Identity Theory and Foreign Policy: Explaining Japan's Responses to the 1991 Gulf War and the 2003 U.S. War in Iraq

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This article examines the feasibility of using role identity as an independent variable to explain the direction of a state's national security policy. Focusing on the response of the Japanese government to the Gulf War (January-March 1991) and the U.S. War in Iraq (March-May 2003), the article correlates articulations of their preferred role made in the Japanese Diet, with these policy outcomes. It finds that the different balance of role conceptions held by Japanese politicians in the two periods under study can explain the difference in policy outcomes. The study also finds, however, that the salience of these role identities is directly affected by contextual factors. Under circumstances of heightened threat perception, Japanese policy makers were less inclined to articulate any sort of value-based role identity for Japan in favor of role statements that were characterized by pragmatism.

The Puzzle

The Japanese government responded differently to the U.S. War in Iraq in 2003 than it did to the Gulf War in 1991. On the surface, this prompts the question "so what?" Most countries—with the exception of the United States and perhaps the United Kingdom—responded differently: with more caution, internal conflict, confrontation, and disagreement characterizing their responses. Many countries who were supportive of forcibly removing Saddam from Kuwait in 1991 were among the most reluctant to support the U.S. War in Iraq. Countries that jumped on the bandwagon and expressed support for the United States in 2003 were not the same countries that had fought with the United States to liberate Kuwait in 1990. So why is the Japanese response so special?

Essentially, Japan's response was the opposite of most of the United States' other allies. The Japanese government showed more enthusiasm, more initiative, and more support for the position of the United States

Politics & Policy, Volume 35, No. 1 (2007): 58-100. Published by Blackwell Publishing Inc.

the second time around. In 1990, the Japanese government had been unable to pass the United Nations (UN) Peace Cooperation Corps Bill, which would have enabled the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to the Middle East to provide noncombat support for a U.S.-led, UN-authorized multinational military operation. In contrast, in 2003, the Japanese government was among the few countries to offer political support for a unilateral U.S. War and quickly enacted legislation authorizing the dispatch of the nation's Ground Self-Defense Forces (GSDF) to support humanitarian assistance and postwar reconstruction in Iraq. The SDF was no longer confined to participation in UN peacekeeping operations, as it was throughout the 1990s, and it was no longer kept out of the way of danger. It was sent into an occupied country, without proper UN authorization and with no guarantee that the conflict had ended.

This article will show that the changing policy response of the Japanese government from 1990 to 2003 is not well explained by either of the two conventional paradigms of international relations: neorealism and neoliberalism. Neither approach was able to predict how the Japanese government responded. Instead, this study attempts to build on current theories of constructivism by introducing insights from Identity Theory and its emphasis on the behavioral implications of role-based identities. It postulates that the difference in policy response can be explained by the changing salience of role identities held by politicians speaking in the Japanese Diet, and it develops a method of testing these identities. Although it finds evidence that the changing balance of role conceptions can explain the change of policy, the study also provides preliminary evidence that the impact of role-based identities will not always be uniform. Under conditions of heightened threat perception, the impact of value-based role identities is likely to be less than when those conditions are absent.[1] This is an important first step in specifying conditions for the application of role identities to foreign policy more generally.

The article begins by examining the background to each event and compares Japan's policy responses. It explains why these responses cannot easily be explained by conventional theories of international relations. It then develops an identity-based approach to understanding foreign policy that draws on constructivist literature and literature on Identity Theory. It goes on to develop a method of testing the

hypotheses generated by the theory and presents the results of the analysis. The final section discusses the relevance of the findings for identity-based approaches to foreign policy and Japanese foreign policy.

Japan's Response

The Gulf War

Even though relations between Iraq and Kuwait had long been characterized by tension, the decision of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait in August 1990 came as a surprise to many in the international community.[2] Annoyed by Kuwaiti overproduction of oil and intransigence over the repayment of war-time loans, Saddam had declared as early as May 1990 that this overproduction was retarding Iraq's postwar reconstruction and amounted to a "kind of war on Iraq" (Freedman and Karsh 1993, 46). By mid-July, the Iraqi leader had commenced a large-scale buildup of military forces on the border with Kuwait, culminating in his invasion on August 2, 1990. Saddam quickly overcame all Kuwaiti resistance and commenced what was intended as a permanent occupation.

The reaction of the international community was "near universal condemnation" (Dobson 2003, 62). The invasion was immediately identified as "such a textbook case of aggression that there was never any question that an elemental rule of international law had been broken" (Freedman and Karsh 1993, 73). U.S. president George Bush publicly condemned the invasion, and the UN quickly adopted Resolution 660, which called for Iraq to "withdraw immediately and unconditionally all its forces" (UN Security Council 1990). This was followed by Resolution 661 on August 6, imposing a sweeping economic boycott of Iraq.

After securing the firm support of Great Britain and the Soviet Union, by August 7, President Bush had assembled a military force to dispatch to the region to secure Saudi Arabia and other countries from further aggression. Before long, the United Kingdom, France, Australia, Italy, Canada, and the Netherlands joined the U.S. forces in supplying naval vessels and equipment to what became known as Operation Desert Shield. Even 13 of the 21 member-states in the Arab League agreed to send forces (Freedman and Karsh 1993, 80-95). By January 15, 1991—the UN deadline for Iraq's withdrawal from

Kuwait—the multinational force had reached 700,000 troops from over 28 nations (Dobson 2003, 63). After a variety of diplomatic efforts by many countries to find a nonmilitary solution to the conflict proved to be a manifest failure, the air war began, quickly destroying most Iraqi air defenses and command and control structures. This was followed by a ground offensive—the "hundred-hour war"—beginning on February 24, 1991. After hostilities ceased, efforts began toward reconstruction, to be subsequently disrupted by an ongoing insurgency.

For Japan, the Gulf crisis appeared suddenly, "like a bolt from out of the blue" (Inoguchi 1993, 98). The initial response of the Japanese government under Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu was swift: it announced a policy of sanctions against Iraq, even before the UN-sponsored embargo began, and took actions to freeze all Kuwaiti assets, trade credits, and economic cooperation (Hook 1996, 84). This early response stood in sharp contrast to the "slow and spasmodic response" it took over the need to contribute to the "military" operations of the multinational force that was soon formed (Inoguchi 1993, 99). Bush had to personally telephone Prime Minister Kaifu to request financial support for U.S. allies and equipment for the multinational force gathering in Saudi Arabia.

Japan's first package of financial assistance was announced, somewhat behind that of other countries, on August 29. Its key provisions were aid to the multinational force ($1 billion) and the promise of a new bill, entitled the UN Peace Cooperation Bill, which in the hopeful eyes of the government would allow the SDF to participate in the international community's efforts (Kyodo News Service 1990). The response of the U.S. government set a precedent for what was to come: U.S. officials stated that these efforts were not enough and cautioned that Japan would face criticism "unless Japanese flags fly in the Gulf." (The Daily Yomiuri 1990). Responding to this pressure, by the end of August, the Japanese government had pledged another $1 billion in support of the evolving multinational force.

After a visit to Japan by Secretary of State Baker, the Japanese government announced a new package on September 14, which added another $1 billion to the multinational force and an extra $2 billion in economic assistance to Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey (Hook 1996, 84). Meanwhile, intense lobbying by U.S. ambassador Michael Armacost of several key leaders of the ruling party, notably Secretary General Ichiro

Ozawa, as well as pressure on Prime Minister Kaifu at a U.S.–Japan Summit in September 1990, pushed the ruling party to put the new bill before the Diet on October 16, 1990 (Hook 1996, 85).

Inside the Diet, however, debate was polarized between the two major opposition parties—the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) and the Japan Communist Party (JCP), who were opposed to the dispatch of the SDF—and the ruling party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), who were mostly in favor.[3] The first bill tried to accommodate the opposition by proposing to send "volunteers" as part of a Peace Cooperation Corps; this was subsequently revised to send SDF forces with the removal of their status as members of the military (Unger 1997, 142). Ultimately, however, the haste with which the bill was prepared and the inability of the government to agree on what operations would be permissible under it resulted in its withdrawal on November 7, 1990 (142). Significantly, the presence of interparty opposition does not explain its failure. In fact, the government only chose to withdraw the bill in November 1990 after securing the support of the DSP and another party, the Komeito, for new legislation that would allow the dispatch of Japan's SDF to UN peacekeeping operations in the future. Both parties had already begun to extend their support with certain conditions attached (Dobson 2003, 69).

