow large numbers of ordinary individuals to deal with numerous instances, day after day, without considerable thought, by responding to basic stimuli."[330] Japanese scholars note that some processes in the Diet are "formulaic," and the bureaucracy tends to be "highly legalistic in its approach to administrative problems."[331] And certainly there are established procedures in the government—particularly JDA, MOFA, and MOF—regarding joint defense research programs and weapons system procurement. These procedures, though, can make organizational behavior appear "unduly formalized, sluggish, or inappropriate," especially when confronting a non-standard problem.[332] On this, Nobutaka Ike writes, "If no statute can be found, and there are no precedents, which are a great arbiter of Japanese administrative practice, decisions are likely to be postponed."[333] Action, then, in organizations ill equipped to deal with non-standard issues, can be near-sighted, inflexible, and incremental.

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[328] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 700.

[329] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 95.

[330] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 702.

[331] Ozawa, *Blueprint*, 58; Ike, *Japanese Politics* 150.

[332] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 702, 700.

[333] Ike, *Japanese Politics* 150.

Though the Japanese government's approach to the MD problem is not completely transparent—especially to a researcher lacking Japanese language skills—one can infer that the output of organizational processes affected the decision. As Allison puts it, "If a nation performs an action of this type today, its organizational components must yesterday have been performing (or have had established routines for performing) an action only marginally different from this action."[334] Each actor involved in the policy decision dealt with the issue, initially at least, within its own established procedures. Organizational methods were in place to address the standard requirements of the U.S.-Japan alliance, regional security, constitutional interpretation, budgeting, and technological assessment of a new defense system. Japan's MD policy, then, emerged in part from organizational action.

Limited Flexibility and Organizational Change

Kyogoku describes a "value system" in Japanese government offices reflected in a "mentality that prefers to follow precedent and avoid the new."[335] This is not fundamentally unique to Japanese politics and does not preclude the potential or necessity for change. Allison writes, "In response to non-standard problems, organizations search and routines evolve, assimilating new situations." He further explains that "learning and change follow in large part from existing procedures."[336] Standing processes are incrementally modified to handle rising issues, slightly changing the ways in which organizations do business.

One area that evinces these gradual modifications is organizational budgets. According to Allison, "Though organizations could divide the money available each year by carving up the pie anew (in the light of changes in objectives or environment), in practice, organizations take

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[334] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 702.

[335] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 45.

last year's budget as a base and adjust incrementally."[337] In Japan, in fact, the budget process is very tightly managed, based on piecemeal adjustments from year to year. During the summer before the start of each fiscal year, the Cabinet issues "Guidelines for Budget Requests" which "set out expenditure ceilings for major programs" and "are usually expressed in terms of absolute or percentage increase (decrease) vis-à-vis the previous fiscal year's amount." According to the MOF Budget Bureau these guidelines force each ministry to "determine the priorities of the various expenditure items before submitting its request." This in turn forces the ministries to keep costs down and operate efficiently.[338] It also underscores the importance of organizational investment.

Once an investment in a particular program has been made, an organization can be expected to stick with that program through varying degrees of success. Japan's budget process accounts for "life-of-project" funding, meaning, "once plans are approved, full funding for them is complete and more or less automatic."[339] Allison notes, "an organizational investment is not dropped at the point where 'objective' costs outweigh benefits. Organizational stakes in adopted projects carry them quite beyond the loss point."[340] In the case of the JDA and SDF, this includes major weapons systems. Japanese participants in a panel on missile defense and Northeast Asian security discussed a strong interest in developing a sea-based MD capability with the U.S., noting that it would be "cheaper and easier since Japan already has Aegis-

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[336] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 701.

[337] Ibid. 702.

[338] Government of Japan, Ministry of Finance, Budget Bureau, "Understanding the Japanese Budget 2004: Budget Process," <http://www.mof.go.jp/english/budget/brief/2004/2004b_02.htm#7>

[339] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 45.

[340] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 702-3.

equipped destroyers."[341] This eventually weighed in to the government's 2003 MD decision.

