

Politics, Governance, and the Law

Japan as a Pivot for Turkey? The Japanese Perspective on the Making of a New World Order, Transcontinental Maritime Alliances, the Ukraine Crisis, and the End of Multipolarity

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Keywords: Free and Open Indo-Pacific, Japanese Foreign Policy, Japanese-Turkish Relations, Proactive Japan, Democracy, Rule of Law, Liberal Economy, Article 9, Japanese Constitution, Self-Defense Forces, U.S.-Japan Relations, Globalization, Abe Shinzo, Aso Taro, Ukraine Crisis, Putin, Authoritarianism, Multi-Polarity, Japan-U.S. Alliance, Bi-Polar World Order, Erdogan, NATO

<https://doi.org/10.1525/gp.2023.75309>

Global Perspectives

Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2023

The paper discusses the recent rise of the Japanese “free and open Indo-Pacific” strategy of alliances and partnerships between Asia and the West in the context of Turkey’s current debate over its membership in the Western alliance of NATO versus the new Eurasianist turn toward Russia and China. The particular geographic focus of the paper is from Istanbul “between Europe and Asia,” looking at Japan’s “free and open Indo-Pacific” strategy from a historian’s perspective by making an analogy with Japan’s prewar foreign policy and global strategy with Britain. The paper argues that the Russian aggression that erupted with the Ukrainian crisis has been quickening the visibility of this emerging grand strategy of Japan, which has been in the making for some time. But the future of the global order is still unclear in view of the ongoing war in Ukraine and Russian and Chinese challenges to the international system. The situation also negatively impacts the global relations of the United States with regional powers, relations that were formed during the Cold War. Japan has more than a century of friendly relations with Turkey, a relationship that is still carried out in an Asianist discourse of shared cultural values, mutual help in times of dire crisis, and Turkish admiration for Japan’s modernity that has retained tradition. The question is whether, in this fluid global situation, this historically friendly context can help Japan be a “pivot” for Turkey in taking steps toward a proactive free and open Indo-Pacific partnership. The prospect might have political implications for Turkey’s future in the making of a new global order by offering an incentive for staying on the Western front.

Japan’s keen interest in forming a maritime partnership across the Indian and Pacific Oceans gained momentum with the late prime minister Abe Shinzō, who was proactively working toward ending Japan’s traditional Cold War pacifist foreign policy, rebranded as “proactive pacifism.” The two oceans cover a vast geography that links Asia with Africa, encompassing South Korea, the ASEAN countries, India, Australia, and New Zealand as well as countries in East Africa. The Japanese vision extends the idea of the Indo-Pacific as a space of rule of law, as well as free trade in cooperation with the United States and recently the United Kingdom. In this context, the Japanese vision of a “free and open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) policy stands out as an objective to realize transcontinental cooperation globally between the West and countries in Asia, implicitly against the authoritarian powers of Russia and China.

However, the bipolar divide between Russia plus China representing a destabilizing authoritarian challenge to the global order versus those countries in the opposite camp is not that clear-cut an indicator of fluidity in the global environment. So far, it looks as if every country has its own desire for FOIP, ranging from ASEAN countries who do not necessarily discursively plunge into a maritime alliance idea directly contesting China to Washington’s explicit challenge for containing China’s expansionism in the Indo-Pacific Oceans. Furthermore, the United Kingdom and France are also taking steps into a free and open Indo-Pacific region from their perspectives. The situation is even more unclear when it comes to opposing Russian aggression in Ukraine. Despite recent close relations between Turkey and Russia and China that have drawn global concern, Turkey is a NATO member and has condemned Russian aggression. On the other hand, though critical of the

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Ukraine crisis, India—which is a Commonwealth member and participates in FOIP exercises with Japan and the United States—preferred not to condemn Russian aggression. Furthermore, despite their strong ties to the West and the existence of democratic institutions historically, for decades both Turkey and India have also been undergoing a strong wave toward an authoritarian ideological turn with religiously defined nationalism while keeping their parliamentary systems and undergoing significant economic transformation because of globalization.

On April 8, 2022, Japanese ambassador to Turkey Suzuki Kazuhiro gave a talk titled “Japan in Indo-Pacific and Turkey’s Role to Play” at Bogazici University in Istanbul that outlined the evolving geopolitical vision of Japan on the free and open Indo-Pacific as the future of the twenty-first century. FOIP looks like a joint formulation of Japan and the United States as a geopolitical strategy that emerged partly in the late 1990s as a hopeful vision. But recently, Japanese activism has markedly accelerated in forming this multifaceted alliance between Asia and Africa as it is being carefully formulated to compete with China’s OBOR and Silk Road internationalism by offering a competing global politico-economic vision that accompanies fiscal investments as well (Suzuki 2022). Ambassador Suzuki’s discussion of FOIP also added interest for the audience as he suggested that perhaps Turkey might also venture to join the prospective multiregional cooperation in the future. Recent trends in Turkish foreign policy until the Ukrainian crisis have been troubling within the Western alliance, given Ankara’s “Eurasian” orientation despite half a century of NATO membership since 1952. Recent years have been marked by the surprising rapprochement between the ruling AKP (Justice and Development Party) government and Putin’s Russia (a surprising turn of events given the long conflictual history of Russian-Turkish relations). That the Japanese ambassador would propose FOIP as a potential international multilateral community of democracies and the rule of international law strongly connected to the West sounded interesting to us in the audience at this global moment.

Though too early to tell, the recent Japanese strengthening of its FOIP policy given the Ukrainian crisis and the recent contested relations with China deserves attention indicative of Japan’s future role in world-making. The Russian invasion that began on February 24, 2022, causing the current Ukrainian crisis, has been quickening the process of FOIP that is linked with Japan’s potential emergence as a conventional power with military capacity that will be globally active in geopolitics, moving away from the reluctant posture of the Cold War era shaped by the singular primacy of the US security treaty.¹ The following paper will discuss the significance of FOIP as the end to Japan’s pacifist foreign policy and the role that the Ukrainian crisis is play-

ing in forging the emerging grand strategy of Japan and its potential impact in Turkey. Looking at the current debate on Japan’s concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific and the Ukrainian crisis next door as a historian, the geographic focus of the paper will be, thus, from Istanbul. The underlying question is whether Japan can be a pivot for Turkey’s involvement in FOIP strategies, implying that the Japanese initiative will aid Turkey’s recent Asianist orientation to be assuredly in line with its post-World War II Western orientation (Esenbel and Atlı 2013). Frankly, can Japan help Turkey, which has been moving close to the Asian world in the last number of decades, avoid the recent dangerous waters of Eurasianism toward alternative global orders with Russia and China that will have negative consequences for the political vision of Western-style democracy and freedoms?