After the outbreak of hostilities in January 1991, the JSP blocked the government's plan of contributing the Air Self-Defense Force to help with the transportation of refugees, personnel, and weapons (Dobson 2003, 67). Faced with heightened criticism from the United States, Japan quickly pledged a further $9 billion in support of the multinational force at a G-7 meeting in January. With previous contributions, Japan ended up contributing almost $13 billion, or 20 percent of the total cost of the war (Wan 2001, 33-4). Monetary contributions, however, were not deemed to be enough and in March 1991 the United States began pressuring Japan to commit minesweepers to the Gulf (Kyodo News Service 1991). After a concerted effort by senior LDP Diet members to persuade the opposition, stressing that the hostilities were over and that the contribution was legal and part of an international effort, the decision to dispatch the minesweepers was finally made at an extraordinary Cabinet meeting on April 24, 1991 (Woolley 1996).

In summary, the response of the Japanese government was characterized by a reluctance to contribute to any international military action taken by the international community and a willingness to rely on the use of financial contributions as an alternative. Observers of Japanese politics explained this by referring to the existence of a norm of pacifism or antimilitarism in Japan, institutionalized by the experience of World War II and by Japan's "peace constitution" (Berger 1996; Dobson 2003; Hook 1996; Hook *et al.* 2001; Katzenstein 1996a). This norm is said to have inhibited the formulation of a coherent and prompt response, leading to reactivity and immobility. As a result, Japan was severely criticized for being "content to benefit from the efforts of the rest of the international community while avoiding taking direct responsibility" (Freedman and Karsh 1993, 121). The unappreciative attitude of the international society was revealed rather shockingly in Kuwait's exclusion of Japan in its official expression of thanks at the end of the war.

The U.S. War in Iraq

In contrast to Japan's hesitant and *ad-hoc* response to the Gulf War, the Japanese government was able to formulate and implement a more coordinated response to U.S.'s requests for assistance in its 2003 War in Iraq, in spite of a much lower degree of international legitimacy. The rationale behind the invasion was Iraq's failure to cooperate with numerous UN Resolutions passed during the 1990s, which called for the elimination of Iraq's production and use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). By 2002, the United States had grown concerned, and at a meeting of the General Assembly of the UN on September 12, President George W. Bush criticized Iraq for sheltering terrorist organizations and its production and use of these weapons. On November 8, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1441, which offered Iraq a "final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations," commanding it to provide an "accurate, full, final and complete disclosure" of all aspects of its programs to develop WMD and ballistic missiles (UN Security Council 2002). Faced with this new resolution, Saddam eventually agreed to admit weapons inspectors, and inspectors Hans Blix and Mohamed El Baradei entered Iraq that same month.

The United States was nevertheless dissatisfied with the results of the inspections—reported at the UN in December 2002, and on January 30, February 14, and March 7, 2003—and began diplomatic and military preparations for a war in Iraq. Under debate was whether a further Security Council resolution (the so-called "second resolution") was necessary to authorize war, or whether 1441 would suffice.[4] France, Russia, and China all stressed the importance of a new resolution and the need for more inspection time. President Jacques Chirac of France was especially emphatic and stated on March 10 that France would veto any resolution that would lead to war.[5] Fellow NATO members Germany and Belgium also expressed their desire for more time to be given to the inspections. This opposition stifled the passage of a new resolution. Yet, after meeting with Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain and Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar of Spain on March 15, the United States declared that diplomacy had failed and designated March 17 as the deadline for complete Iraqi compliance with 1441. The invasion began on March 19, 2003 and was carried out by a coalition of primarily British and U.S. forces. Its official goals were to end the government of Saddam Hussein and to eliminate all WMD.

It is important to note the degree to which the two wars differed in terms of international support and legitimacy, the U.S. War in Iraq was very different from the Gulf War—in short, it lacked international support and, as a result, legitimacy. Many allies of the United States during the Gulf War were opposed to the invasion and most countries who pledged official support were acting despite adverse public opinion. Several close allies of the United States, most notably Germany, France, and Belgium, expressed vehement opposition to a military intervention on the grounds that it would increase rather than decrease the possibility of more terrorist attacks ("The UN Security Council and the Iraq War" 2006). Although the United Kingdom and other NATO members supported the U.S. position, opinion polls showed that the majority of their populations and often large segments of their Parliaments were against the attack.[6] Large-scale peace marches mobilizing hundreds of thousands of people occurred in cities all over Europe and other countries. Even among the nations supportive of the war, opinion polls did not show an actual majority in favor of the war before it began in any country other than the United States ("Opposition to the Iraq War" 2006).

At the heart of the opposition was the view that the invasion represented unilateral U.S. action with no UN backing.[7] Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada, for example, refused to participate in a war on Iraq without UN approval. Public opinion polls in Australia and Britain showed that while people may have supported the war with UN backing, they were strongly opposed to a war without it. Many countries indicated that they preferred giving weapons inspectors more time to complete their investigations and urged the United States to wait. Many also accused the United States of including the Iraq War as part of a broader war against terror, which they argued was illegitimate (Anderson, Bennis, and Cavanagh 2003).[8]

Despite the widespread international opposition to the invasion, the Japanese government was quick to support the U.S. position. As early as September 13, 2002, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi had fallen in line with U.S. opinion on Iraq. Speaking at the UN General Assembly, he called Iraq a threat to the world community, stating that Iraq "must comply with all the relevant UN Security Council resolutions" and, in particular, "must allow immediate and unconditional inspections and dispose of all weapons of mass destruction" (Koizumi 2002). After President Bush's ultimatum on March 17, Koizumi publicly announced that he supported a military attack against Iraq and that no further UN resolution was necessary (Takahashi 2003). In public statements, he justified his decision based both on the need to maintain a credible alliance with the United States in the face of the threat of North Korea and on the need for Japan to make an "appropriate contribution" to international society (Sato 2003).

After Bush declared "Mission Accomplished" on May 1, the United States officially requested 1,000 Japanese GSDFs to provide rearguard support for their efforts to restore order in Iraq (Sato 2003). Koizumi responded by pledging support for the postwar reconstruction effort ("Japan Dispatches the SDF to Iraq" 2004). His cabinet set to work immediately, developing enabling legislation needed because the dispatch would be outside the framework of UN peacekeeping operations.[9] The Iraq Humanitarian Reconstruction Support Special Measures Law (or Special Measures Bill) was submitted by the government to the Diet in June, passing both houses on July 26 with support from the LDP, the New Komeito, and the Liberal Party. The new law enabled the dispatch of the GSDF to Iraq to assist international

efforts in humanitarian assistance and postwar reconstruction, and also to ensure domestic security in Iraq.

In many ways, this policy change represented a further leap in an increasingly active Japanese security policy. Whereas the Japanese government was paralyzed in 1990, unable to respond even in circumstances of high international legitimacy and U.S. pressure, in 2003, the government lent political support to the United States in the face of widespread international opposition. In a few short months, it had drawn up a law that would allow the SDF to participate in a non-UN peacekeeping operation. Even though the 1992 UN Peacekeeping Operation Law had enabled the dispatch of the SDF overseas under the auspices of the UN, participation had always been strictly limited to UN peacekeeping operations.[10] Consent from both parties to a conflict was required and a ceasefire had to have already been called. With Iraq, it was very difficult for the government to make the case that Samawah—the place of dispatch—was a noncombat zone. It was for this reason, and the disputed legitimacy of the war, that many Japanese were opposed to the government's stance, with Tokyo witnessing demonstrations on a similar scale to other countries.

Possible Explanations

What explains the change in government policy from one war to the next? Neorealism and neoliberalism are the two dominant paradigms that inform most analyses of change in a state's security policy. With the benefit of hindsight, they can both provide *ad hoc* explanations for why a particular course of action was chosen in a given situation, but they are indeterminate when it comes to prediction. As this section will show, the same paradigm yields not one prognosis for state action, but several. What will a country do, balance or bandwagon? Which international institution or law will a country choose to support, in this case the UN or, for Japan, its alliance with the United States? An approach that combines understandings of how a state views its role in the world with the assumptions underpinning neorealism and neoliberalism will serve as a better predictor of a state's foreign policy.

Neorealist Approaches

First, the core tenets of neorealism are that states are power-seeking and security-conscious because of the anarchical nature of the international system. For neorealists, a state's foreign policy is primarily shaped by its position in the international system and the distribution of relative material power capabilities. States seek security by engaging in internal or external balancing; great powers tend to balance against one another and less powerful states seek to align with the great powers (see Walt 1987; Waltz 1979). Japanese foreign policy in 1990 should therefore be understood through its relationship with the United States, the chief guarantor of its security. Given the rise of a new security threat, therefore, alliance maintenance should prevail. Japan should follow its leader and help repel the threat.