According to the Budget Bureau, "it is now possible to construct a system using equipment

already existing in Japan."[342]

Significant change is not entirely out of the question, though. "Dramatic organizational

change occurs," Allison argues, "in response to major crises."[343] Fortunately for the Japanese, as

Ozawa claims, "Japanese democracy—unlike that of Europe or the United States—comes to life

mostly in times of crisis."[344] All of the actors, including the public and the media, respond by

participating in the re-definition of organizational goals, which influences procedures resulting in

policy outputs. The official government interpretation of the constitution states that the "specific

limit of the minimum necessary level of armed strength for self-defense varies depending on the

international situation, the standards of military technology and various other conditions."[345] It

is possible that a number of events—discussed in Chapter 2—provided a catalyst for

organizational change that would affect the decision to field a missile defense system. The most

notable of these is the 1998 North Korean missile shot over Japan.

Administrative Feasibility

 Allison notes, "Outputs raise the problem, provide the information, and make the initial

moves that color the face of the issue that is turned to the leaders."[346] Further guidance on the

issue is then turned back to the organizations for resolution, producing more outputs. In this

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[341]"Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security" 17.

[342] Government of Japan, Ministry of Finance, Budget Bureau, "Understanding the Japanese Budget 2004: National Defense," <http://www.mof.go.jp/english/budget/brief/2004/2004e_03.htm#5>.

[343] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 698.

[344] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 42.

[345] Government of Japan, "Government View on Purport of Article 9 of Constitution: Self-Defense Capability Permitted to be Possessed," <http://www.jda.go.jp/e/policy/f_work/frame12_.htm#a>.

cycle, however, Allison asserts that "a considerable gap separates what leaders choose (or might rationally have chosen) and what organizations implement."[347] Decision-makers must consider whether a policy output is even plausible.

The MD decision required a great deal of interaction between actors in the Japanese political realm, from the Cabinet and the Diet to political parties and interest groups to ministries, agencies, and bureaus. Actual implementation of the policy falls to the JDA and SDF, but Allison warns, "Projects that require several organizations to act with high degrees of precision and coordination are not likely to succeed."[348] The MD policy will certainly demand that the Air, Maritime, and Ground Self-Defense Forces cooperate in the areas of budgeting, fielding, and employment details, to name just a few. However, JDA exists as a coordinating authority, encouraging the services to work together. In the National Defense Program Guideline, the Cabinet considers "Enhancing Joint Operation Capabilities" fundamental to the accomplishment of the SDF missions. The government announces its intent to "create a central organization to facilitate joint operations" and to "reexamine existing organizations to enhance their effectiveness."[349] It appears that the government is making appropriate changes to improve organizational teamwork to ensure MD success.

The MD project is not so complex that "existing organizational units depart from their accustomed functions and perform previously unprogrammed tasks."[350] The SDF are responsible and ready for the defense of Japan in the event of an attack; MD serves to enhance

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[346] Allison, "Conceptual Models," 699.

[347] Ibid. 703.

[348] Ibid.

[349] Government of Japan, NDPG 10.

[350] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 703.

their capabilities. There will undoubtedly be, however, some degree of trial and error as the system is tested and fielded, perhaps resulting in a departure from the project's original concept.

Government leaders also can "expect that each organization will do its 'part' in terms of what the organization knows how to do."[351] The SDF will employ the sea- and land-based components of the system and will provide and conduct appropriate training. The Finance Ministry will ensure that the JDA inputs are included in the annual budget, and the Diet will approve funding. The Cabinet will provide proper oversight and command & control. These organizations, however, cannot be expected to operate effectively outside their spheres of expertise.

Each organization likely will pass "incomplete and distorted information…concerning its part of the problem."[352] Complete information reveals weaknesses and vulnerabilities. It may also indicate the inability of a commander or commanders in the field to make it work. In Japan, saving face is a significant cultural pull that could inhibit organizations from offering unfavorable information. Unanimity and consensus within the organization will be achieved before information is released to others in the government. Budgeting and politics may also have roles in the provision of incomplete information. Also, if an organization is assigned a portion of the MD policy that is contrary to its goals, it will resist implementation of that piece.[353] Leaders should expect that organizational procedures can only deal with situations they are designed to handle; anything beyond that could result in incomplete information or resistance.

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[351] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 703.

[352] Ibid.