Ambassador Suzuki’s suggestion that Turkey will be welcome to join the FOIP community is at the moment only an idea, but it is significant because it is part of a fluid environment where, in recent years, rival arguments in Turkish public discourse against the Euro-American West have become significantly visible in local media and public debate. The anti-Western mood—ranging from the widespread criticism of American imperialism, especially over the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan as well as intervention in Syria, to the Islamist criticism of Euro-centric Islamophobia in the West—provides a fertile environment for a small but influential group of media and political networks that are seeking alternative global orders through Russian Eurasianism and the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. The pro-Russian networks vocalize arguments in favor of abandoning NATO membership even though Turkey has been a member of the Western alliance since 1952. Pro-Chinese networks have accused the local Western-trained China specialists as “agents of American imperialism.” The anti-American and anti-NATO rhetoric that used to be dominant among leftist circles back in the Cold War era is particularly voiced in the activities of a former Maoist radical movement currently refashioned as the Eurasianist Homeland Party (Vatan Partisi). Despite an electoral performance consistently less than 1 percent of the cast votes in every election, the Homeland Party members have gained visibility in current Turkish international relations by acting as a primary mediator in “informal” connections with Russia and the PRC, sometimes clashing with the official Turkish diplomatic missions in those countries. Even though the Turkish government’s official bodies, such as the presidency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, still appear to be in charge of foreign policy, the Homeland spokesmen for Eurasianism make their views quite public and are quite influential as a network in relations with Russia and China (Kınıklıoğlu 2022).² They are advocating moving toward the Shanghai Cooperation Organization under Russian and Chinese lead-

¹ It implies the necessity of revising the pacifist 1947 Constitution, but the public persistently shows skeptical reluctance despite the intent of the Japanese mainstream right-wing conservative political leadership that has ruled the country for more than half a century. [Japanese Public Attitudes on Constitutional Revision | Council on Foreign Relations \(cfr.org\)](https://www.cfr.org/japan/japanese-public-attitudes-on-constitutional-revision/p31277).

ership for the “independence” of Turkey from American hegemony. Even though the Eurasianist anti-NATO rhetoric of the Homeland circle is still at the level of “informal but vocal” influence, it shows that the situation in Turkey is in flux and in step with global uncertainty about the future (Kınıklıoğlu 2022).

Recently the Eurasianist group worked hard in holding two conferences in Turkey at Bogazici University, known for its liberal education and close links to the American and European academy, to make their agenda known: the first one was in 2019 (Demirci and Kazmina 2021);³ the second one was held recently on December 30, 2022. The recent conference, entitled *International Eurasian Studies* (Aydınlık 2023), was initially a gathering of academic scholars that was suddenly interrupted by the lengthy political speech of the vice president of the Eurasianist Homeland Party, who criticized the current Asia-Pacific strategy of the United States in strong terms and said, “Our country will only have the opportunity to get rid of the Atlantic shackles that pose a threat to its existence in the Eurasian climate and to benefit from international cooperation to increase its strength in line with the development strategy determined by itself.”⁴ That the anti-American announcement came from the halls of Bogazici University, which had been founded by American missionaries in 1863 and turned into a Turkish state institution in 1971, was ever more a “successful” public relations event for outside observers.

This paper can only speculate whether Japan’s new steps into a proactive FOIP global role might have implications for Turkey in the future to help “ensure” that Turkey remains in its historic Western orientation. But the Eurasianist challenge in Ankara is real. Hence, the recent Japanese emphasis on FOIP currently invites serious attention because of its potentially effective role in the future. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara is already taking a step toward FOIP that diametrically challenges the so-called Eurasianist agenda. In contrast to the Homeland Party perspective in 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs surprised the annual ambassadors meeting in Ankara when Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavuşoğlu suddenly launched the Asia Anew Initiative in his brief address. Commentators immediately noted that the Asia Anew Initiative was still an initiative rather than a major official policy but that it was in

step with the shift in global economic and possibly political dynamics shifting to Asia and the Asia Pacific.

The Cold War had restricted Turkish access to countries such as Russia and China, which were considered communist states. Local Turkish academic exposure to South Korea, Japan, or India was almost nil due to the lack of resources and academic programs. The end of the Cold War has been an advantage for mid-ranking countries like Turkey, which has been able to expand connections in Asia for business as well as cultural and academic interests. There is a noticeable new burgeoning of interest among the public for Asian culture, films, television drama, and traditional arts. The private sector’s keen financial and commercial interest in Asia has shown an exponential rise. Commentators have noticed the visible emergence of a new generation of Asia scholars in Turkey and the expansion of educational and academic programs in Japanese, Chinese, and Korean languages and Asian studies (Esenbel and Togan 2022, 3–10).

But observers who have acknowledged the economic and technological, possibly even military, advantages of a potential Asia orientation still express concern that the Asia Anew Initiative might generate an undesirable axis shift from the West. At the 2019 meeting, the foreign minister also took pains to assure the audience that the new Asia shift *did not mean an axis shift from the Western* orientation of Turkey. The Ankara Asia Anew Initiative, therefore, indicates that the Japanese ambassador’s comment in April 2022 was not simply a personal wish but was part of an ongoing debate in official and unofficial circles about Turkey’s international posture with the West (Alperen and Ersoy 2019).

Official sources in the ministry furthermore state that the Asia Anew Initiative is the platform where Turkey cooperates with Japan’s FOIP policy on its own terms. Avoiding accusations of an axis shift, the ministry’s official circles carefully state that Turkey’s new turn toward Asia is simply more systematic attention paid to already existing ties with Asian societies through historical and cultural links to be in step with global currents. The diplomat-analysts of a recent academic publication who have analyzed the ministry’s new initiative have paid special attention to the view that this should not be interpreted as a shift away from or challenging Turkey’s strong links with the West. They ar-

2 Kınıklıoğlu, Suat. 2022. “Eurasianism in Turkey.” *SWP Research Paper*, no. 7 (March): 1-32. There are other groups of Eurasianists as well, including the Islamists critical of Westernization and nationalist “Kemalists” staunchly against religious politics, but lately the pro-Russia and pro-China network has become more prominent.

3 Sevtap Demirci and Olga Yevgenievna Kazmina, ed. 2021. *Russian Studies/Rusya Araştırmaları Proceedings of the Bogazici University-Lomonosov Moscow State University Workshop*. October 10-12, 2019. The conference was held in cooperation with the Turkish Historical Society. The organizers were not able to convince any academic department to host this workshop. It was hosted by the student club of Atatürk Thought, which is known for its Eurasianist views from a Turkish nationalist perspective. The first conference did not exhibit an overtly Eurasianist view targeting the United States or NATO and remained within the frame of forming a joint academic event between Russian and Turkish scholars.

4 Aydınlık. 2023. “Boğaziçi Üniversitesinde Avrasya Sempozyumu: Sıcak denizlerde ittifak zamanı [Bogazici University Eurasianism Symposium: The time for alliance in warm seas].” Published January 2, 2023. <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/haber/bogazici-universitesinde-avrasya-sempozyumu-sicak-denizlerde-ittifak-zamani> (Eurasian Symposium at Bogazici University: The time for and alliance in warm seas).

gue that Turkey's historic relations with the West will be an asset in its new gaze toward Asia (Yıldırımgeç 2022, 299–306).⁵ The official circles thus state that the ministry agrees with the main principles of FOIP on democracy, rule of law, and free market environment and desires to cooperate with Japan accordingly. Although Ankara's Asia Anew Initiative is also inclusive of strengthening relations with China, India, Southeast Asia, and South Korea, it does serve as the platform for cooperating with Japan's FOIP policy. The statements of the diplomats reflect the pragmatic perspective that characterizes the ministry's foreign policy approach in general. Typically, the Ankara ministry circles prefer to express the view that the China-led Belt and Road Initiative overland in Eurasia and Japan's initiative in FOIP are potentially complementary to the developmental transformation of Asia if these strategies do not descend into competing rivalry. Japanese prime ministers have also avoided aggressive language about contesting China or Russia in the FOIP vision, though a competitive "world-making" is surely emerging in their mind. The response of Ambassador Suzuki to a question to that effect was that China is welcome as long as it adheres to the FOIP principles of international rules and promotes freedom and open market principles (Suzuki 2022). The taciturnity of Japan over China might be an advantage in dialogue with Turkish counterparts who have close economic relations with China.

