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**Masuda Hajimu. "Fear of World War III: Social Politics of Japan's Rearmament and Peace Movements, 1950-3." *Journal of Contemporary History* 47:3 (2012): 551-571. DOI: 10.1177/0022009412441650. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022009412441650>**

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What are the sources of a country's foreign policy? Do they emerge from the international environment or from domestic concerns? Studies of diplomatic history and international relations have revolved around these central questions since the time of Leopold von Ranke. Ranke's famous 1833 essay, "The Great Powers," is generally credited for inspiring the idea of the "primacy of foreign policy" (*Primat der Aussenpolitik*). But it was his "A Dialogue on Politics," published three years later, that more fully outlined this view. "The position of a state in the world," Ranke contended, "depends on the degree of independence it has attained. It is obliged, therefore, to organize all its internal resources for the purpose of self-preservation. This is the supreme law of the state."<sup>1</sup> States, in short, are subject to the whims of the anarchic and at times chaotic international environment. They must organize internally to compete externally. Domestic interests are thus subservient to the needs of foreign policy. Later scholars contested this notion, however, viewing diplomatic history and foreign policy as offshoots of social history. This second school of thought, that of the "primacy of domestic politics" (*Primat der Innenpolitik*), contends that social constraints, internal tensions, and other domestic issues play the most important role in dictating a country's external policies.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leopold von Ranke, "A Dialogue on Politics," *The Theory and Practice of History* (Routledge, 2011), 65. See also Leopold von Ranke, "The Great Powers," *Ibid.*, 29-53.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Eckhart Kehr, *Economic Interest, Militarism, and Foreign Policy: Essays on German History*, trans. Grete Heinz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871-1918*, trans. Kim Traynor (Berg, 1985); and Arno J. Mayer, "The Domestic Causes of the First World War," in Leonard Krieger and Fritz Stern, eds., *The Responsibility of Power: Historical Essays in Honor of Hajo Holborn* (Doubleday, 1967), 286-293.

Masuda Hajimu's article, "Fear of World War III," joins a similar debate in Japan's Cold War diplomatic history. Masuda falls into the domestic politics school: he explores the impact that ordinary Japanese have had on foreign policy. He tackles with zeal what has become known as the Yoshida Doctrine, Japan's pacifist Cold War foreign policy strategy named after the 'Japanese Adenauer,' Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru. The Yoshida Doctrine is generally understood to be Japan's economics-first Cold War strategy, in which Japan rebuilt its economic power while remaining lightly armed and relying on the protective shield of U.S. military power. Masuda notes that existing scholarship on the doctrine tends to focus on high politics—in particular, the political relations between Yoshida and his counterparts in Washington. Although Masuda does not spell the debate out in this manner, some of the best English-language works focus on the primacy of foreign policy in the creation of this strategy.<sup>3</sup> Such works recognize that Yoshida never declared a 'Doctrine.' But they still argue that he forged a grand strategy that sidestepped the physical and psychological costs of rearmament, while allowing Japan to take economic advantage of the bipolar Cold War world.<sup>4</sup> Masuda, conversely, believes that historians and political scientists misunderstand the emergence of the Yoshida Doctrine. Far from a grand strategy, Japan's decision against overt rearmament was in fact the understandable result of domestic constraints.

Using newspapers, journals, films and other cultural productions, and contemporary government documents, Masuda reconstructs Japanese decisions on rearmament as the consequence of popular sentiment. Strikingly, Masuda begins by revealing the existence of widespread support for rearmament, especially in the wake of China's October 1950 entry into the Korean War. He confirms this popular mood through polls conducted by major daily newspapers (it was fascinating for me to learn that the more conservative *Yomiuri Shinbun* showed less support for rearmament than the more liberal *Asahi* and *Mainichi*). Masuda provides convincing evidence that ex-Prime Minister Ashida Hitoshi's well-known hardline views on rearmament in fact owed to his interpretation of the public mood. Even Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru privately noted his preference for a national military, though Masuda offers no definitive proof that this desire was shaped by public sentiment.

Given this widespread support, why did Japan not rearm immediately? Masuda argues that

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<sup>3</sup> Perhaps Kenneth B. Pyle has done the best work in English on the doctrine. See Kenneth B. Pyle, *The Japanese Question: Power and Purpose in a New Era* (AEI, 1996), and *Japan Rising: The Resurgence of Japanese Power and Purpose* (PublicAffairs, 2007), 241-277. Pyle played a role in the development of the "Yoshida Doctrine" idea, so it is rather curious that Masuda does not cite Pyle's important works. John W. Dower's biography of Yoshida also provides an excellent analysis of Yoshida's foreign policy. See Dower, *Empire and Aftermath: Yoshida Shigeru and the Japanese Experience, 1878-1954* (Harvard East Asian Monographs, 1988).