[353] Ibid.

A brief survey of the preceding factors shows that the MD policy is indeed administratively feasible. Implementation will have challenges, however; a period of "growing pains" is likely while organizations and leaders adjust to this nuanced mission.

Conclusion

In their critique of Allison's models, Jonathan Bendor and Thomas H. Hammond claim that Allison's organizational model discussion is his strongest, yet they "have some reservations about his analysis."[354] Taken with Japanese cultural considerations, their assessments offer further insight into the MD resolution at the organizational level.

As previously mentioned, Allison contends that organizations perform only marginally differently from day to day in varying situations, given the constraints of SOPs. Bendor and Hammond note that Allison's assertion that "simple rules generate simple, predictable behavior," on the other hand, "greatly underestimates how complex behavior—of even a single decision maker—can arise out of the use of simple rules."[355] The tendency in Japanese politics to remain in the gravitational pull of the status quo lends itself to Allison's model, but interpretation can expand the acceptable limits of the status quo. War-renouncing Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, for example, has been reinterpreted several times to make room for standing defense forces and capabilities. The plainly worded Japanese foreswearing of war has generated complex behavior in the country's policymaking. Also, it is impossible to predict—even with organizational SOPs—which procedure an organization might favor if it is presented with more than one option in a given situation. Further research into specific organizations would be helpful here but is beyond the researcher's resources and scope of this project. Suffice it to say

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[354] Bendor and Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models" 309.

[355] Ibid.

that Allison's view of organizational SOPs may serve to oversimplify the inner workings of the Japanese government.

Bendor and Hammond also argue that, rather than hinder decision-making, "organizations can significantly ease the constraints on information processing that confront individuals."[356] Using *nemawashi* to seek compromise and consensus could result in data being filtered out before it is presented to the decision-maker. This supports Allison's notion that decision-makers should expect incomplete information from organizations. Conversely, the involvement of experts such as *zoku* and career bureaucrats in the process could facilitate the movement of high quality, germane information to policy makers. The critics note, "Given the real limits on individual cognition, technically demanding projects such as going to the moon can be handled only by collective endeavor."[357] Fielding a MD system and making it work is a "technically demanding project" that requires the involvement of multiple Japanese organizations.

Allison's organizational process model offers a look into the participation of various Japanese political entities in the MD decision. While its explanatory value may be questionable, it provides a tool for examining the role organizations play in decision-making, the environment in which they operate, and the challenges their diversity presents. The MD decision can be characterized, at least in part, as the output of interacting, established organizational processes.

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[356] Bendor and Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," 309.

[357] Ibid., 313.

CHAPTER FIVE

BUREAUCRATIC POLITICS AND JAPAN'S MISSILE DEFENSE POLICY

Allison's bureaucratic politics model aims to examine government behavior "not as organizational outputs, but as outcomes of bargaining games." He explains that "what the nation does is sometimes the result of triumph of one group over others. More often, however, different groups pulling in different directions yield a resultant distinct from what anyone intended."[358] Japanese scholar Kyogoku may explain bureaucratic politics in a similar fashion, noting, "in reality, politics…is not subject to unified, centralized control, but rather is featured by competition among sovereignlike agencies, which leads to a vertically segmented administration."[359] This model involves political rivalry at all levels of policymaking, not simply the adherence to established procedures or the selection of a best option.

This chapter ventures to explore how bureaucratic actors are defined and how they compete, horizontally and vertically, internally and externally. Application of this model to Japan's MD decision should offer insight into the degree bureaucratic politics figured into the government's policy. Allison claims that with this model, the "explanatory power is achieved by revealing the pulling and hauling of various players, with different perceptions and priorities, focusing on separate problems, which yielded the outcomes that constitute the action in question."[360]

A Little Less Talk and a Lot More Action

Allison argues that "the context of shared power but separate judgments concerning important choices, determines that politics is the mechanism of choice" for government decisions

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[358] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 707.