But today the Turkish Eurasianist advocacy for an alternative road for Turkey *if freed from the chains of the West* has gained ground despite the postwar domination of American and European "soft power" in popular culture, academic, and intellectual connections in Turkish civil society. Right after Ambassador Suzuki's talk at Bogazici University, the May 25, 2022, article of the Homeland Party official paper *Aydınlik* (Enlightenment) declared that the "US Indo-Pacific Strategy has no chance of success" (Aydınlik 2022). The competitive environment makes the Japanese ambassador's outreach to Turkey all the more significant and timely. Given Japan and Turkey's strong discourse of friendship going back to the late Ottoman period, one can speculate whether the Japanese advocacy of FOIP would make the strategy more "palatable" in Turkish circles in contrast to the American version that is contested by the Eurasianists in such strong terms. Hypothetically, one can argue that it would be risky for the local Eurasianists to directly attack Japan as it would risk a strong negative reaction from the general public and media, which tends to be pro-Japanese.

The current Japanese vision does not simply look like the continuation of a bilateral partnership with the leading power of the West, like Japan's prewar reliance on Britain or Cold War reliance on the United States, which might be an advantage for Japan in discussions with third parties who would prefer joining a multilateral community. Unlike

the Cold War system, Japanese FOIP policy posits Japan as part of a multilateral cooperation—possibly an alliance in the future—of regional interests in Asia, Europe, and East Africa and Japan's special relations with the United States that would encourage a globally prosperous economic hemisphere and bolster democratic regimes against authoritarian challenges from China and Russia. Recently Sheila A. Smith has provided a comprehensive assessment of Japan's new security strategy, increased military capability, and the changing geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific where the United States' and Japan's security interests are intertwined; she describes the fluid situation for the future, also noting: "Japan's leaders remain cautious about using their military as a tool of foreign policy but they have accepted that the SDF can make a contribution to global security" (Smith 2019).

Recent works have extensively analyzed the significant change in postwar Japan's security vision, moving away from the Cold War Yoshida Shigeru doctrine of pacifism and heavy reliance on the US Security Treaty to a "normalized" Japan with a significant defense capacity and evolving the US-Japan Security Treaty into a multiregional global format of alliances and partnerships. Andrew L. Oros attributed Japan's security "renaissance" to the recent emergence of Japan's significant military capacity and industrial production. Oros sees these developments as marking the end of Cold War policies of pacifism and total reliance on the defense treaty with the United States. The new security orientation in Japan is marked globally by the rise of China, the relative decline of Japan from its leading role during the Cold War as an Asian success story, and threats such as North Korea. According to Oros, these international developments during the "globalization" years after the end of the Cold War have been coupled with shifts in the domestic political scene leading the ruling Liberal Democratic Party toward "normalizing" Japan by coming to terms with wartime memory and finding ways of enhancing defense capability through circumventing Article 9 of the 1947 Constitution that prohibits Japan from possessing or using military force for international conflict. The "renaissance," though, is markedly faced with strong domestic public opinion against the revision of the legacy of the postwar pacifist Constitution (Oros 2017, 1–34).⁶

Richard J. Samuels has presented an extensive historical overview of Japan's grand strategy and predicts the emergence of a revised Yoshida Doctrine as a fully institutionalized East Asian Community sharing in Japan-induced prosperity that will "tame" China's ambitions checked by a globalized US-Japan alliance. A new Japanese grand strategy will enable Japan to play a selective pivotal role. Samuels's prediction of a "muscular and autonomous" Japan is positive:

Japan may never again be as central to world affairs as it was in the 1930s nor as marginal to world affairs as

⁵ Ambassador Kezban Nilvana Darama Yıldırımgeç is the diplomat in charge of the Asia Anew Initiative policy.

⁶ For an overview of Oros's thesis and book, see Oros 2017, 1–34.

it was during the cold war. Once revisionism has run its course, however, and once accommodations are made in its economic diplomacy, Japan will have cleared for itself a policy space in which it can be selectively pivotal in world affairs. (Samuels 2007, 208)

Ambassador Suzuki's invitational comment on FOIP might be the beginning of such a "selectively pivotal" role for Japan for keeping Turkey within the frame of the Western alliance. Termed the "fault lines in a troubled alliance," recent Turkish American relations have been in trouble over the purchase of Russian S-400 missiles despite NATO and US security concerns in 2017, the divergent security interests of Turkey and the United States in Syria, or the deterioration of relations with the European community over human rights issues. (Kirisci 2017). The Japanese Diplomatic Bluebook 2022 notes the multifaceted diplomacy of Turkey's presidential leadership since 2018:

Turkey is a geopolitically important regional power. As a member country of NATO, Turkey plays a significant role in regional security while proactively pursuing multifaceted diplomacy with Europe and the U.S., Russia, and countries in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Turkey has traditionally been one of the friendliest countries with Japan, as typified by episodes such as the *Ertugrul* Frigate incident in 1890. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan 2022, 157)⁷

Japan and Turkey also act together against Russia. On March 19, 2022, Kyodo news reported that during their meeting in Antalya Forum, Japanese foreign minister Yoshimasa and his Turkish counterpart jointly condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a breach of international law that violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.⁸ Throughout Ambassador Suzuki's talk, the emphasis was on the birth of a new world order in place of the multipolarity that had emerged between the United States, Russia, China, Japan, the European Union, India, and emerging regional powers such as Turkey and Brazil after the end of the Cold War bipolar power competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. His argument was that post-Cold War multipolarity was waning toward the building of two competing major camps/states from Europe, Asia, and Africa with the United States that were creating multilateral cooperation of free market economy and trade, as well as shared values—democracy and human rights along the maritime regions of the Asia Pacific—versus the autocratic hinterland states of Eurasia (namely, Russia and China). He invited Turkey from the Mediterranean and the Black Sea to join the maritime free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Like present-day Japanese foreign policy papers, Ambassador Suzuki's argument was based on the projection that the current situation represents the maturation of multidimensional diplomacy for the future that will turn the Indo-Pacific region into a center of global trends, as the core maritime regions that will challenge the hinterland powers. The 2021 Bluebook of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides a detailed argument for FOIP with the ASEAN countries of Southeast Asia, which has continued to be the backbone of Japan's Asian foreign policy. It even has a detailed map that shows the coastline of Africa added to the vast stretches of the coastal and island states along the Indian and Pacific Oceans (Bluebook, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan 2021). The 2022 Bluebook puts primary emphasis on Japan's promotion of a free and open Indo-Pacific policy as essential because of a "variety of threats" to establish rule of law for peace and prosperity, continuing the holistic vision of the late prime minister Abe Shinzō. Today, we understand that Japan's FOIP view is shared by the United States, Australia, India, the ASEAN nations, and the European Union. Japan has also strengthened overall relations with friendly states with the January 2021 Japan-UK Comprehensive and Economic Partnership Agreement, the TPP11 Agreement, the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement, and the Japan-US Trade Agreement, which cover the geography of interest to Japan's global strategy. Japan has also built projects that strengthen connectivity in the Southern Economic Corridor, including Ho Chi Minh City, Phnom Penh, and Bangkok to the Indian Ocean, and the East-West Economic Corridor, connected to Da Nang, Vietnam to Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar, again to the Indian Ocean. The FOIP vision now includes assistance to countries in Asia and Africa, and capacity-building assistance on maritime law enforcement to the Philippines, Vietnam, and others (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan 2021, 2022).