As the previous discussion showed, however, Japan did not follow its leader. This is made more puzzling because of the intense pressure placed on Japan by its ally. Confrontation over burden-sharing had featured prominently in U.S.–Japan relations throughout the 1980s. Framing the Gulf crisis in terms of a universally acceptable "international contribution" rather than in terms of the Soviet threat that characterized disputes during the Cold War meant that the United States was in a stronger position to pressure Japan to share the load (Hook 1996, 81). In fact, the U.S. Congress adopted resolutions expressing frustration with Japan's tardy response. Democratic Leader of the House Richard Gephardt sent a letter to Prime Minister Kaifu threatening the application of "meaningful" voluntary export restraints on Japanese automobiles to the United States if Japan failed to make what U.S. policy makers deemed to be a sufficient contribution to the war effort. This was followed in December 1990 by a threat that U.S. troops would actually be recalled from their Japanese bases if the Japanese contribution was not satisfactory (Hook 1996, 83).

No matter how much pressure the United States exerts, however, this has to resonate with domestic political actors in order to have an impact (Putnam 1988; Schoppa 1993). Even more puzzling, therefore, is the fact that this external pressure did resonate with powerful political forces inside the ruling party. Figures such as Ichiro Ozawa, at the time Secretary General of the LDP, as well as other members of the LDP's "defense tribe" were set on "normalizing" the Japanese military and having the SDF play a role in resolving international disputes. In

particular, Ozawa saw a unique opportunity in the Gulf crisis for the Japanese government to expand the scope of SDF activity. He was instrumental in developing the legislation that was eventually abandoned, and he secured an agreement with the opposition parties to reexamine the legislation the following year (Hook 1996, 83). Policy makers were also very concerned about the risk of U.S. abandonment, fearing that if the United States was to sustain heavy casualties in the war, this could trigger an "isolationist backlash" and the possible abrogation of the Security Treaty on which Japan depended for its security (Berger 1996, 322; Cooney 2002, 104).

While neorealism offers no explanation for Japan's failure to support its ally, at a more general level, it is also unable to explain why Japan, in the face of dramatic changes in its security environment after the Cold War and a steady growth in its material power, continues to adhere to policies that deemphasize military instruments as a means of achieving national goals (Berger 1996, 318). It cannot explain why Japan—faced with heightened stature in a new international system—deliberately eschewed all the new military responsibilities thrust upon it by the international community.

If neorealism cannot account for Japan's response to the Gulf War, can it lend insight as to why Japan responded the way it did in 2003? This would depend on showing that in relative power terms, Japan's security situation worsened between 1991 and 2003. If it did, this should lead Japan to take a bolder stance on defense issues. On one hand, the perceived threats posed by China and North Korea loomed larger in 2003 than they did in 1991. Specifically, China spent the 1990s engaging in a quantitative and qualitative arms buildup, which included the development of an upgraded nuclear strike capability. The Chinese government also illustrated their willingness to rely on the military to achieve national objectives in the 1995-96 crisis in the Taiwan strait (Hughes 2004, 166). Similarly, North Korea was perceived as much more threatening in 2003 than in 1990 after a decade of nuclear crises, stemming from the North's reluctance to give up its nuclear weapons program and the test-firing of two missiles (the *Nodong* in 1994 and the *Taepodong* in 1998). Both these incidents exposed Japan's vulnerability to instability on the peninsula (Hughes 2004, 166). A second nuclear crisis erupted in 2002 when North Korea admitted to pursuing a uranium-based nuclear weapons program, which led to the unraveling

of the 1996 Agreed Framework as the United States, South Korea, Japan, and the European Community suspended fuel shipments, and North Korea expelled inspectors from the UN International Atomic Energy Agency from its nuclear facilities and withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (Margerison 2003).

On the other hand, however, the combined capability of Japan and the United States—as its chief ally and provider of security—to repel these threats also grew in the 1990s. A simple comparison using crude figures of military spending indicates that the United States spent $431,282 million on defense in 1990 compared with $414,400 million in 2003, and Japan spent $37,642 million in 1990 compared with $42,729 million in 2003. China, on the other hand, lagged behind both countries at both times, spending $12,277 million in 1990 and $33,100 million in 2003 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2005). Even though military spending does not equate to capabilities, it is difficult to argue other than that the military power of the United States has increased drastically vis-à-vis any other country in the post-Cold War world (see e.g., Conetta and Knight 1997).

More importantly, the 1996 "review" of the U.S.–Japan security alliance, conducted largely in response to the 1994 nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula, means that Japan can be even more certain than before that United States' capabilities will be brought to bear in its defense should the situation in the region deteriorate. The review resulted in a new set of guidelines for U.S.–Japan defense cooperation, which expanded the ways in which the SDF would be legally able to cooperate with U.S. forces in case of a "regional contingency" (Neary 2002, 171). The fields of cooperation include refugee flows, noncombat operations, the enforcement of economic sanctions, the use of SDF facilities by U.S. troops, rear-area support and minesweeping—all items that Japan had not been formally compelled to cooperate on previously (Hughes 2004, 178). The fact that the geographic scope of the security treaty was broadened to include the wider Asia-Pacific region signaled a more active commitment by both parties to guarantee regional stability.

The Japanese commitment to "regional" security, however, was tempered by ambiguity in the wording of the revised guidelines. The terms "situation" and "areas surrounding Japan" were left ambiguous (McCormack 2000). Even though this was a move that gave Japanese

policymakers a safety clause, enabling them to opt out of cooperation with the United States if the "situation" does not warrant it, if Japan was so concerned about the rise of North Korea and/or China, what explains this ambiguity? If Japan really was facing such a threatening environment, what explains its failure to try and get a more explicit guarantee of U.S. protection?

Ultimately, the signals that the international system sends are ambiguous. Even if Japanese policy makers were concerned about the military threat of China or the nuclear threat of North Korea, this does not automatically prescribe Japanese activism in Iraq. Even though some neorealists might argue that a show of force in 2003 was needed to hedge against the threat of North Korea, others might say that Japan should not risk antagonizing its proximate threat by supporting such a controversial war, especially one aimed at overthrowing a military dictator that the United States did not like. If Japan was motivated to support the United States in Iraq because of the threat of North Korea, why did it not do more? Why did it not pass the legislation earlier and commit troops to the actual invasion? In the end, Japan's response was not exactly a strong show of force.

Another related argument that neorealists make is that mercantilist concerns—specifically, concerns over oil—determined Japan's involvement in Iraq. Heginbotham and Samuels (2002), for example, have argued that mercantilist concerns determined Japanese policy toward the war in Afghanistan in 2001. They argued that LDP backtracking from what Koizumi originally promised President Bush was caused by concerns that the war would damage Japan's economic interests: "they determined that, despite Koizumi's promises, Japan's national interest would be best served by 'showing the flag' to satisfy the United States while simultaneously refraining from high-profile military action so as to reassure Middle Eastern oil exporters and other trading partners" (114).[11]

The mercantilist argument is also indeterminate. Is Japan more or less likely to support the United States depending on the nature of its interests in the region? High dependence on oil from the Gulf may create incentives for Japan to intervene and cooperate with the United States in securing its oil supply. Yet other incentives exist that proscribe Japan's involvement: by showing support for a war with questionable international legitimacy Japan risks antagonizing its main oil supplier,

at that time Iran (Heginbotham and Samuels 2002, 115). In any case, Japan's interests in the region have not changed significantly since the Gulf War, which also represented a threat to the price of oil and to its access. It was for this reason that Saddam's actions were unanimously condemned, even by Arab states. The War in Iraq in 2003, however, ostensibly had nothing to do with oil and was opposed by all members of the Arab League except Kuwait. If Japan truly was motivated by concerns about oil, then what explains its commitment the second time rather than the first? If Japan truly cared about oil, then why was it the first country to apply economic sanctions against Iraq?

Neoliberalist Approaches

The second major paradigm, which may be termed neoliberalism or neoliberal institutionalism, postulates that the destabilizing effects of international anarchy can be mitigated by the provision of information and rules in the form of regimes set up to address common problems (see Krasner 1983; Keohane 1984; Axelrod and Keohane 1993). In contrast to neorealism, it highlights the importance of nonstate actors, such as international organizations, and of domestic political actors in determining a state's foreign policy. For some neoliberalists, international structural change, such as the spread of liberal democracy, growing economic interdependence, and the growing number of international institutions, has effectively increased the costs of war while reducing its benefits. In this vein, Japan's reluctance to contribute militarily to the Gulf War in 1990 is evidence that military force is no longer an effective instrument of state capacity (Berger 1996, 323). This perspective, however, cannot account for Japan's military contribution in 2003.

Neoliberalists believe that alliances as well as international institutions often develop rationales for their existence that are unrelated to security concerns. They become a device by which cooperation can be achieved in a wide variety of issue areas, including trade and cultural exchange (Adler and Barnett 1998; Deutsch 1957). While the centrality of the U.S.–Japan alliance in its defense policy is clear, Japan's Basic Policy for Defense also declares a desire for the eventual realization of a multilateral security environment centered on the UN (DeFilippo 2002), and even the U.S.–Japan security arrangements are described as only important "pending the effective

functioning of the UN . . . in deterring and repelling such aggression" (Neary 2002, 171). Moreover, the UN enjoys high levels of support from the Japanese people (DeFilippo 2002). Neoliberalists are therefore unable to explain why Japan failed to support an initiative that enjoyed the double blessing of both the United States and the UN.