[359] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 116.

and actions.[361] Masato Kamikubo contends that major policy changes in Japan are a result of "the consequences of conflicts between politicians" which influence "the transition of power relations between government agencies."[362] Charles Bingman makes similar observations of behavior in Japanese policymaking. He notes, "a constant pattern of internal alliances and networks…who debate policies, seeking reinforcement from factions of like-minded people in the party or the Diet." The "results of the maneuvering" often "determine policy, even against official Cabinet positions."[363] A leader's best alternative, according to this assertion, does not always drive policy. As Allison points out, "The sum of behavior of representatives of a government relevant to an issue was rarely intended by any individual or group."[364] These alliances and networks also indicate that policymaking is not handled exclusively within the confines of standard organizational channels. "Rather," Allison writes, "separate individuals with different intentions contributed pieces which compose an outcome distinct from what anyone would have chosen."[365]

Some phenomenon in Japanese policymaking, particularly the budget process and the bureaucracy's internal communications, show how political action can lead to government decisions. Allison asserts that since "bargaining games do not proceed randomly," these types of "action-channels" actually "structure the game by pre-selecting the major players, determining

[360] Allison, "Conceptual Models," 711.

[361] Ibid. 710.

[362] Kamikubo, "Bureaucrats."

[363] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 42-43.

[364] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 711.

[365] Ibid.

actions."[370] The *ringi* document relevant to policy making "is a kind of 'diplomatic document' that confirms the agreement of relevant departments," divisions, bureaus, and eventually ministries for the proposed policy.[371] The cultural elements of consensus, unanimity, and *omote* and *ura* politics apply and seem to support Allison's claim.

More concretely, it is interesting to note that "the larger political establishment in Tokyo remained cautious in its approach" to the MD issue after the North Korean nuclear program and abduction revelations in 2002. At that time, "the Koizumi administration continued to hold the position that it would be much more realistic to persuade North Korea to abandon its…missile development program through negotiations."[372] Roughly one year later, the same administration decided to pursue a MD system. Allison's model would credit political maneuvering with the change of heart.

<p align="center">*"Where You Stand Depends Upon Where You Sit"*</p>

A number of actors undoubtedly participated in the pulling and hauling associated with the MD decision. The bureaucratic politics model attributes individual and organizational stances to the professional positions held by the participants. Allison writes, "Positions define what players both may and must do."[373] Kyogoku recognizes this, stating that "Individuals, through their roles, secure a 'meaningful niche' in the universe." He contends, "If one completely abandons commenting on or criticizing organizational goals, meanings, and norms, and gives his whole heart and soul, he will be well served."[374] Indeed, the "meaning of life" for

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[370] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 216.

[371] Ibid. 216-17.

[372] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 2.

[373] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 709.

[374] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 94.

bureaucrats according to Kyogoku is "the expansion of functions, competence, personnel and budgets of the various ministries, bureaus, departments, and sections."[375] Kamikubo strikes a similar tone, arguing that "bureaucrats pursue the benefit of whichever government office they belong to."[376] And Allison echoes, "the stance of a particular player can be predicted with high reliability from information concerning his seat."[377]

Officials must know what it is they're after. As Allison puts it, "To motivate members of his organization, a player must be sensitive to the organization's orientation."[378] One way this is accomplished in Japanese politics is through appointment as a parliamentary vice minister. Usually within his/her first three terms, a politician serves in this capacity to receive "training for more responsible positions later." The parliamentary vice minister position "carries with it few responsibilities, but it enables the politician to learn about a number of policy issues in some depth and to develop relationships with bureaucrats and with interest groups that form the ministry's public clientele."[379] The loyalty that likely results from this arrangement could benefit both the politician and the ministry in future policy negotiations.

Not surprisingly, there has been some bureaucratic friction surrounding the MD policy on a number of issues. One report notes that the "Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Japan Defense Agency (JDA) support a robust upper-tier system, whereas the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force has expressed pursuing a PAC-3 lower-tier system to ensure that it has a role in missile defense decisions." Some JDA officials also believe that MD "serves multiple purposes

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[375] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 216.

[376] Kamikubo, "Bureaucrats."

[377] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 711.

[378] Ibid. 709.

[379] Curtis, *Japanese Way* 89.

for Japan and is consistent with Japan's evolving concept of defense." [380] JDA could use the MD

issue to further broader organizational goals. The agency published a report in 1995 titled "On

Research Concerning Ballistic Missile Defense," which "acted as a spur to further studies…on

linked technologies and systems including satellite linked sensor systems, and a highly integrated

[command, control, communications, and intelligence] system."[381] This report came at a time

when the U.S. and Japan were engaged in early negotiations about the future of their alliance.