FOIP looks like the same maritime geographic space of the historic, prewar Asia-centered vision of the Japanese Empire's international relations over the geography of the China Sea and the Indo-Pacific Oceans that included China, Korea, the European colonial territories of India, and Southeast Asia. Though officially discarded with the defeat of Japanese imperialism and the American occupation that forged the structure of the new Japan, Japan's Pan-Asianist face has survived in the postwar period in a modified form. Postwar Japan prioritizes close relations with the ASEAN countries of Southeast Asia as central to its Asia-oriented foreign relations and economic relations in addition to the special position of China and Korea for Japan. While Pan-Asianism reminiscent of the prewar imperialist engage-

⁷ The frigate *Ertugrul* sank in Japan on September 16, 1890, during its return voyage from a goodwill mission to the Meiji emperor. The Japanese public and government aided the rescue of the 69 survivors out of a total of 650 crew and returned them to Istanbul with the two Japanese frigates *Kongo* and *Hiei* in January 1891. The event has been symbolically central to the warm friendship discourse that dominates Japanese-Turkish relations to this day.

⁸ Ukrainian foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba has met with Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov in Antalya before, through the intermediation of Cavusoglu, but there was no agreement.

ment no longer exists, the Asia primacy of Japanese diplomacy and business has continued to this day despite the coeval continuation of the negative colonial memories of Asian peoples.

A benign version of Pan-Asianist rhetoric, for example, still survives in the discourse between Japan and Turkey, which have never engaged in any conflict during 150 years of contact, plus the memory of camaraderie over the Ottoman frigate *Ertuğrul*'s 1890 shipwreck saga during its return voyage from Japan that is noted in the 2022 Bluebook. Regardless of their party affiliation, the politicians and statesmen of Turkey habitually express a shared discourse of admiration for Japan and the special friendship between the two countries in every official meeting. Historically, the Turks shared in the global admiration of Japan's "miraculous" rise during the Meiji period and celebrated Japan's victory over Russia in 1905, which generated Turkish imagination of a postwar Japan *rising like a phoenix from the ashes of world war destruction* oblivious to traumatic war memories.⁹ Leftists and right-wing circles have considered modern Japan as a successful modernizer. For the Islamist imagination, *a Japan that has kept its tradition* has particularly served to legitimize a romanticized, non-Western, religio-traditional model of modernity as an alternative to Westernization (Esenbel 2018, 30–36).

In terms that would be unthinkable in Japanese-American diplomatic encounters, Japanese spokesmen and their Turkish counterparts freely make use of Asianist themes of special brotherhood stemming from origins in Central Asia—a survival of the prewar Pan-Asianist rhetoric about bonds with Central Asian Turkic Muslims (Levent 2015). The former Japanese ambassador Akio Miyajima to Ankara was particularly proactive and stood out as a member of the international diplomatic corps in generating a wide circle of friendly relations with Turks of all circles of life through his constant visits to practically all of the provinces of the country with the slogan "One Heart Two Nations" (Demirtaş 2020). In recent years, the Russian observations of Japanese-Turkish cooperation in Central Asia may have exaggerated the Pan-Turkist and Pan-Asianist perspective of this partnership, but there are some elements of truth in the matter as these terms are used to frame the economic cooperation (Danilov 2021). One must remember that prewar Japanese Pan-Asianists like Ōkawa Shūmei admired the Kemalist Revolution for the "construction of Asia," though he criticized it for "too much Europeanization" (Aydin 2007, 151; Esenbel 2011, 98–99). The gesture of special friendship from Sultan Abdülhamid II (reign 1876–1909), whose goodwill mission to Emperor Meiji of the frigate *Ertuğrul* ended with a tragic shipwreck during its return voyage on September 16, 1890, accelerated close relations between

Japan and Turkey. The tragic episode still serves as the opening address to Japanese-Turkish relations. In recent years, the shipwreck was even commemorated with a popular commercial film in a joint Japanese-Turkish production, *Kainan* (海難) 1890 (Shipwreck 1890). Islamist circles in Turkey have romantically appropriated the Japanese Pan-Asianist history of prewar Japan's "Islam Policy" for forming close relations with Muslims in Eurasia as imperialist strategy against the Western empires, and turned the narrative to represent a special emotive connection via Islam for forging Japanese-Turkish relations (Esenbel 2004, 1140–70).

Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs also puts great importance on the rise of Asia and the realignment of the major developed economies of the world in a global order, which, they argue with confidence, is going to be centered in Asia. Asia's economic rise will link the Asia Pacific and Africa as well as parts of Europe in a global economy. According to Ambassador Suzuki, who based his talk on Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimates that were in line with World Bank data, though with some eye-catching differences, the forecast of the top ten economies of the world in 2050 will show a radical shift from the major economies that have continued for more than half a century since the 1960s. By 2050 he estimated that Asia will manufacture 50 percent of the global economy. He acknowledged that the rising power of China will be in step with the ascendancy of Asia's century. Accordingly, he estimated that many countries will drop from the top ten, with Italy, Spain, Canada, and Russia descending to a lower scale. Among others, Turkey will reach the top ten, along with Indonesia.¹⁰ Significantly, neither former ambassador Miyajima nor current ambassador Suzuki presented their assessment of China's rise as a negative factor, for it was part of the larger picture of "the rise of Asia" that is in line with the general theme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bluebooks, even though they did note the activities of Beijing that were harmful to a stable and peaceful global order.

The 2022 Bluebook notes that "the international community is currently undergoing an era-defining change" of competition between the United States and China, as well as competition among other developing countries that have benefited from globalization that is shifting from the era of leadership by the United States and other advanced democratic countries toward the current fluid situation (Bluebook, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan 2022, 14). While the 2022 Bluebook notes China's increase of its defense budget and explains that unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force at sea, as in the case of the Senkaku Islands, as unacceptable, the tone prefers a persistent but calm attitude (Bluebook, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan 2022, 19). The

⁹ Turkey was neutral during the Second World War. Thus the Turkish general public has no deep knowledge or memory of the global destruction. Most will not incorporate the impact of the war in their historical memory of Europe or Japan unless they are from émigré families.