Ultimately, neoliberalism is indeterminate with regard to what it predicts Japan would do in the event of conflict between the UN and the United States, which is exactly what occurred in the lead-up to the 2003 invasion. Given the purported centrality of the UN for Japan's security, as well as Japan's longstanding desire for a seat on the UN Security Council (Cooney 2002, 43), its support for unilateral action by the United States—which effectively ignored the wishes of other key UN players—is puzzling.

The most convincing explanation for the difference in policy outcome offered by neoliberalists is that changes in the domestic political environment contributed to or caused the differences. Hughes (2004, 162) has argued, for instance, that "the changing domestic political situation favored an expanded role for Japan." The most important changes were the following: the strengthening of the position of the LDP within the Diet; the strengthening of the power of the executive in matters of foreign policy (and the concomitant rise of Prime Minister Koizumi); the declining influence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) on Japanese foreign policy; and changing public opinion.

A careful exploration of these arguments nevertheless highlights their incomplete character. First, while it is true that the LDP did not have a majority in the Upper House in 1990, interparty opposition to the bill is not the main reason that it failed. Rather, the ruling party's hasty submission of the bill and its lack of preparedness to answer questions was a more important factor (Cooney 2002, 40; personal interview, Tokyo, Ausust 2006). As mentioned above, Prime Minister Kaifu withdrew the bill only after securing the support of the Komeito and the DSP for a bill to be passed in the next Diet session. Prime Minister Miyazawa dutifully put the second Peacekeeping Bill to the Diet the following December and followed a traditional LDP tactic of "railroading" it through the Upper House in July 1992 (Cooney 2002, 41).

Even though the LDP enjoyed a majority in both Houses in 2003, this majority rested on its coalition with the New Komeito. Although this party had supported the LDP-proposed peacekeeping bill in 1992, it was by no means as dedicated as the LDP to expanding Japan's international activism. Indeed, the New Komeito has repeatedly "been able to parlay its swing vote in the upper house to leverage over legislation" and has often been able to block or weaken legislation (Midford 2003, 338-9). Proposals that the New Komeito have targeted in this way include the acquisition of mid-air refueling tankers for the Air Self-Defense Forces and legislation passed in 1999 that would have enabled Japan to fulfill commitments made under the 1997 U.S.–Japan Revised Guidelines (338-9). Paradoxically, the New Komeito's actions have also had the effect of encouraging opposing forces within the ruling party to voice their opposition to the party line (339). Thus, it is doubtful that the policy choice in 2003 can be ascribed solely to the strengthened position of the LDP.

Second, while institutional changes within the Prime Minister's Office have resulted in a streamlining of the policy process, which observers believe is likely to facilitate quicker responses to international crises (Hughes 2004, 164) and lessen the influence of MOFA on Japanese foreign policy (Cooney 2002), neither of these factors by themselves can explain the choice of policy. The factors make two assumptions: (1) that the Japanese executive favored an expanded role for Japan; and (2) that MOFA did not. While Prime Minister Koizumi has enjoyed extremely high levels of public support, his ability to bring about structural reform in the economy has been impeded both by opposition within his own party and by a policy-making system that subordinates the executive and inhibits decisive leadership (Mulgan 2002). Gerald Curtis has coined the phrase "Mr NATO" ("No Action—Talk Only") to describe Koizumi ("Koizumi Branded 'Mr NATO' " 2001). It is therefore difficult to gauge the extent to which the difference in beliefs and resources wielded by the executives in the two periods can be utilized to explain the outcome. Moreover, recent work on the attitudes informing Japanese foreign and security policy suggests that MOFA favors cooperation with the United States for the sake of regional stability (DeFilippo 2002). Its declining influence, therefore, does not provide an explanation for why Japan chose to cooperate more expansively in 2003.

Third, while it may be argued that the overseas dispatch of the SDF as part of UN peacekeeping operations—since 1992, to Angola, Cambodia, Mozambique, El Salvador, Rwanda, the Golan Heights, and East Timor—has created a change in public attitudes in favor of the SDF's participation in these activities, this did not extend to support for Japanese participation in the postwar reconstruction of Iraq. The sticking point was the fact that the fighting in Iraq was far from over, and hence the SDF would not be operating in a noncombat zone. While public opposition to the Iraq War was at 80 percent before it started, by July 2003, 48 percent were still actively opposed to the SDF dispatch for postwar reconstruction (Curtin 2003). In contrast, at the time of the Gulf War, the majority of Japanese were actually in support of the overseas dispatch of SDF for noncombat missions like disaster and humanitarian relief (Midford 2003, 340).

By themselves, therefore, changes in the domestic political landscape do not appear to be sufficient to explain changes in foreign policy. Even if the power of the LDP and the Prime Minister was indeed stronger than it had been in 1990, this alone does not lead to predictions regarding foreign policy. If the LDP was so committed to enlarging Japan's international contribution, and Prime Minister Koizumi was so adamant about supporting the United States, then why was the enabling legislation passed earlier and the SDF not sent earlier? In order to fill these gaps in theories of international relations, scholars have recently begun to consider how national identity impacts upon state preferences. It is this approach that will be taken up in the next section.

Constructivism, Identity Theory, and Foreign Policy

As the above section demonstrated, developments in Japanese security policy do not easily fit within standard explanations of foreign policy. The limitations of the two principal paradigms in international relations has led to the development of a third, that of constructivism (Onuf 1989; Wendt 1992; Katzenstein 1996), an approach that draws attention to the impact of national identity and culture on both foreign and domestic policies. It rejects the idea that state interests are determined by the structure of the international system, and instead postulates that they are socially constructed and vary between states. For a constructivist, identities come before interests, and state identity

emerges from interaction in different social environments, both domestic and international.

In international relations, two of the most important issue areas that constructivists are engaged in are the following: (1) the issue of norms and their capacity to reconstitute state interests; and (2) notions of state identity and their impact on policy (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001). Constructivists working in the first issue area have demonstrated how "norms"—defined as "collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity"—can have a causal effect on state policy independent of material interests, by reshaping actors' interests, self-understandings, and behavior (Katzenstein 1996b, 4). These norms can be held at both the international and domestic level. Systemic constructivists, for example, focus on how international norms shape the preferences and identities of states by acting to socialize them into international society, which explains why states will adopt similar policies despite occupying different positions in the international system (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Price and Tannenwald 1996; Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink 1999; Klotz 1995). Yet norms embedded in domestic social structures also exert a powerful influence on policy makers' perceptions of the range of foreign policy options available (Risse-Kappen 1996).

By treating norms as the independent variable in foreign policy, constructivists have been able to interpret foreign policy decisions that previously dominant neorealist and neoliberalist approaches have been unable to explain. With regard to Japanese security policy, Katzenstein (1996a), Berger (1996), and Hook and others (2001) have shown that the domestic norm of "antimilitarism," which they argue has become part of Japan's national identity, explains Japan's reluctance to assume greater military responsibilities since the end of the Cold War. Berger argues that the existence of a unique political-military culture in Japan, developed in the 1950s and characterized by a strong aversion to the use of military force, still has a major impact on the development of security policy in Japan. More recently, Dobson (2003) has utilized constructivist ideas to explain the growing participation of Japan in UN peacekeeping operations. He shows how domestic political actors were able to overcome public opposition to the overseas dispatch of the SDF—the norm of antimilitarism—by calling for Japan to make an "international contribution" via participation in UN peacekeeping

activities, appealing to what he terms as a new norm of "UN internationalism." In doing so, Dobson confirms that states are affected by norms held at both the domestic and international level and their changing salience can explain changes in foreign policy.

Ultimately, however, constructivist approaches based on international norms fail to provide a satisfactory explanation of the variation in outcome across the two periods. In the face of norms like antimilitarism and UN-ism, which generate opposite predictions of Japanese behavior in both 1990 and 2003, it offers no criteria for determining which norm will predominate, and under what conditions (Kowert and Legro 1996, 497). We have no way of knowing when Japanese foreign policy decision makers will be guided by expectations of behavior addressed to them by their domestic, or international, environment. Responding to this critique, constructivists have argued that international norms such as human rights affect states differently according to their domestic political processes and institutions (Checkel 2001) or the presence or absence of domestic actors receptive to the cause (Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink 1999). In this case, however, the political system did not change significantly over the two periods, and receptive actors existed within government at both times.

A further factor that constructivists have begun to consider, however, is how international norms may affect states differently because of their different "state identities" (Gurowitz 1999). For example, Gurowitz has argued that states like Japan, with "insecure international identities," respond to international norms more often than states whose identities are secure. This insecurity has also been shown to condition Japan's response to global environmentalist norms (Catalinac and Chan 2005; Miyaoka 1998). Accordingly, a plausible hypothesis is that changes in Japan's "identity" provide the most plausible explanation for the change in policy outcome from 1991 to 2003.