<sup>4</sup> Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels have called this grand strategy—practiced by subsequent Japanese governments—"mercantile realism," a foreign policy strategy organized around the goal of advancing Japan's techno-economic position. See Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels, "Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy," *International Security* 22:4 (Spring 1998), 171-203.

the most important factor militating against the creation of a national army was not the political calculation of leaders. Instead, it was the emergence of student and peace movements (and the attendant spate of anti-war cultural production) by early 1951. The Korean War—and the possibility of World War III—unleashed a flood of memories of life during World War II, which in turn fed into widespread grassroots activities against remilitarization.<sup>5</sup> Such grassroots activities, he hints, grew so strong that rearmament became the central issue in the national elections of 1952 and 1953. In this context, Masuda's most important contribution is the way in which he links popular movements to electoral outcomes. Owing to a hardening popular sentiment, anti-rearmament parties—Yoshida's Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party—made big gains, whereas Ashida's pro-rearmament *Kaishintō* fared poorly. Masuda thus argues that what has become known as the Yoshida Doctrine was in fact the result of two contradictory ideas: popular objections to overt rearmament, on the one hand, and doubts about progressive views of unarmed neutrality, on the other. These contradictory ideas, he argues, convinced Yoshida to bow to popular demands against a full rearmament, while keeping Japan lightly armed and offering bases to the United States. "Such an eclectic and half-finished conclusion," Masuda concludes, "which historians later called the 'Yoshida Doctrine,' was not really Yoshida's creation. It was a collaboration participated in by a large portion of the population" (571).

For an article about the Yoshida Doctrine, however, both Yoshida and the larger context of U.S.-Japan relations receive short shrift. Granted, this fits with Masuda's understanding of the primacy of domestic politics. But Yoshida is too slippery, too shrewd, and too calculating a figure to dismiss so readily. Masuda highlights the Yoshida administration's policy documents, which were meant to inform Washington that overt rearmament might unleash domestic unrest that could be mobilized by subversives. Though Masuda does not provide the specific dates, one presumes that the Yoshida administration prepared those documents for U.S. Special Emissary John Foster Dulles's late January 1951 trip to Japan, during which Dulles preached the necessity of Japanese rearmament. As is well known, Yoshida continually opposed Dulles's enjoiners. He utilized an array of arguments against rearmament—that it could wake Japan's sleeping militarists, impoverish his nation, provoke social unrest, and elicit antipathy among Japan's former wartime empire. Further, as Igarashi Takeshi has argued, Yoshida was not averse to using the specter of public unrest to support his own agenda. He even used backdoor channels to convince the Socialists to whip up anti-rearmament demonstrations and campaigns during Dulles's visit in 1951.<sup>6</sup>

Seen in this light, one wonders whether the policy documents Masuda cites should be

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<sup>5</sup> The author mentions that the years between 1950 and 1953 "marked the high point of popular student movements in Japan." Perhaps he means until 1969, when students barricaded around 141 university campuses and untold high schools?

<sup>6</sup> See Igarashi Takeshi, "Sengo Nihon 'gaikō taisei' no keisei, 2: tai Nichi kōwa no teiketsu to seitō seiji," *Kokka gakkai zasshi*, Vol. 97, No. 7-8 (1984), 486-87.

taken at face value. Granted, Yoshida and other conservatives remained concerned about domestic sentiment. But was Yoshida as constrained by the public mind as Masuda argues? I wonder. The documents the author cites, after all, could also be read as political propaganda—or negotiating tactics—to take advantage of the emerging Cold War order. If Yoshida was concerned about economic recovery above all else, then playing into U.S. fears of communism makes sense. It is easier, after all, to refuse the wishes of an occupying power if one hints at the specter of social unrest. Such a political stratagem would have ensured that Japan could rest comfortably under the warm and toasty U.S. security blanket and focus on economic recovery, while shelving the costly issue of full-scale rearmament. Moreover, if Yoshida worried about explosive public sentiment, why would he have used backdoor channels to stir up anti-rearmament demonstrations? Masuda's article needed to demonstrate that Yoshida became increasingly concerned with the size, scope, and vigor of the anti-rearmament demonstrations that he willingly utilized. The failure to do so—and the failure to pay broader attention to U.S.-Japan relations—undermines its persuasive power.

Masuda's article nonetheless makes an important contribution in showing stronger domestic constraints on Japanese leaders than has previously been acknowledged. I largely agree with him that Yoshida, Ashida, and others kept their fingers on the public pulse. But he has not overturned the existing understanding of the Yoshida Doctrine. Perhaps what made the doctrine so successful and long-lived was the fact that it linked foreign policy goals with domestic constraints. If anything, this article provides a powerful testament that in Japan, like in other nations, the Rankean notion of the primacy of *Aussenpolitik* has never implied that leaders can avoid or ignore *Innenpolitik*.

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