These talks may have yielded a domestic agenda on defense modernization that became more

pertinent in the post-9/11 environment.[382] Thus, MD offers greater value to JDA than simply

that of effectively engaging an inbound missile.

On the business side of the issue, according to one analyst, "defense industries would

have strong interests in continuing work on the mega project that was" MD.[383] However, both

MOFA and the Finance Ministry had previously "supported purchasing off-the-shelf defense

systems from the United States as a way to enhance alliance strength and lower overall defense

costs."[384] This is a case of Allison's assumptions correctly predicting actors' stances. MOFA is

concerned with alliance politics, while MOF looks to ease the budget burden. On the other hand,

buying off-the-shelf interceptor missiles from the U.S. could lead to "abandoning the joint

research project" and "erode support within the Japanese defense industry for participation" in

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[380] "Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asia Security" 5, 18.

[381] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 45.

[382] Dr. Deborah J. Milly, Virginia Tech Department of Political Science, suggested this notion on 10 May 2005.

[383] Kartha, "Managing the Shift" 44.

[384] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 3.

the MD program.[385] Clearly, specific, well-defined interests are at work in Japan's MD efforts and have an impact on a final government position.

Successfully advocating one's interests depends on each player's power. Allison explains, "Power, i.e., effective influence on policy outcomes, is an elusive blend of at least three elements: bargaining advantages (drawn from formal authority and obligations, institutional backing, constituents, expertise, and status), skill and will in using bargaining advantages, and other players' perceptions of the first two ingredients."[386] One example is the former State Minister for Defense Shigeru Ishiba. He had previously served as Senior Vice Minister for Defense and was "known for favoring the use of the Self-Defense Forces to accomplish policy objectives."[387] His ministerial appointment raised his status, ordained him with formal authority, reflected his expertise, and made him head of an organization already favoring MD. He enjoyed bargaining advantages and possessed the skill and will to use them. As the top JDA official, he could speak authoritatively on the subject, claiming that "North Korea had already deployed some 100 ballistic missiles capable of reaching major Japanese cities and stated flatly, 'missile defense is indispensable for Japan's security.'"[388]

Ishiba's case demonstrates the power an individual can wield in the decision making process. Additionally, the LDP retains power as an organization. Bingman writes, "the internal conflicts between factions in or between ministries…has been a force for the consideration of alternative policies," but, he continues, "it has certainly not produced any substantial departures

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[385] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 3.

[386] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 710.

[387] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 2.

[388] Ibid.

from the broad national policy mainstreams laid down by the LDP and successive LDP-dominated Diets and Cabinets."[389]

Japan's MD issue shows that bureaucratic interests largely determine individual and organizational positions on the topic. And the power of officials to affect decisions relies on a number of factors intertwined with those political interests.

Too Many Indians and Not Enough Chiefs

Allison states that "Individuals become players in the national security policy game by occupying a critical position in an administration. These positions range from "Chiefs" at the highest level to "Staffers" to "Indians" to *Ad Hoc* Players."[390] Lower-level Japanese bureaucrats can be considered "Indians," while those in Cabinet, Diet, and LDP leadership constitute the "Chiefs."

Japan's policymaking environment reflects Allison's assertion that "Most problems are framed, alternatives specified and proposals pushed…by Indians."[391] When dealing with those outside the bureaucracy, these Indians sometimes "take advantage of the prior approval system by accepting the demands of LDP politicians in return for having bills and budgets pass through the PARC (and subsequently the Diet) without major modification."[392] In the aforementioned *ringi* system within the bureaucracy, the "divisions and bureaus involved have the power of veto." Kyogoku further explains, "the approval must be obtained politically from those individuals who happen to be chiefs of divisions and bureaus at that time."[393] These officials

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[389] Bingman, *Japanese Government* 77.

[390] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 709.

[391] Ibid. 711.

[392] Mulgan, "Japan's 'Un-Westminster' System" 83.