While constructivists such as Wendt (1992, 1994) contend that state identity fundamentally shapes state preferences and actions, work on this topic in international relations is plagued by problems, which include how these identities are constructed (and the relative weight to assign to the international or domestic sphere in this construction); how they are defined (how do we know an identity if we see one?); and how they can be measured (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001, 399). This caused

Abdelal *et al.* (2005, 1) to ask "if identity is a key variable explaining political, economic and social behavior, how does it vary, why does it vary, and how would one know variation if one saw it?" Based on a comprehensive analysis of approximately 600 social science articles that use identity, these authors have developed a definition of a "social identity" that consists of two facets, content and contestation. The "content" of the identity includes constitutive norms, relational comparisons with other social categories, cognitive models, and social purposes, all of which imply different causal pathways between identity and behavior (Abdelal *et al.* 2005, 12). "Contestation" refers to the degree to which this content is contested within the group. Sometimes, specific interpretations of the meaning of an identity are widely shared; at other times, they are not.

The present study considers that changes in Japan's response from 1991 to 2003 can best be explained by understanding how notions of Japan's identity altered over this period. First, like Abdelal and others (2005), I distinguish between personal and social identities and am concerned with the latter. Social identities describe groups of people and have an intersubjective quality: they involve collective meaning, which no individual can readily change (3). Second, I conceive of identity as "normative," composed of norms of behavior. These norms are essentially constitutive rules that define one's social identity and lead others to recognize it; identity is thus linked to behavior via the performance of roles. People are compelled to act a certain way in a situation because of what they—and others—conceive their role to be. Identities provide roles that are socially appropriate (12).

This approach draws on insights from identity theory in social psychology, which views the self as a multifaceted social construct, the components of which are referred to as "role identities" (Burke 1980; McCall and Simmons 1978; Stryker 1968). For the individual, roles are not only indispensable in providing a stable sense of identity and a way in which to impose order and structure on their environment, but their enactment has a positive effect on self-esteem (Hogg *et al.* 1995). Identity theorists acknowledge that some role identities will have more self-relevance than others: they conceptualize an organized hierarchy, whereby roles at the top of the hierarchy are more likely than those at the bottom to be invoked in a certain situation. The term "identity salience" is used to refer to the probability of a particular role being

operationalized in a certain setting. Difference in identity salience accounts for variation in behavior between people with the same role identities.

This article makes use of role identity as an independent variable to explain changes in Japanese security policy. In doing so, it does not make the assumption that the Japanese state is a unitary actor with the same role conceptions held by all decision makers at a certain time. Rather, it hypothesizes that the response of the Japanese government in 1991 can be explained with reference to the salient role conceptions held by Japanese policy makers at the time, while the difference in response in 2003 can be explained by the salience of a different role conception. In fact, this is not a new approach to foreign policy analysis. It builds on earlier work by Holsti (1970), who attempted to define 17 different categories of the roles states play in the international system, and more recently by Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot (1996), who attempted to explain Ukrainian and Belarusian decisions to comply with the nuclear nonproliferation regime as a function of national role conceptions held by elites.

Methods

Applicability to Japan

Since the end of World War II, scholars of political science and international relations have been fascinated by Japan's "identity." Japan has been, for example, a "reactive state" content to assume a passive, low-profile, chiefly economic role in world affairs, eschewing the use of military force as an instrument of state policy and relying on the United States for its security (Calder 1988; Yasutomo 1995); a "rising state" no longer content to let the United States dictate its foreign policy and more inclined to take on a proactive international role (Akaha 1991); and a "defensive state" pursuing a "low-cost, low-risk, benefit-maximizing strategy" in pursuit of its national interests (Pharr 1993).

Until the Gulf War in 1990, the Japanese people were content to see themselves as a peace-loving state (*heiwa kokka*). This "identity" was born out of a combination of the experience of the war; the constraints imposed by Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, which renounces war as an instrument of state policy; and the adoption of the Yoshida Doctrine in the 1950s, which allowed Japan to concentrate on economic

growth while relying on the U.S. umbrella for its security. This identity and the foreign policy it prescribed received a rude shock in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait. Suddenly, Japan was faced with unprecedented pressure from the United States and the international community to join the multinational forces and make a "human contribution" befitting its status as a powerful international player. Japan could no longer remain a passive spectator of world events, but was expected to contribute to the new world order alongside other major powers.

In this vein, the effect of the Gulf crisis on Japanese foreign policy should not be underestimated. It has been termed "a watershed" for Japanese security policy, thrusting issues of identity to the fore and occasioning a process of self-reflection and foreign policy restructuring that continues to make an impact upon Japanese foreign policy today (Dobson 2003, 63; Hook 1996, 75). The question posed by the Gulf War was this: should Japan stick to its carefully cultivated identity as a "peace state"—its tried and true course of foreign policy—or should it begin to act as a "normal country" making an international contribution commensurate with its economic power? The debate became split between the pacifists, who favored the rejection of the use of military force as an instrument of state policy, including the right to collective self-defense, and the conservatives, who argued that Japan should play a more active role in ensuring worldwide peace and stability (Klien 2002, 118).

The current debate over Japan's national identity and role in the world renders it a good candidate for the application of identity theory to explain the change in the dependent variable: the different responses of the Japanese government in 1990 and 2003. Although the details of the two situations are slightly different, in 1990, Japan had been unable to dispatch the SDF to provide noncombat support for the UN-authorized, U.S.-led multinational forces; in 2003, however, it was able to dispatch the SDF to provide logistical support in what was essentially still a war zone, outside the aegis of the UN. It is hypothesized that the decision in 1991 reflected the dominance of the pacifist role identity, which is hypothesized to have declined by 2003.

Study Sample

The study sample consists of statements made by elected representatives in the Upper and Lower Houses of the Japanese Diet

that indicated a purpose or vision of a kind of status for Japan. Analysis was made of statements made by all politicians, regardless of party affiliation, in the plenary sessions of the Upper and Lower House during the two crises. The time periods were defined to reflect the length of each crisis: the first time period was from July 1990 to April 1991; the second extended from February 2003 to July 2003.[12] In addition, the only statements collected were those made in sessions in which Japan's response to the crisis in Iraq was discussed. I searched for the "rationale" behind what was being proposed, rather than the specific course of action that was being suggested. This enabled me to gauge the role identity favored by the politician. For example, if Prime Minister Kaifu called for sending the SDF overseas so that Japan can fulfill its responsibilities to the international community, it is the latter part of the statement that provides the role conception.

The search was limited to elected representatives speaking in the Japanese Diet because I was certain that any role conception that carried significant weight among the Japanese people or inside the bureaucracy would be reflected in the statements of these politicians. This conviction was reinforced by the nature of partisan disagreement on the issue, which in Japan means that the bureaucracy will not have the final say on legislation. In 1990, for example, the Socialists refused to negotiate the proposed law outside of the Diet (Cooney 2002).

Classification of Role Statements

My readings of transcripts of all the plenary sessions in which Iraq was discussed during both time periods yielded a significant quantity of role statements. These were classified in terms of categories identified by Susanne Klien (2002) in "Rethinking Japan's Identity and International Role." Here, the author conducts discourse analysis of a selection of Japanese journals of various political persuasions over the period January 1990 to December 2000 and identifies four different "perspectives on Japan's foreign policy and international role."[13]

The perspectives identified by Klien fall into four different categories. First, the "centrist" view emphasizes the importance of maintaining political, military, and economic stability wherever possible, and sees the world in zero-sum terms. Proponents of this view do not express commitment to any traditional "Japanese" value and instead usually frame their arguments in terms of "the protection of

Japan's national interests." Japan should do *X*, because it is in its best interests. While centrists tend to favor Japan's traditional foreign policy of mercantilism for the respect and prosperity it has brought, they also support the U.S.–Japan security alliance and realize that Japan needs to take on more responsibility in security matters. Measures should only be taken, however, if they accord with Japan's national interest (Klien 2002, 119-25).

Second, the "independentist" view expounds the need for Japan to "go it alone" in the international system and achieve political, economic, and emotional independence. While independentists also emphasize the importance of asserting Japan's national interest, arguments are framed in terms of the need to uphold traditional Japanese values and a desire to disassociate Japan from Western imperialism. This perspective criticizes Japan's "unequal" relationship with the United States and rails against the U.S. military presence in Japan. Independentists are critical of Article 9, favor its revision, and are openly and unhesitatingly in favor of an expansion of the role played by the SDF in Japan's foreign policy. Unlike the next category, however, their motive is to protect Japan's national interests rather than to make a commitment to the international community (Klien 2002, 125-34).