¹⁰ World Bank 2021 data kept Russia as a top ten economy; Suzuki's talk removed Russia but incorporated Turkey and Indonesia.

map of FOIP that outlines the regions in Africa and Asia that are conceived as part of the multilateral cooperation shows that Japan's military and economic investment has increased in the last decade in East Africa's coast, extending to the Horn of Africa. The FOIP vision stands out in its emphasis on the future growth and investment potential of the African continent—obviously aiming to compete with the present leading level of Chinese investment in Africa. The map incorporates the Japan Self-Defense Force Base in Djibouti, which is part of the international antipiracy defense forces consisting of Camp Lemonnier of the United States (formerly of France), the French Military Base, and the Chinese PLA Support Base. Other sites included in the FOIP regional orbits are Mombasa port of Kenya on the Indian Ocean, Nacala port of Mozambique, and Toamasina of the island of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean.

While Japan's assistance and investment in Africa are behind that of China, recent years have witnessed a new surge of Japanese commitment to African development and a new emphasis on the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) meetings with major African countries. In 2019 Prime Minister Abe Shinzō promised \$20 billion in investment in Africa that intends to begin competition with \$46 billion worth of Chinese projects in Africa (20 percent in loans).¹¹ Ambassador Suzuki's previous posts also reflect this strong African emphasis in Japan's foreign policy in recent years. Before Ankara, Suzuki was assistant minister-director general of the North American Affairs Bureau; both are top positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His post as ambassador was to Ethiopia as permanent representative of Japan to the African Union between 2013 and 2016, and he was co-chairman of the African Union Partners Group in the diplomatic corps in Addis Ababa.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan's Official Text 2022 defining FOIP as a global strategy also looks more pragmatic and realistic in terms of FDI projects in comparison to previous announcements, but there is a studied emphasis on universal values, rule of law, "quality infrastructure," and "connectivity" between Asia and Africa that reflects a united global vision with the democratic countries of Asia and Euro-America that implicitly challenges the Russia-China authoritarian regimes.¹² The recent Ministry of Foreign Affairs document and the FOIP map also reveal a sprinkling of recent Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) projects in East Africa and Southeast Asia that represent the material frame for the vision intending to compete with the well-known Silk Road / One Belt One Road projects and the strong financial presence of China in recent years in Asia and Africa (*Global Perspectives on Japan* special issue 5).

Though the US Treaty is still cited as the cornerstone of Japan's international relations and security strategy, the post-Cold War era has brought about a markedly different

vision, taking a new step toward turning the bilateral treaty, which has been primarily concerned with Japan's security, into a Japan-US alliance for regional security to ensure a stable global order. The political vision of transforming the US-Japan Security Treaty into an alliance is clearly stated in the 1996 text of the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security Alliance for the 21st Century that was signed by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto: "The two leaders agreed that the future security and prosperity of both Japan and the United States are tied inextricably to the future of the Asia-Pacific region" (Hook et al. 2012, 566–69). The text explains the necessity for the Japan-US alliance in terms of universal values for the maintenance of freedom, the pursuit of democracy, and human rights that expand the alliance beyond a bilateral treaty for the defense of Japan to the larger regional scale of the Asia Pacific as a vital partnership in the twenty-first century.

The FOIP oceanic space points to the importance of naval power and control of the seas, reminding us of the well-known American strategist Alfred T. Mahan's (1840–1914) argument in favor of becoming a maritime power, a view that has continued to be important for Japanese policymakers. Hence, the Indian and Pacific Ocean orbits resemble the revival of the maritime geopolitical strategy of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 in a new form, with the United States and Japan playing leading roles in bringing together all the other countries in these orbits. The signature of the 1996 US-Japan alliance also is in line with the Japanese conservative-centrist right wing's decades-long objective of pursuing Japan's road map of becoming a "normal country," a "sovereign" power with military capability.

FOIP's vision also diverges from that of the Cold War era, for it combines economics and politics in one policy, whereas, during the Cold War era, Japanese government leaders and politicians spoke of separating politics from economics or the principle of *seikei bunri* 政経分離 (separation of politics and economics) in favor of the latter. Ever since Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, in setting up the "Yoshida system" of the 1950s (prime minister 1946–47, 1948–54), similar to the role of Konrad Adenauer in Germany, mediated the American-induced radical reforms, generations of Japanese political leadership of the Liberal Democrat Party chiseled national interest into their psyche as becoming a global "economic power," given prewar militarism's destruction and postwar Japan's constitutional restriction that ruled out forever the potential of becoming a conventional great power again (Hoshino and Satoh 2012, 181–298).¹³ The American reforms radically changed the state and society. Comprehensive reforms in education—deleting nationalist, militarist/Shinto religious elements from secondary education—and strictly secular con-