[393] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 217.

remain "Indians" in the context of this research; political pulling and hauling occurs even at the lower levels of government, prior to proposals reaching the "Chiefs."

Allison also observes that "Indians fight with Indians in other departments."[394] One example is the waning influence of MOFA's China and Mongolian Affairs Bureau and the gains made by "those in charge of managing the alliance with the United States."[395] One observer declares, "Although officials in charge of the U.S. alliance have probably always wielded greater power inside MOFA, the fall of the 'China Hands' has certainly influenced the ministry's stance with regard to the pace and extent of [MD] cooperation."[396] China's stated opposition was likely a factor, allowing those responsible for U.S. affairs to capitalize and advance their interests.

The primary problem faced by "Indians," as Allison notes, "is how to get the *attention* of Chiefs, how to get an issue decided, how to get the government to 'do what is right.'"[397] One observer argues that "given the ossification of the bureaucracy, where the system of promotion by seniority prevails…there is no other way but to kick the older people upstairs, and let those with ability do the work."[398] Policy initiative, thus, is deferred to lower levels, and the power that should accompany formal authority is transferred, increasing the political role of lower-ranking officials. Japanese reformer Ozawa voices his frustration, asking, "If ministry and agency views have already been completely coordinated before the cabinet meeting takes place, what is the purpose of the meeting?"[399]

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[394] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 711.

[395] Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious" 4.

[396] Ibid.

[397] Allison, "Conceptual Models" 711.

[398] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 218.

[399] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 60.

While "Indians" are developing policy proposals, "Chiefs" focus their efforts on "the hottest issue *de jour*" due to their busy schedules and broad responsibilities. Ozawa remarks that "ministers not only represent…ministries, but are also cabinet ministers and generalists who take responsibility for national issues." He goes on to declare, "they fall back into their roles as representatives of particular ministries, pleading on behalf of the bureaucrats."[400] For the most part, as evidence in the Ishiba example, ministers advocate the positions presented by their respective "Indians." However, there are times when their interests may conflict. Ministers in a parliamentary system such as Japan's are nearly exclusively elected legislators. As professional politicians, they continually seek "vote maximization." As Chalmers Johnson points out, "it is only when the recommendations of the bureaucracy present an *obvious* possibility of damaging vote positions that they will be rigorously checked by government."[401] Politics—the art of reconciling competing interests—plays an important role in all levels of the Japanese government and impacts policy outcomes.

Conclusion: Assessing the Bureaucratic Politics Model

While politics is central to Japanese decision making, the country's form of government and culture could, in the end, pose a challenge to the application of the bureaucratic politics model. Bendor and Hammond see four weaknesses in Allison's model. They claim that Allison: misconstrues the nature of executive branch policymaking, overlooks hierarchy, imprecisely formulates his model, and presents a model that it too complex.[402] A brief look at these assertions against the Japanese case fosters greater understanding of the model and the decision making process.

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[400] Ozawa, *Blueprint* 55.

[401] Johnson, *Who Governs* 139.

Allison's contention that policy results as an outcome from bargaining implies that bureaucratic goals are always conflicting. Conversely, Bendor and Hammond point out that "considerable similarity in policymakers' views should be expected," since, in the U.S., the President appoints key Cabinet officials.[403] This would seem to be the case in Japan as well. The Prime Minister is responsible for forming his Cabinet and is likely to choose parliamentarians who share his views and goals (and who happen to share his LDP affiliation). In the Japanese system, though, political appointment is based largely on seniority in the party. This, combined with the factional competition within the LDP, means that shared goals are not always a given. On the other hand, neither are conflicting ones. The drive for unanimity and the use of *ura* politics in Japan can cloud policymakers' true goals.

Shared goals also do not guarantee absence of conflict; instances of *tamamushi-iro* do arise. Bendor and Hammond cite the need to "distinguish between differences over goals and differences over beliefs about how to achieve the goals." When "there is agreement on goals but disagreement on beliefs," decision-makers tend to use a "collegial" approach to resolve the issue.[404] The authors offer the following explanation:

Collegial problem solving involves efforts to ascertain the justification for differing beliefs and to change the beliefs of other actors. If agreement on beliefs remains elusive, more overtly political activities might occur, though it seems likely that actors would try these only as a last resort.[405]

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[402] Bendor and Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models" 314.