Third, the "pragmatic multilateralists" advocate an "all-round" stance of continuing Japan's reliance on the United States while also placing emphasis on increasing relations with Asia. They favor multidimensionality and flexibility in Japan's foreign policy and place great emphasis on confidence-building, transparency, and the creation of trust in Japan's relations with other countries. While they support the U.S.–Japan alliance, they urge the government to adopt a greater sense of responsibility, independence, and equality within the alliance framework. However, they see the security link with the United States as a precondition for their "all-round" stance; in other words, development of multi- and bilateral relations with other countries is deemed possible because of the security relationship. This group tends to be in favor of the revision of Article 9 for the transparency it would bring to Japan's foreign policy, and because it would help Japan play a more responsible role in the world (Klien 2002, 134-43).

Finally, the "pacifists" attach great importance to nonmilitary means of achieving peace. They favor the preservation of Article 9 as a symbol of Japanese pacifism and call for the dissolution of the SDF on

the grounds that it runs counter to the spirit of the constitution. They also consider collective defense to be incompatible with the constitution and argue that Japan should confine itself to an entirely nonmilitary contribution to international peace. They also reject the U.S.–Japan Security Treaty, on the grounds that it ties Japan into U.S. military strategy, and express a sense of duty and responsibility toward Asia (Klien 2002, 143-50).

To explain the change in the dependent variable—Japan's response to both incidents—my argument depends upon finding a different distribution of role statements at time $t = 1$ than that found at $t = 2$. Based on these four categories, it was hypothesized that more statements would espouse a pacifist role identity for Japan than any other role at time $t = 1$, which would explain Japan's decision not to commit the SDF. It was also hypothesized that more statements espousing a pacifist role for Japan would be expressed at time $t = 1$ than at $t = 2$. With regard to the balance at $t = 2$, it was considered that while Japan's decision to commit the SDF to postwar reconstruction may reflect greater salience of the "pragmatic multilateralist" role, the fact that the initial war was undertaken outside of the aegis of the UN may mean that more politicians were espousing a "centrist" role for Japan.

Results

A total of 536 role statements was collected from the legislative debates: 359 from the first period and 177 from the second period. I read all the debates in which Japan's response to Iraq was discussed and literally counted how many times representatives expressed a role identity they preferred for Japan. Because my argument depends on assessing the salience of the role conceptions held at both times, I did not limit my collection of statements to one role per politician; instead, I counted each articulation of their preferred role identity for Japan as a separate role statement. This enabled me to extract more than one role conception from one speech. I contend that this provides a more accurate measure of how salient the role was at the time. Some politicians expressed their desired role for Japan more than once in a single speech, while others did not mention a particular role identity at all in their discussion of Japan's response.

The role statements could be classified fairly easily into three of the four categories discussed above. Interestingly, no role statements were found that articulated an independentist, "go it alone" view. An overview looks at findings across the three categories, followed by analysis of the results.

First, statements coded as "pacifist" emphasized the uniqueness of Japan's "peace constitution" and the restrictions this placed on the overseas dispatch of the SDF: "Japan should definitely not carry out any measures that would entail the use or overseas dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces";[14] and "we cannot permit a change to our fundamental law, the Japanese Constitution, to allow overseas dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces."[15] These legislators stressed the importance of nonmilitary resolutions to all conflicts: "Japan should make a contribution in the areas of aid provision, medical care, food supplies, and the rebuilding of facilities and transportation; under no circumstances should Japan make any sort of military contribution, including the overseas dispatch of the SDF."[16] Statements that called for Japan to stop all financial contributions on the grounds that they would be used to support military force were also coded as pacifist.

Statements that stressed that Japan's international contribution should be the pursuit of global nonproliferation in line with its special pacifist constitution or peaceful values were included in this category; so were statements at $t = 2$ that criticized the United States for resorting to military action so quickly and not seeking a peaceful settlement: for example, "the answer to eliminating weapons of mass destruction is not recourse to war. We simply must solve the dispute through peaceful means."[17] Statements at $t = 2$ that called for Japan to "live up to its peaceful ideals, and call on America to stop the war" were also coded pacifist.[18]

Second, statements coded as "pragmatic multilateralist" emphasized the need for Japan to enlarge its contribution to international society, particularly in the resolution of conflict. They emphasized Japan's position as a member in international society and Japan's duty and responsibility to this end: "as a member of the United Nations it is Japan's duty to contribute to UN collective security arrangements"[19] and "in order to restore peace and security Japan cannot simply remain a passive spectator, we must find a way to play an active role."[20] This category also included statements that criticized

the pacifists for not doing enough: "the attitude that peace in one country is enough is selfish and is not plausible in today's world. We must make legal measures in order to be able to contribute to world peace in a variety of ways."[21]

This category also included statements that used Japan's identity as a peace state as a basis for greater action in the international arena: "a 'peace state' is a country that is prepared to take responsibility for maintaining peace as a member of the international community; peace is only achieved and maintained through the combined forces of many countries."[22] At $t = 2$, statements coded as pragmatic multilateralist included those that criticized the United States for its quick recourse to force, but not because they disagree with using military means, but because it circumvented the powers of the UN: "no matter how hard it is to build an international consensus, military force should always be undertaken with the authority of the UN, under a UN resolution;"[23] and "American actions blocked international efforts by the UN to resolve the dispute via weapons inspections; Japan should impress upon the US that it cannot completely ignore the UN Charter and its resolutions."[24] Also, "we must aim for the construction of a framework for nation building that is under UN authority rather than an American occupation."[25]

Finally, statements coded as "centrist" advocated a particular course for Japan because it was in Japan's national interest. In other words, these Diet members made no mention of any need to contribute to the world community or fulfill the ideals of the peace constitution, but called on Japan to do *X* (usually, commit the SDF) only because its national interest demanded it. Typical centrist statements referred to the importance of Japan acting as a strong alliance partner of the United States; the importance of supporting U.S. actions in Iraq to combat the threat of WMD; the importance of acting to get rid of the Iraqi threat; and the importance of acting to gain status and prestige in international society. For example, "the US is Japan's invaluable ally; it guarantees the stability of the Asia-Pacific region and is vital in ensuring our peace and security. When America is making large sacrifices for the cause of international society, it is Japan's duty to provide as much support as we can."[26] Similarly, Japan should make an international contribution in order to enhance its international status and prestige and make progress toward a permanent seat on the UN Security

Table 1. Classification of Role Statements into Pacifist, Pragmatic Multilateralist, and Centrist at t = 1 and t = 2

	t = 1 August 1, 1990-April 30, 1991 N = 359	t = 2 February 1-July 30, 2003 N = 177
Pacifist	166	28
(Percentage of Total)	(46%)	(16%)
Pragmatic Multilateralist	142	52
(Percentage of Total)	(40%)	(29%)
Centrist	51	97
(Percentage of Total)	(14%)	(55%)

Council.[27] The distribution of statements across the categories is given in Table 1.

Four observations are immediately discernible: statements advocating a "pacifist" role identity are not significantly higher than "pragmatic multilateralist" statements at t = 1 (approximately 46 percent versus 40 percent); "pacifist" role statements decline from 46 percent of statements at t = 1 to 16 percent of statements at t = 2; "pragmatic multilateralist" statements decline from 40 percent at t = 1 to 29 percent at t = 2; finally, there is a significant rise in "centrist" role statements from t = 1 to t = 2 (14 percent to 55 percent).

Given the first observation, a follow-up analysis of the salience of the "peace state" identity was performed by measuring the frequency in which it is referred to in all statements at t = 1, compared to t = 2.[28] Among the statements coded as "multilateralist," a significant number mentioned Japan's peace state identity as a basis for Japan's active cooperation with the international community. It was considered that they may have been less inclined to do so at t = 2 because of the declining salience of this identity. I therefore wanted to see whether this usage declined at t = 2 and also which kind of category of statements used the words more often: pacifist statements or nonpacifist statements. The results are summarized in Table 2.

Given the fourth observation, which was somewhat unexpected, the "centrist" statements at t = 1 and t = 2 were grouped into further

Table 2. References to Japan's "Peace State" Identity at t = 1 and t = 2

	t = 1 August 1, 1990-April 30, 1991 N = 359	t = 2 February 1-July 30, 2003 N = 177
Total references to "peace state identity" (as a percentage of total statements)	93 (26%)	31 (18%)
Number of references in "pacifist" statements (as a percentage of total references)	44 (47%)	18 (58%)
Number of references in "nonpacifist" statements (as a percentage of total references)	49 (53%)	13 (42%)

categories in an attempt to ascertain what kinds of statements at t = 2 had trumped both "pacifist" and "pragmatic multilateralist" role commitments. In doing so, I looked not for the course of action proposed (e.g., measures to compensate for high oil prices) but, instead, for the rationale behind it—why Japan should take this particular course of action. Understanding the rationales behind these centrist statements (e.g., because the situation in Iraq threatens world oil prices) should assist in discerning the conditions under which Japanese politicians were more inclined to articulate a pragmatist view. The results are given in Table 3.