11 Salaudeen 2019.

12 See [figure 1](#), Ministry of Foreign Affairs map of FOIP, in this article.

13 For *seikei bunri*, see Hoshino and Satoh 2012, 193.

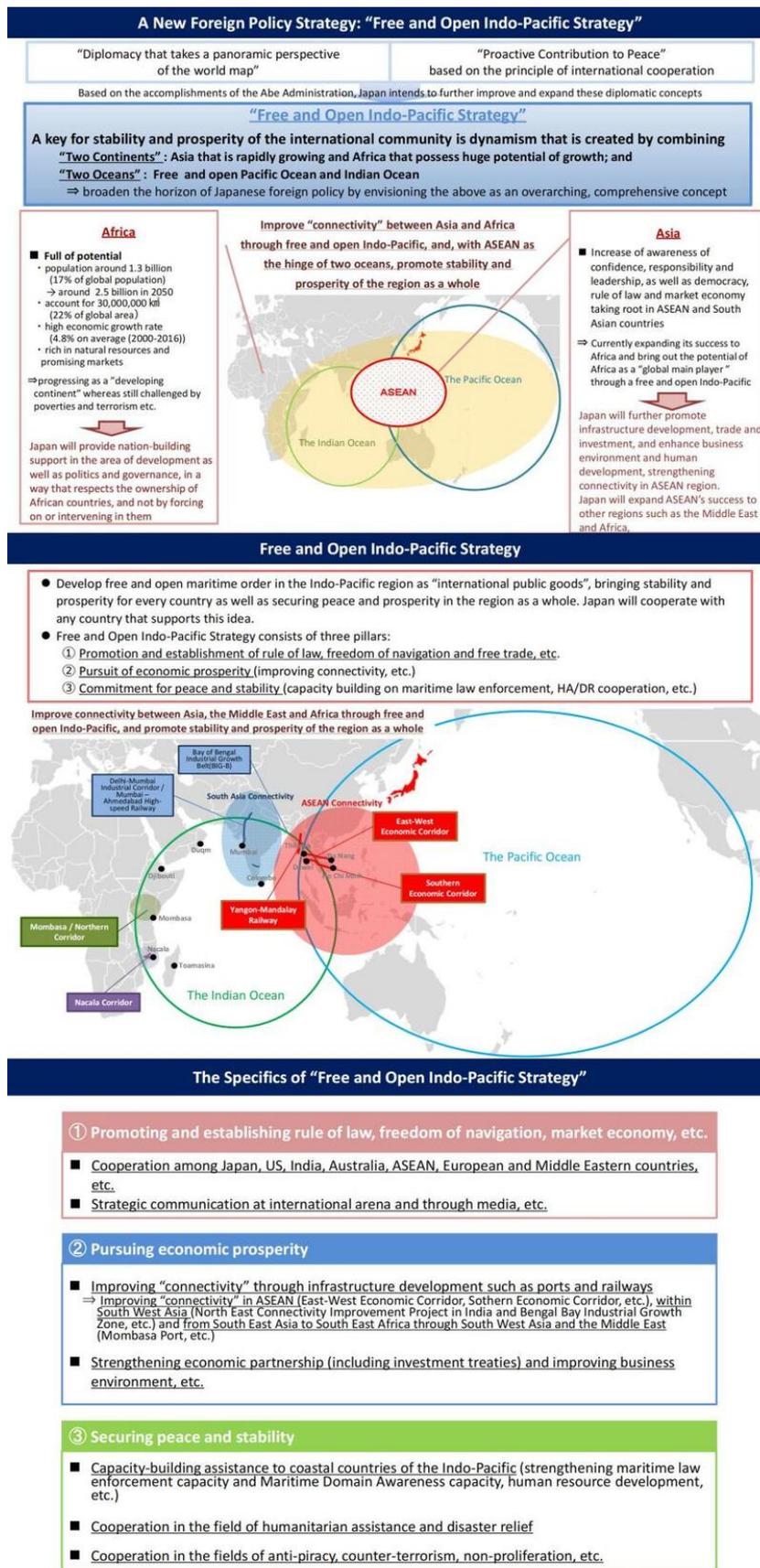


Figure 1. Mission of Japan to ASEAN n.d. “インド太平洋戦略” Free and open Indo-Pacific strategy, with ASEAN in the center. (mofa.go.jp)

stitutional principles that prohibited state funding of Shinto and the like purged prewar militarism and ultranationalism from the public sphere. The Japanese political elites' cooperation with the Occupation reforms helped turn Japan into a parliamentary democracy *in step with the West*. This was the core of Japan's famous pragmatism, which was the standard Cold War approach of the mainstream right-wing conservative politicians and the business community. The 1947 Constitution also gave birth to the long-lasting strong pacifism of the Japanese public, even if the majority has continued to vote centrist right-wing conservatives into power for close to a century. The Japanese conservative leadership rationalized military dependency on the United States, which politically compromised Japan's sovereignty, for the sake of becoming a global economic power. Still, despite political differences and unresolved historical war memories, during the 1970s *seikei bunri* referred to forming normalized relations with the PRC for the sake of fruitful economic cooperation.

The Japanese debate about needing a new geopolitical strategy after the end of the Cold War had actually emerged first in the abstract vision of Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Asō Tarō's Arc of Freedom and Prosperity, in 2006, that was discontinued after his resignation in 2007; his vision was generally considered to be rather flighty, with no substance (Hosoya 2011, 13–24). But the Arc is credited for having given birth to discussions on post-Cold War Japan's strategy and foreign policy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs despite Asō Tarō's rather eccentric persona. An avid fan of manga and anime, he is a charismatic hero in the downtown pop culture scene in Tokyo. Asō's book, published by a manga publisher, maps a multiregional and multicontinental Arc alliance with a global vision that takes the oceans and countries from Japan in the Pacific to the Mediterranean as a free trade zone with politically shared universal values of democracies and the rule of law, including the Near East and the Balkans connecting to Western Europe (Asō 2007). The Arc united the East and the West, Europe and Asia, by the seas. The current FOIP is a more restricted version of the former Arc by limiting the regions to Asia, Africa, and the United States, eliminating the troubled regions of the Near East and the Balkans, and also leaving out the European Union at the moment. But compared to the Arc, it is also more substantiated with a sprinkling of JICA projects, military defense bases, military and naval exercises, and free trade negotiations.

The second tier of Japan's traditional foreign policy and geopolitical strategy is the East Asian community and regionalism concept, which has recently retreated into the background because of the increasing tension over Taiwan and the confrontation over the Senkaku Islands (known as Diaoyu Islands in China) but above all else because of the Ukraine crisis. Though the East Asian community idea surfaces as a competing alternative vision that may be seen as contradictory to outside observers, it should be taken very

seriously as regionalism that explains the Japanese reticence about China in its FOIP strategy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bluebooks make sure that they cite good relations and regional peace as an important second foreign policy principle of Japan, noting that China is an important neighbor and a significant economic interest as well. The 2021 Bluebook notes the problems but emphasizes that "*Stable Japan-China relations are important not only for both countries but also for the region and the international community*" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan 2021, 58). The major threat to Japan is identified as North Korea, and China is assumed to have the ability to control North Korea's dangerous nuclear ability.

Japan's East Asian community strategy of cooperation with China has roots in early Japanese Pan-Asianism, going back to the Meiji period. Prince Konoe Atsumaro's *Tōadōbunkai* (東亞同文会), or East Asia Common Culture Association, advocated special relations between the Chinese and the Japanese, though the association ended up training China hands for the Japanese military and civilian authorities. During the postwar period, Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo's doctrine of partnership with ASEAN and China and the Manila speech 1977 apology to Southeast Asian countries are cited as the start of the regional orientation in Japan's foreign policy, amid the Nixon-Mao normalization of US relations with China in 1971. The era was a historic turning point in the Cold War, which signaled the end of the Vietnam War, which had been fought as a kind of proxy war between the United States and the Soviets for global hegemony. The East Asian community policy was strengthened with the Treaty of Peace and Friendship with China (1978) that Fukuda signed after the normalization of relations under Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei, who had visited Beijing in September 1972 and had many festive photographs taken with Premier Zhou Enlai (New York Times 1972).

On January 14, 2002, the East Asian community strategy surfaced with Prime Minister Koizumi Yuichirō's policy speech that first articulated the East Asian community, a speech delivered during a tour of Southeast Asian nations. But Koizumi's subsequent visits to Yasukuni shrine, which soured relations with the ROK over Takeshima Island and incited anti-Japanese protests in China, did not facilitate the East Asian community policy. However, Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo, the son of Fukuda Takeo (a relationship that shows the importance of lineage in Japan-China politics), and later Abe Shinzō worked hard to restore cooperative relations with China (Hosoya 2013, 146–56).¹⁴ Prime Minister Abe Shinzō visited Beijing in October 2018 on an airplane full of Japanese businessmen, some of whom already had factories in China. Despite his nationalist discourse, the Abe visit reflected the restoration of good relations with China as the main objective of the regionalism policy.

Even in the heyday of the Cold War, economic relations between Japan and China had never really disappeared.

14 For the East Asian community strategy, see Hosoya 2013, 147–48.

Back in 1990, in his revealing article on the topic of Japanese-Chinese relations, Akira Iriye explained that trade between China and Japan continued all through the postwar years, even during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, which had put Japan in a divergent position from the US-led camp of these conflicts. As early as 1952, Japanese business missions were dispatched to the Chinese mainland, and the latter, in turn, sent its first trade mission to Japan in 1955 (Iriye 1990, 631–33). Despite the differences and disputes in the relationship, friendly Japanese-Chinese relations have relied on *dōbundōshu* (同文同種) “same writing/culture, same race” discourse from the late Meiji era, pointing to the East Asian cultural bond between the two peoples.

The collapse of the Soviet Union brought about an end to Cold War foreign policy and strategy in many third countries. But in Japan, the end of the Cold War also accelerated the Japanese mainstream right-wing policy of gaining ground in the US-Japan relationship on a more equal footing and opening the way for more self-reliance in military defense capability. Thus, by the turn of the twenty-first century, new, futuristic Japanese strategies that go under the labels of the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity, the free and open Indo-Pacific Ocean, or the East Asian community grand strategy—visions serving as an anchor to multilateral and regional collaborations—have replaced the Cold War Yoshida Doctrine that was built on US-Japan bilateral relations.

