

Can America Feel “At Home  
Abroad” in Asia: A Strategy of Concentric Multilateralism?

by

Henry R. Nau

Professor of Political Science and International Affairs

Elliott School of International Affairs

The George Washington University

Washington, D.C. 20052

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# Traditional Ways of Thinking About Future Japan-US Relationship

- Return to Balance of Power (National interests)
  - Strategic Quadrangle (US/J/C/R)
  - Triangular Politics (US/J/C)
  - Korea? Pawn in power struggle?
- Statusquo - Unequal Alliance (Common foreign policy interests)
- Traditional Bilateral Equal Alliance (Collective defense – US/UK model?)
- Trilateral or Multilateral Alliance (NATO during CW model)
  - US/J/SK (plus others?)
  - Nucleus in TCOG and trilateral defense exercises
  - As alliance, implies some actual threat –containment of China?
- Collective Security (Common international institutions – League of Nations and UN model)
  - No pre-designated threat – attack on one, attack on all
  - Japan gets seat on UNSC?
  - Could degenerate into balance of power system, if great powers conflict (as happened in UN in 1940s)

# Novel Way of Thinking About Future Japan-US Relationship

- Democratic Security Community – common domestic values (NATO after CW model)
  - Based on common internal political values (I.e., democracy), not just common foreign policy interests (as in alliance)
  - no threats or use of force within community (democratic peace)
  - Membership requires decisive steps toward democracy (as in NATO expansion)
    - Includes initially J/US/Austr./NZ/SK (indirectly Taiwan)
    - Open to others (ASEAN, etc.) as they liberalize politically (Partnership for Peace programs in NATO)
  - Aspires to greater equality among members (ASEAN plus 3, like EU in NATO)
  - Coordinates foreign policies toward non-members
    - Multilateral defense alliance against potential (China, Russia) and actual (NK) threats
    - Open regional and global economic system — includes China, Russia and potentially NK (WTO, APEC, etc.)
    - Diplomatic bridge-building — includes China (ARF, Track II discussions)

# Which Way to go – Alliance or Security Community?

- Japan's Preferences — for Japan to decide
- U.S. Preferences
  - Balance of Power — Never felt “At home abroad” without threat!
  - Statusquo — Untenable
  - Traditional bilateral or multilateral alliance — requires common threat to bind members, which do not necessarily share same internal values.
  - Collective Security — premature, good for peacekeeping but not for deterrence
  - Democratic security community
    - Can exist without threat (NATO after CW)
    - Goes beyond balance of power — US now feels “at home abroad” in Asia
    - Protects against potential but not actual threat from China – no containment but insurance
    - Community is open economically and transparent politically

# What is Democratic Security Community — Internal Dimension?

- Common rules governing use of force internally against own citizens
  - Inside any country, not legitimate for citizens to use force. Only government has right to use force to enforce laws.
  - Governments legitimate use of internal force on basis of various standards:
    - religion — Iran
    - culture — traditional Japan (and European states)
    - class — communism (China)
    - civilization — West vs Rest (Fundamentalist Islam)
    - political regime — democracy vs. nondemocracy
- If rules converge, countries can reduce, even eliminate, threat and use of force in relations with one another. Why? Because they use force internally on basis of same rules and hence trust one another more.
  - If common democracy is more important than different cultures to legitimate internal police power, Japan and US exist in security community
  - If different cultures are more important than common democracies to legitimate internal police power, Japan and US exist in traditional alliance

# What is a Democratic Security Community — External Dimension?

- Common rules governing use of force externally against non-member countries
- Only governments (not individual citizens or domestic groups) can use force legitimately to defend national security
  - Governments legitimate use of external force on basis of:
    - historical experience — allies (J/US since 1950) vs. enemies (US/SU from 1945-90)
    - Interdependence - trade, common membership in IOs, etc. (reduces incentives to use force)
    - satisfaction or dissatisfaction with statusquo (US/Japan statusquo, China revisionist?)
  - If rules converge, threat diminishes.
  - If rules diverge, threat increases
- Combine internal and external dimensions of security community to assess threat, that is, inclination to threaten and use force in various bilateral relations
  - If both dimensions converge, no threat
  - If both dimensions diverge, most threat

# Differences/Similarities of Identities

## Create Threat

Internal Identity: Measured in terms of Democracy

Measured in terms of  
Historical Conflict

	Converge	Diverge
Cooperation	Japan-US Japan-Australia Japan-India? 1	Japan-ASEAN 3
Conflict	Japan-SK Japan-Taiwan 2	Japan-Russia Japan-China Japan-NK 4

1. No Threat – Security Community
2. Little Threat – Emerging Security Community
3. Some Threat – Prospective Members
4. Most Threat – Economic Engagement and  
Collective Defense toward Non Members

# A Strategy of Concentric Multilateralism

- Core democratic security community — Japan/US (Australia/NZ?)
  - Ensures transparent democratic control of military policymaking as Japan assumes a larger military role – reassures Asian/Pacific neighbors
  - Integrates military command structures – Japan becomes great power within security community (German model?)
  - Coordinates foreign policies toward NK and China
- Emerging democratic security community - Japan/US/SK/T(?)
  - strengthen Japan/SK (and Japan/Taiwan?) link - reconciliation (Franco-German model), including inter-parliamentary exchanges (US/J LEP)
  - Coordinate defense planning and exercises — modest beginning
  - Coordinate foreign policy interests (TCOG model?)
- Prospective members of democratic security community
  - Thailand, Philippines, India
  - ASEAN plus 1 and plus 3 — what about ASEAN plus 2? (Asian Economic/Security Caucus?)
  - ASEAN PMC (plus 4?)
- Economic engagement and defense toward non-members
  - Includes China (even N. Korea if it reforms economy) — internal identity convergence in economic area.
  - Provides security insurance if China becomes more powerful and adversarial
  - Builds bridges through ASEAN Regional Forum
- Combines “Soft” Deterrence with “Hard” Engagement



## America “At Home Abroad” Asia

- Historically, not engaged except under threat
- Traditional alliances (bilateral or multilateral) require threat
- Collective Security — supplemental, not primary; good for peacekeeping, not peace insurance or enforcement
- Democratic security community
  - Does not require actual threat — US can stay engaged
  - Builds on common values — “at home abroad”, deepens US/J relations
  - Open economic policies — doesn’t threaten anyone
  - Encourages domestic transitions toward greater transparency — economic, perhaps political, liberalization
  - Deters softly in case economic engagement produces stronger adversary