Discussion

These results provide strong evidence for my argument that the policy change from t = 1 to t = 2 can be explained by the changing distribution of role conceptions held by politicians in the Japanese Diet. Most significantly, the results show that there has been a marked change in salience of the "peace state" identity among Japanese politicians: approximately 46 percent of all role statements during the period of the Gulf War envisaged Japan as a "peace state" living up to its peaceful ideals and not sending the SDF overseas; at the time of the Iraq War in 2003, a mere 16 percent of role statements saw Japan in this way. The total number of explicit references to the "peace state" identity (for

Table 3. Rationales for the Centrist Role Identity at t = 1 and t = 2

Rationale behind centrist statements (number of statements in parentheses)	t = 1 August 1, 1990-April 30, 1991 N = 51	t = 2 February 1-July 30, 2003 N = 97
Strengthening the U.S.–Japan alliance to cope with new threats	18% (9)	34% (33)
Gaining status/prestige from the international community	27% (14)	11% (11)
Countering the threat to Japan's economy of fluctuating oil prices	39% (20)	1% (1)
Gaining a seat on the UN Security Council	6% (3)	7% (7)
Achieving stability in the Middle East	6% (3)	7% (7)
Protecting the lives of Japanese citizens	4% (2)	6% (6)
Countering the threat to Japan's security posed by Iraq	—	4% (4)
Countering the threat to Japan's security posed by weapons of mass destruction	—	20% (20)
Countering the threat to Japan's security posed by North Korea	—	5% (5)
Countering the threat to Japan's security posed by terrorism	—	1% (1)
Achieving stability in the Asia-Pacific	—	2% (2)

example, "Japan's peace constitution"; "our peaceful ideals"; "Japan's principle of pacifism") in the role statements also declined from 93 mentions in 359 statements at t = 1 (26 percent) to 31 mentions in 177 statements at t = 2 (18 percent).

The salience of this role identity during the Gulf War is also confirmed by the 49 nonpacifist role statements (53 percent of the total) that mentioned Japan's "peace constitution" or "peace identity" as a basis for more activity in the multilateral arena (see Table 2). This means

that over half of all the nonpacifist role statements at t = 1 referred to this identity and used it as a basis for greater activism. By 2003, this had declined slightly to 42 percent of the total. There was nevertheless a rise in pacifist role statements making explicit mention of Japan's unique "peace state" identity. Although it is not immediately clear why this is the case, it may be in reaction to the declining salience of the identity: politicians who envisage a pacifist role for Japan were more inclined to mention it explicitly in 2003.

The results generated also support my second hypothesis that there will be more pacifist role statements than pragmatic multilateralist role statements at t = 1. The results showed that 46 percent of the total number of statements at t = 1 were pacifist, whereas 40 percent were pragmatic multilateralist. Even though my original hypothesis was that there would be a significant difference between the two, a reconsideration of the exact policy that was adopted makes sense of the results. The policy response represented a compromise between politicians seeking a pacifist role for Japan and those seeking a more active role, with the pacifists gaining the higher ground: the bill to dispatch the SDF failed; the SDF was not dispatched under any other law; the Japanese government provided a financial contribution of $13 billion (in line with the pacifists' emphasis on nonmilitary and financial contributions); and minesweepers were eventually sent (which many pacifist statements had been against).

Third, the policy adopted at t = 2 (the SDF dispatch to postwar Iraq and also Koizumi's political support for the U.S. invasion) led me to expect that I would see a decline in the "peace state" identity and a rise in either a pragmatic multilateralist role or a centrist role. Here, the findings were somewhat unexpected. While the number of pacifist statements declined, so too did the pragmatic multilateralist statements. While both categories comprised approximately 86 percent of all role statements during the Gulf War, in 2003, they comprised just 45 percent of all role statements. In their place, there was a significant rise in centrist role statements, from approximately 14 percent of the total at t = 1 to 55 percent of the total at t = 2. In 2003, politicians were not envisaging Japan as either a state that aspires to live up to the ideals of its peace constitution nor as a state that places the UN and international community at the center of its foreign policy. Instead, Japan was compelled to act because its national security demanded it.

Categorizing these role statements by rationale (see Table 3) yielded several further observations. First, during the Gulf War, the three major rationales for action were the need to counter the threat to the economy posed by rising oil prices (approximately 39 percent of all statements); the need for Japan to gain status/prestige from the international community (27 percent); and finally, the importance of strengthening the U.S.–Japan alliance (18 percent). During the U.S. War in Iraq, the major rationales were the need to strengthen the U.S.–Japan alliance (34 percent); the need to protect Japan against WMD (20 percent); and the need for status/prestige (11 percent). For Japanese politicians in 2003, the need to preserve and strengthen the U.S.–Japan alliance was a much more pressing concern than it had been in 1991. There was much less concern about international status. Most importantly, however, the need to counteract the negative effect on the economy declined from being the most commonly invoked rationale in 1990 (39 percent of all statements) to being the least commonly invoked in 2003 (a mere 1 percent of all statements). In place of the threat to the economy, Japanese politicians were concerned about the proliferation of WMD, the threat posed by Iraq, the threat of North Korea, and regional instability.

On balance, these observations do not lend support to the argument that mercantilist concerns may have encouraged Japan's activist policy response in 2003. Not only were Japanese politicians much less concerned about the threat posed to Japan's oil supply, Japan was actually more dependent on oil from the region in 2003: 86 percent of its oil was coming from the Middle East in 2003 versus 70 percent in 1990.[29] Moreover, not one single mention of the need to counteract the threat posed to oil prices in either 1990 or 2003 directly advocated a course of action that involved more active support for the U.S. effort. In other words, politicians did not link the two. The proposed courses of action ranged from introducing energy-saving measures to reduce domestic demand, requesting Japanese businesses for their cooperation to this end, and preventing a further rise in oil prices by negotiating with Europe and the United States to set limits on speculative purchasing of oil. Thus, it is unlikely that mercantilist concerns can explain either policy.

Furthermore, classifying the rationales yields another observation: not only were politicians more inclined to articulate centrist role

statements in 2003 than they did in 1990, but their rationales for action became more realist. If "hard realist" concerns are defined as being those centered on the threat posed by the external environment (for example, instability in the Middle East), these increased from approximately 8 percent of all centrist role statements at t = 1 to 48 percent at t = 2. If concerns about alliance maintenance are also included, realist statements increase from 32 percent of the total at t = 1 to 81 percent of the total at t = 2. It has already been noted that status concerns—considered irrelevant under neorealism—have decreased.

In support of this heavy emphasis on the external environment, politicians were also much more likely to use the word "threat" during the period of the Iraq War when making role statements than they did during the Gulf War. During the Gulf War, they referred to it as a "situation" they needed to deal with, or as a "crisis." In 2003, Iraq and also North Korea were frequently referred to as "grave threats." A frequency count shows that the word "threat" was used in a mere 2 percent of all statements at t = 1 and in 12 percent of all statements at t = 2. This provides further evidence that Japanese politicians were considerably more concerned with external threats and alliance maintenance in 2003 than they were in 1990.

Conclusion

This article set out to explain a puzzle. In 1990, the Japanese government chose not to dispatch the SDF to provide noncombat support for the UN-authorized and U.S.-led multinational force in the Gulf, despite a high degree of international legitimacy and direct U.S. pressure to do so. In 2003, however, Japan expressed political support for a U.S. invasion at a time when other U.S. allies did not, and dispatched the SDF to provide logistical support in what was still a highly dangerous zone, outside the framework of UN peacekeeping operations. Neither neorealism nor neoliberalism has been able to provide a satisfactory explanation for this.

Using insights from constructivism and identity theory, it was anticipated that changing understandings of the appropriate "role identity" for Japan held by Japanese policy makers over the two time periods could explain the change in policy. A greater salience of a pacifist role identity in 1990 would explain the inability of the Japanese

government to dispatch the SDF during the Gulf War. No matter how much pressure the United States applied, Japan's identity was simply not conducive to dispatching the SDF at that time. By 2003, however, a decline in salience for the pacifist role identity and a rise of alternative role conceptions would explain the more proactive policy response. The findings of a detailed analysis of legislative debates confirmed both hypotheses: the distribution of role identities is significantly different across the two time periods, and in the direction predicted.

Interestingly, the decline of the pacifist role identity was accompanied by a similar weakening of the pragmatic multilateralist identity. Both were superseded by a "centrist" role identity, one which conceives of Japan as a state that should strive to protect its national interests in every way possible. This role identity is one of utility-maximizer, where options are considered only if they are in accordance with Japan's national interest. Essentially, this role identity prescribes *realpolitik* behavior for Japan. Careful analysis of the beliefs held by politicians regarding how and why doing something will advance Japan's national interests (the rationales behind the centrist statements) highlights that they were motivated primarily by the need to ameliorate threats posed to Japan. This article thus provides preliminary evidence that conditions of threat will limit the impact of other, more idealist, and value-based role identities.