There are, however, divergent views of FOIP between American policymakers and the Japanese leadership that reveal potential problems. In the recent Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Alliance Policy Coordination Brief of October 2019, the authors Nicholas Szechenyi and Yuichi Hosoya noted the assets for a future FOIP strategy that should include Japan and the United States in multi-regional cooperation for economic, political, and defense purposes, but they also note among the potential problems the divergent interpretations of FOIP by American and Japanese policymakers. The American side verbalizes FOIP in terms that challenge the “predatory economic power” of China. The Japanese vision of FOIP avoids conflictual terms against China and has persistently preferred an emphasis on regional stability in East Asia and the ASEAN member countries of Southeast Asia. Japan’s FOIP avoids an overt contestation against China and accepts the rise of China as part of the rise of Asia, which, from a Japanese perspective, has a positive value. That difference of opinion between the American and the Japanese policymakers over FOIP and China might be an added reason for the search among British and Japanese circles to bring the United Kingdom into Asian politics. This would “compensate” for events such as the shocking briefly “isolationist” stance of the former Trump administration in withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement.

Memory of the Anglo-Japanese alliance has reappeared too. Recent publications of the UK-Japan Global Seminar,

organized by Chatham House, show a growing interest from British and Japanese academic circles and officials responsible for international relations and security strategy on bringing Japan and the post-Brexit United Kingdom closer to preserve a “rule-based world order,” to promote greater business and trade agreement, and finally, to form a joint-defense agenda. The executive summary of John Nilsson-Wright noted: “It may be premature to characterize this as the start of a new UK-Japanese alliance, but there is little doubt that the opportunity for a strengthened and genuinely global and proactive bilateral partnership is real” (Nilsson-Wright 2019 x).

The historic analogy with the Anglo-Japanese alliance is ever more “substantiated” in the official report of important American policymakers and politicians. Back in 2000, the Bi-partisan Study Group of top government officials, diplomats, academics, and former naval officers published a brief seven-page text titled *The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership Special Report*.¹⁵ The authors conclude with the need to reformulate the security alliance with Japan into one with the “special relationship between the United States and Great Britain as a model” (Institute of National Strategic Studies and National Defense University 2000, 3).

Compared to the past, the Japanese argument for FOIP, which portrays the new US-Japan alliance frame as one that treats Japan as an equal *sovereign* entity with the United States in the alliance, surely contributes to the centrist right-wing conservative aim of turning Japan into a “normal” state. The 1960 treaty, which still stands as a cornerstone of Japan’s foreign policy, has been based on the concept of US leadership and Japan’s quiet dependency, reflective of the 1945 occupation, though it was a notch better than the original 1952 treaty, which gave the US military the right to intervene in Japanese politics in the event of a crisis that could threaten security. Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke’s government’s renegotiation of the 1960 treaty revision, which was greatly contested and marked by widespread anti-security treaty protests, had managed to eliminate that article during the clash between the police and the protestors.

The 1996 Japan-US Alliance Agreement reads as a milestone in comparison, for it defines Japan as an *ally* of the United States in global terms, responsible for regional security, not only the defense of Japan. The terms of the American-Japanese bilateral alliance have moved closer to the former bilateral Anglo-Japanese alliance, which lasted from 1902 to 1922 as a globally significant transcontinental geopolitical naval cooperation between the British and the Japanese Empires. Though not stated implicitly, both the former Anglo-Japanese alliance and the current US-Japan alliance appear to have been formulated against the continental Russian empire across Eurasia.

The growing military cooperation between Britain and Japan over the manufacturing of fighter planes is a further

15 Including Richard L. Armitage, Joseph D. Nye Jr., and Paul D. Wolfowitz. October 11, 2000, report.

sign of breaching the pacifist 1947 Constitution's historic postwar restrictions on the production of military armament. The recent announcement of the British Tempest-Mitsubishi collaboration in the manufacturing of fighter planes, the first time that Japan will cooperate with a country other than the United States in military matters, is a conspicuous example of the new Japanese strategy (Kelly et al. 2022).

The current Ukraine crisis has thus exposed Japan's new face as a proactive spokesperson for the FOIP camp against autocratic regimes and most likely will accelerate these visions of a more sovereign, self-reliant Japan into reality. Current prime minister Kishida criticized Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 in the strongest possible terms as an "aggression" against international law, a criticism that would have been unthinkable a generation ago. More recently, former prime minister Abe Shinzō, who was an enthusiast of a proactive Japan, had left an open door during the Russian occupation of Crimea because he gave top priority to keeping an open dialogue with Russia over negotiations for the return of the Kuril Islands (referred to as the Northern Territories in Japan), which had been occupied by Stalin at the end of the Second World War. It must be emphasized that Japan and Russia are still in a noncombatant "state of belligerency" because they have not signed a peace treaty that would end the Second World War—a fact that might cause an added problem if Russian expansionism converges into a major conflict.

Kishida's strong condemnation was accompanied by sanctions (except, like Europe, for the energy firm Gazprom) freezing the assets of Russian leaders, blocking swift use in banking that is in line with the major G7 advanced economies. On May 5, 2022, Russian leader Putin responded in kind by slapping Japanese leaders with sanctions. Japan for the first time has also shifted its policies in such cases of international conflict by abandoning neutrality. The Japanese authorities are providing bulletproof vests and some military equipment to the Ukrainian resistance. They have even unconditionally admitted Ukrainian refugees, an unprecedented decision as Japan officially has always declared an antirefugee policy. The Ukrainian exception is reminiscent of when prewar Japanese governments during the 1920s gave generous asylum to White Russian and Tatar émigrés who had sought haven in Manchuria, having escaped from the Bolshevik Revolution. The resemblance highlights the significance of Russia in Japanese security concerns going back to the Meiji period (Johnston 2022). The number of Ukrainian refugees (whose status is disputed as they still do not have permanent refugee status) has reached more than 2,100, which, though modest compared to the millions in Europe and much lower

than 95,000 in Turkey, is still a significant breach of Japan's established antirefugee policy of many decades (Nippon.com 2022).¹⁶

The Ukraine crisis has also suddenly emboldened the critics of the Japanese public's well-known pacifism, which traditionally opposes rebuilding a strong military force or eliminating Article 9 of the 1947 Constitution, which prohibits the maintenance and use of military force. Remembering the traumatic experience of militarism and wartime destruction during the Second World War, postwar Japanese public opinion—which, ironically, includes mainstream conservative voters as well as social democrats, communists, socialists, and liberals—has traditionally favored the ideal of Japan as a pacifist state, privileging Japan as a unique case in international relations. Yukari Easton's recent article in the *Japan Times* reveals the quick shift in tone arguing in favor of strengthening Japan's military capacity and advocating the Japanese public's recognition of the need to develop the means and the mindset for defending one's country, taking Zelensky's Ukrainian defense as an inspirational model (Easton 2022). The article notes that the Ukraine crisis has left the Self-Defense Forces of Japan in limbo. The Japanese Communist Party leader Shii Kazuo posted on Twitter heralding Article 9 of the Constitution. Former prime minister Hatoyama Yukio alluded to fault on both sides. Easton cautions the reader that the real question was that India, though a member of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad), abstained from the UN General Assembly and human rights resolutions while urging others to do so. His biggest concern was former president Trump's dangerous isolationist outbursts against security treaties with Japan and Korea as well as relations with NATO in Europe. Easton concludes that the virtuous message of peace needs an effective hard power strategy.