[403] Ibid.

[404] Ibid.

[405] Ibid.

This description bears an uncanny resemblance to the Japanese technique of *nemawashi*. In their attempts to maintain harmony, Japanese employ this tactic regardless of whether goals or beliefs are in contention.

On the questions of whether the chief executive must bargain with subordinates and whether those subordinates enjoy support outside the executive branch, one must recognize the differences between the U.S. system and the Japanese parliamentary government.[406] Unlike the U.S. President, the Japanese Prime Minister could face a vote of no confidence in the legislature; therefore, it behooves him to maintain good relations with members of his Cabinet, at least half of who must be Diet members. The other ministers may also be associated with other factions within the LDP, waiting to make a power grab should the opportunity present itself. As previously mentioned, another difference between the U.S. and Japanese executive branches is that the Prime Minister, like the rest of his Cabinet, is entitled to one vote in the decision making process, whereas in the U.S., the buck often stops with the President. Allison may not have crafted a "one-size-fits-all" conception of executive or bureaucratic decision-making, but he offers a useful tool for investigating below government's surface level.

Bendor and Hammond argue that Allison's model "says almost nothing about how the hierarchy affects the politics." They note that "policymaking involves making comparisons… and that an organization's structure affects who compares what with what, so that different structures can produce different policy outcomes."[407] The remarkably hierarchical arrangement of the Japanese bureaucracy undoubtedly plays an important role in making those comparisons. The *ringi* system accounts for interactions within and between ministries, but exactly who sees

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[406] Bendor and Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," 315.

[407] Ibid. 317.

what documents is not entirely clear. Hierarchy is an important aspect of Japanese politics, yet Hammond and Bendor contend that Allison's model does little to explore this phenomenon.

The claims that Allison's model lacks conceptual development and is too complex are technical arguments unaffected by the national origin of the decision-makers under examination. Some argue that "it is difficult to determine from Allison's discussion when bargaining will characterize policymaking and who will have to bargain with whom about what."[408] The intertwining of legislators, ministers, and political party members in key personalities adds to the ambiguity of the model.

Cultural norms and governmental structure characterize the unique Japanese policymaking system. Under these conditions, Japanese political actors behave differently than their U.S. counterparts might with respect to Allison's and his critics' assertions. One can safely say, though, that political pulling and hauling likely occurs at many levels and that one's stance may be colored by his position in the government. The idea that Japan's MD policy resulted as the outcome of political bargaining cannot be discounted.

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[408] Bendor and Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," 317.

CONCLUSION

Japanese policymaking is a complex process involving cultural forces, numerous formal and informal actors playing multiple roles, and intense behind-the-scenes negotiations. It provides complicated political grist for the mill of Allison's rational actor, organizational process, and bureaucratic politics models. Some of Allison's concepts and propositions appear less than well suited to deal with these additional cultural considerations and blurred institutional lines. For instance, it is difficult to determine precisely the motivations of a Cabinet member who must bear in mind the desires of his legislative constituency, his intra-party factional leadership, the prime minister, and the ministry over which he presides. How can one determine where he stands if it is unclear exactly where he sits?

Application of these models also provides insight into the Japanese political phenomenon to foster a better understanding of how Japan's government arrives at major decisions. At a minimum, foreign officials who engage Japan on matters of policy should understand the multi-faceted positions held by Japan's leaders, the roles played by formal and informal processes in organizational decision-making, and the political power wielded by those in the lower levels of the bureaucracy and ruling party. As Japan's global status matures, this understanding will increase in value, giving future scholars a starting point for further research.

The themes of Japanese culture and social dynamics run throughout the study, enabling use of Allison's models outside the American political landscape and exposing their vulnerabilities. Subordination of the individual and the quest for unanimity and harmony are unique to the Japanese system; they also color the decision-making process by framing options, procedures, and political bargaining. An option expected never to gain consensus in Japan may be discarded early in the process, limiting the alternatives for rational consideration. Procedures

are established to foster maximum participation of officials within organizations and rarely change as a result of internal initiatives. And the maintenance of visible harmony provides motivation at even the lowest levels of government to engage constantly in pulling and hauling. Each of the formal and informal institutions of government face, to some degree, the discrepancy between authority and power prevalent in the particularly Japanese system that seamlessly assimilates foreign ideas.