There are several ways to interpret these results. Neorealists might say that given the impact of role identity is not always uniform, varying with context, the capacity for it to be used as an independent variable in foreign policy analysis is limited. They might argue that the findings in this article prove that at times of heightened threat perception, all other value-based role identities become subsumed under the perceived threat, which will dictate Japan's policy response. I contend, however, that role identities held by elites will always have an effect on policy. There is absolutely no reason why utility-maximizing behavior cannot be considered as one of the many role identities states may exhibit. This is consistent with the constructivist ontology that interests are not exogenously given, but are fluid and constructed by actors. Pitting ideational variables against variables measuring the capabilities of a state in material terms amounts to arguing that there are spheres of human activity that are idea-less. As social psychologists have taught us, there is no realm of human activity that is identity-less. Rather,

individuals hold multiple role conceptions at different times, and the one that is enacted depends upon the accessibility and fit of the role to a given situation.

I therefore conclude that in a situation characterized by heightened threat perception, states are less likely to express commitment to any sort of value-based or idealist role conception, and are more likely to adopt role conceptions characterized by pragmatism. However, situations where a grave threat is not perceived will encourage behavior in accordance with other role identities favored by policy makers. This is not a trivial finding. It means that it is possible to utilize role identities held by policy makers as an independent variable to explain and even predict how states will act in a certain situation. This article has provided an example of a methodology—discourse analysis of parliamentary debates—that can be employed to do so. As Abdelal *et al.* (2004) have pointed out, this is a valuable method by which to identify the dominant role identities held in a society.

To this end, it would be useful for further research to be directed toward a more precise specification of the contextual factors that encourage certain role identities to become more salient. What was it about the period 1990-91, for example, that allowed Japan's pacifist role identity to become salient? To many observers, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait represented the first real post-Cold War threat to international stability. Japan was heavily dependent on the region for its oil supply and policy makers were also worrying about the future of its alliance with the United States. Why did Japanese policy makers articulate a pacifist role identity during this period? It seems that some threats matter more than others. Given that the conflict was in the same region in 2003, why were Japanese policy makers so ready at that time to revoke both their pacifist and pragmatic multilateralist role identities in favor of a centrist one? Perhaps the type of threat they perceive is related to other factors, such as the state of their own economy. This is especially true given that a strong economy is an element of the pacifist role identity. Japan's poor economic performance over the last decade might well have posed a threat to this identity, encouraging the development of a new one in its place.

For Japanese foreign policy, this study provides refreshing evidence that different ideas exist within the Diet regarding what Japan should and should not do in foreign policy, and that debate is vigorous. Further,

it supplies evidence that, for the most part, role identities expressed by politicians reflect those articulated by journalists, professors, and political commentators in popular discourse. For foreign policy analysis generally, this article has shown that incorporating role identity as an independent variable into studies of foreign policy can assist in generating predictions regarding what states will do in certain situations.

Notes

[1] I use the term "value-based" merely to distinguish between roles that express a commitment to abstract "values," such as pacifism and/or responsibility to the international community, and roles that are characterized by pragmatic realism. Although I realize that pragmatist roles are also articulations of value, this ontological distinction is not pertinent for the purposes of this analysis.

[2] It was a big surprise for Japan: its ambassador to Kuwait was on holiday at the time.

[3] The LDP had 113 out of 252 seats in the Upper House, while in the Lower House it had 285 out of 512 seats (Freedman and Karsh 1993, 124). For more details on the allocation of seats, see Curtis (1999, Appendix 4).

[4] The resolution promised "serious consequences" if the demands that weapons inspectors have "immediate, unconditional and unrestricted access to all sites" were not met. See UN Security Council (2002).

[5] France had explicitly stated at the time of the passage of 1441 that another resolution would be necessary to decide on the proper course of action if Iraq discontinued its compliance (UN Security Council 2002).

[6] Out of the countries in President Bush's "coalition of the willing," only four provided combat forces that participated in the invasion (United States, Australia, United Kingdom, Poland). The large contributions made by the Australian and British governments were in the face of major parliamentary and public opposition to the invasion.

[7] UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called the War in Iraq an illegal act that contravened the UN Charter. He stated that the decision to take action in Iraq should have been made by the Security Council, not unilaterally. See "Iraq War Illegal, Says Annan" (2004).

[8] Critics also argued that many of the governments that had aligned with the United States despite strong opposition among their constituencies did so because of economic ties. The United States was accused of using strong pressure and threats to coerce members of the UN Security Council to support their position.

[9] There were two reasons why new legislation was needed. First, maritime logistical support under the Anti-Terror Special Measures Law (passed in 2001 in response to the events of September 11) was ruled out by the government because there was no evidence of links between al Qaeda and Iraq. Second, the lack of a UN mandate meant that the Japanese government was unable to dispatch the GSDF to Iraq under the existing Peacekeeping Operation Law (passed in 1992).

[10] During the 1990s, the SDF was sent to Cambodia in 1992, Mozambique in 1993, Zaire in 1994, the Golan Heights in 1996, and East Timor in 2002.

[11] The Japanese government responded to the attacks by quickly passing an antiterrorism bill in October 2001 that enabled the SDF to give logistic rear-guard assistance to U.S. forces in the Indian Ocean. In December, a second law was passed that significantly expanded the scope of SDF participation in UN peacekeeping operations (Neary 2002, 171).

[12] The first time period encompasses Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, the Japanese government's announcement of its proposed financial package on August 29, debates over the proposed UN Peace Cooperation Law in October 1990, the January 1991 deadline for Iraqi withdrawal, the launch of Operation Desert Storm, the beginning of the Allied ground offensive on February 24, and finally the UN-mandated ceasefire in mid-April 1991. The second time period encompasses the beginnings of ultimatums issued toward Iraq in early 2003, the beginning of the war on March 19, 2003, the May 1 declaration of the end of hostilities, and finally the deliberation and passage of the Special Measures Law for Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq in July 2003.

[13] The journals were *Voice, Bungei Shunju, Shokun, Gaiko Forum, Chuo Koron, Sekai, Shiso* and *Gendai Shiso*.

[14] Koshiro Ishida, *Proceedings of the 120th Regular Session of the Diet, Lower House,* January 18, 1991.

[15] Hiroshi Tachiki, *Proceedings of the 119th Extraordinary Session of the Diet, Upper House,* October 18, 1990.

[16] Osamu Ikeda, *Proceedings of the 120th Regular Session of the Diet, Upper House,* January 18, 1991.

[17] Iji Kokutake, *Proceedings of the 120th Regular Session of the Diet, Lower House,* February 4, 1991.

[18] Tadayoshi Ichida, *Proceedings of the 156th Regular Session of the Diet, Upper House,* March 21, 2003.

[19] Man Sasaki, *Proceedings of the 119th Extraordinary Session of the Diet, Upper House,* October 17, 1990.

[20] Toshiki Kaifu, *Proceedings of the 119th Extraordinary Session of the Diet, Lower House,* October 12, 1990.

[21] Mutsuki Kato, *Proceedings of the 120th Regular Session of the Diet, Lower House,* January 28, 1991.

[22] Toshiki Kaifu, *Proceedings of the 119th Extraordinary Session of the Diet, Lower House,* October 16, 1990.

[23] Yuzuru Tsutsuki, *Proceedings of the 156th Regular Session of the Diet, Lower House,* March 20, 2003.

[24] Iji Kokutake, *Proceedings of the 156th Regular Session of the Diet, Lower House,* February 4, 2003.

[25] Masaharu Nakagawa, *Proceedings of the 156th Regular Session of the Diet, Lower House,* June 24, 2003.

[26] For example, Junichiro Koizumi, *Proceedings of the 156th Regular Session of the Diet, Lower House,* March 20, 2003.

[27] For example, "given that Japan is actively seeking status as a UN Security Council member, it is imperative for us to assume the responsibilities of contributing to the strengthening of the UN." Keigo Ouchi, *Proceedings of the 119th Extraordinary Session of the Diet, Upper House,* October 17, 1990.

[28] "Referred to" denotes statements coded either pacifist, pragmatic multilateralist, or centrist that mention Japan's "peace constitution" and/or Japan's "pacifism", e.g., "Our peace-loving country" (*heiwa o kikuyu suru wagakuni*); "under our peace constitution" (*heiwa kenpou no rinen no moto de*); "our peace-constitution" (*wagakuni no kenpou no heiwagensoku*).

[29] This was referred to in some of the statements: e.g., Yutaka Takeyama, *Proceedings of the 156th Regular Session of the Diet, Upper House,* February 4, 2003.

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