Kuni Miyake's recent article on April 28, 2022, in the *Japan Times*, with the surprisingly dramatic title "War in Ukraine Shatters Japan's Pacifist Dreams," takes the Ukraine crisis as a transformative event for discarding unrealistic post-World War II pacifism. Miyake argues that Japan is awakening and that people will have to stand up and fight like the brave Ukrainians in the event of such an invasion, even suggesting bringing back some kind of patriotic and perhaps military education (Miyake 2022).¹⁷

It is too early to draw conclusions from all these developments, but the Ukrainian crisis will quicken the trends in Japan, as long as conservative political leadership is in power, toward developing a strong military capacity and will shift the Japanese general public's view away from pacifism and toward a defense orientation as a nation. The crisis will probably also quicken the work toward FOIP that will contribute to the making of the future twenty-first-

16 The Turkish figure is from the Turkish embassy in Tokyo. Recent figures are close to 90,000 Ukrainian refugees, plus a large number of Russians who do not want to participate in the war.

17 Kuni Miyake is president of the Foreign Policy Institute and research director at Canon Institute for Global Studies. A former career diplomat, he also serves as a special adviser to Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's cabinet. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the positions of the Japanese government.

century order as a transcontinental, multilateral alliance between the United States and allies in Europe, Asia, and East Africa.

There are limits to strategic visions, however. In 2000 the same bipartisan report that proposed a US-Japan alliance like the special relationship with Great Britain also confidently argued that “*Major War in Europe is inconceivable for at least a generation*” and that “*the prospects for conflict in Asia are imminent.*” That report did not anticipate the Russian invasion. The report insisted that major conflict could occur at any moment on the Korean Peninsula and in the Taiwan Strait, that the Indian subcontinent is a flashpoint, and that there is lingering turmoil in Indonesia. Although potential danger exists over North Korea or Taiwan, none of the above erupted in Asia, but the 9/11 attacks took place in the United States only eleven months later as an act of global Islamic terrorism. Today, the Russian invasion of Ukraine carries the ominous immediate danger of catapulting into a terrible global conflict in less than a generation in Europe (Przystup 2005, 1–31).

The report was updated in 2005 to note the lack of anticipation of the tragic events of 9/11, acknowledging that Japan and the United States responded together against terrorism and confirming the alliance’s importance for stability and security across the globe.

From a Turkish perspective, the potential for the success of FOIP thus, hopefully, will be not so much as a contestation against China but as an invitation for economic prosperity that will foster the sustainability of democracies and freedoms of participating countries. China’s rise will benefit from the prosperity, but it will also be checked with the strong relations that Japan upholds with the West via the United States and potentially Britain and multilateral cooperation with countries in Asia and East Africa. One hopes that the invitation of Ambassador Suzuki to the Turkish people may turn into reality one day if and when Japan’s FOIP and Turkey’s Asia Anew Initiative meet. Given the legacy of the especially close relations that the general Turkish public has felt for Japan, historically, since the nineteenth century, and even the legacy of Pan-Asianist bonding that some Japanese imagined for the Turkish world in the past, maybe all of that legacy might be put to good use in the future to align Turkey in the “democracy” camp once again.¹⁸

It is too early to draw conclusions from all these developments, but the Ukrainian crisis will quicken the trends in Japan of the conservative political leadership’s goal toward developing a strong military capacity and will shift the Japanese general public’s view away from Pacifism toward becoming a more defense-oriented nation. In recent publications, Kitaoka Shinichi, the former president of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and am-

bassador to the United Nations, is an active advocate of Japan’s new geopolitical strategy of a Western Pacific union that is centered on the free and open Indo-Pacific policy evermore. Kitaoka places particular emphasis on forging cooperation between the ASEAN nations of Southeast Asia and the Pacific countries of Australia and New Zealand to counter China’s influence in the region (Kitaoka 2021, 7–34; 2023).¹⁹

The crisis will probably also quicken the work toward FOIP that will contribute to the making of the future twenty-first-century order as a loosely formed, bipolar, transcontinental maritime alliance between the United States and countries surrounding NATO members, the European Union and the United Kingdom, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, and other ASEAN members in Southeast Asia, New Zealand and Australia in Asia, and East Africa versus a Eurasian transcontinental alliance surrounding Russia, again with some countries such as Serbia and Belarus in Europe, Iran, and China in Asia. Belarus is serving as an outright post for missiles, and Iran is more interested in increasing oil production with Russian investment. Turkey, a regional power and a NATO member, has condemned Russian aggression; India, a Commonwealth member, has not but has recently voiced serious concern. Recently, on September 16, 2022, during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization leaders’ summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, Indian prime minister Narendra Modi told Putin: “Now is not the time for war” (Pratap, Register, and Chen 2022).

Governments of Turkey and India, despite their historically strong ties to the West, are playing a mediating role at the moment in the Ukraine crisis, though it would be difficult to predict how long that will last. None of these trends portray a definitive end at the moment, but with the Ukraine crisis taking place in Europe, that indicates that it is again the rivalry between “great powers” and Russia’s aggressive first step in the West that have fueled the potential of a wider conflict in the twenty-first century. Currently, given the Ukraine crisis, it looks as if the multipolar world-making that was predicted in the heyday of globalization in the post-Cold War era is no longer that feasible as a comfortable world order of peaceful interaction. Ironically, it is again in the Western Hemisphere that dangerous signs of global power rivalry like Putin’s nuclear threats have surfaced as ominous reminders of the potential for world war.

Returning to Ambassador Suzuki’s outreach to Turkey in his exposé of Japan’s FOIP policy: on the question of whether Japan can act as a pivot to enable Turkey’s entry into the FOIP policy, deterring a Eurasianist axis shift away from the Western alliance, it is simply too early to tell. But the long years of special relations between Japan and Turkey, even though described in Pan-Asianist terms of camaraderie, might serve in this instance as the means for

18 For aspects of Japanese-Turkish relations during the late Ottoman Empire and the early Republic of Turkey, see Esenbel 2011.

19 Kitaoka’s book *Seitaiyourengo no subsume: Nihon no “atarashii chiseigaku”* (西太平洋連合のすすめ日本の新しい地政学) (Tokyo: Toyo Keizai shinposha, 2021) has been recently translated into English by David Noble and Marie Speed, *A Western Pacific Union: Japan’s New Geopolitical Strategy* (Tokyo: Japan Publishing Industry Foundation for Culture, 2023).

ensuring the rule of law and democratic values in a novel manner. There is still an ongoing competition in Ankara between Eurasianism toward Russia and China versus the Asia Anew Initiative that is in step with Japan's FOIP. It will be interesting to follow its consequence. Japan's FOIP, which is increasingly in step with various FOIP views of its member countries, is here to stay as a significant strategy in world-making.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The author declares no competing interests.

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Submitted: October 01, 2022 PDT, Accepted: March 17, 2023 PDT

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