Further affecting the Japanese system is the encroachment of the international strategic environment. There is less distinction today between global, regional, and domestic issues, a notion that motivates Japan to examine its self-defense capability in light of emerging threats that appear closer as time goes by. External pressures certainly must be considered when making rational decisions between policy alternatives; their influence on organizational processes and politics, though, are not as strong. Shocks to the system, such as North Korea's 1998 missile launch, may force organizations to rethink how they conduct business, but existing institutions must react to crises with fixed procedures. And bargaining can be used to publicize a policy issue in the wider political realm, but as the adage goes, all politics is local. Nevertheless, it is within this strategic context that Japan's decision-makers considered the impact a missile defense policy might have on the U.S.-Japan alliance, regional security, the Peace Constitution, and the national budget.

Qualitative analysis of the rational actor model shows that Japanese decision-makers weigh costs and benefits associated with fielding a missile defense system and would likely choose the best option available given the current circumstances. However, it neither definitively supports nor fails to support the assertion that Japan's decision results more from a selection of the best alternative than from an organizational output or a political outcome. It was

the least difficult model to apply since it required less insight into the actual procedures and politics of the Japanese system. Options available to decision makers proved more visible and accessible than Japanese organizational outputs or political outcome; although, the alternatives are not all inclusive and had to be derived, or simply inferred, from secondary sources. Bendor and Hammond state, "a close examination of these models show that they are much less rigorously formulated than is generally recognized…and that the meaning of the empirical tests is often quite ambiguous."[409]

The opacity and ambiguity of Japanese policymaking itself presented challenges to Allison's models by obscuring exactly who was making the decision—who was reviewing the available alternatives; the Cabinet, however, seemed to play a prominent role. Given the swelling mood for reform in the 1990s and 2000s, it is possible that the Cabinet did levy the final decision, yet there is no discernable trail of the policy origins. What is unclear is whether the Cabinet officials acted as such or as Diet members or LDP supporters or top-level bureaucrats. Also not clear is where the informal actors and influences—policy tribes, mass media, public opinion, and foreign pressure—fit into any of Allison's models.

Future researchers interested in this topic could gain even more by focusing further on a specific policy issue related to the missile defense decision. For instance, an examination exclusively into the budgeting process that supported the decision may yield greater insight into Japanese decision-making. It may aid in defining more clearly the actors involved and would present a quantifiable, measurable indication of the actors' intent. Other approaches could include examining Japanese public opinion polls or analyzing the content of news coverage, official speeches, or legislative proceedings. Japanese language skills and access to a major research center would also serve subsequent researchers very well.

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[409] Bendor and Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models" 318.

Regarding this project, the missile defense decision appears to reflect a synergy of all three of the models. Analysis inferred that the outputs and outcomes of the organizational process and bureaucratic politics models could have been included as inputs to the rational actor model. They could have provided, from organizational and political perspectives, information and options policymakers could have used in their search for the best alternative. Some scholars claim that "the key to the insightfulness necessary for both the policy maker's and the student's success lies in using different models, reflecting different premises and guides to reasoning, to illuminate different aspects of the policy in question."[410] Kyogoku observes, "Since the formal political institutions are fairly similar, if not the same, these differences are often attributed, quite rightly, to variations in cultural traditions."[411] It is the nexus of these two notions—the analyst's self-consciousness and cultural awareness—wherein the significance of this research lies. It demonstrates that Allison's venerated models, though imperfect, continue to provide valuable tools with which to explore complex policy problems. The outcome of their application may not yield a complete explanation of policymaking processes; their value lies in approaching the problems from various perspectives, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of the policy as well as the models. In this case, the analysis offers a fresh look at an ongoing policy discussion while further revealing Japanese politics and bridging Japan's recent past with its ever-changing future.

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[410] Asa A. Clark IV, Thomas F. Lynch III, and Rick Waddell, eds., *Understanding International Relations: The Value of Alternative Lenses* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993) 393.

[411] Kyogoku, *Dynamics* 38.

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