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A Paper Proposal for GRADNAS International Workshop
On
Asian Security Research

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1. Title

Japan's Renegotiation of the Postwar Bargain in the 1970s

**This paper is a draft Chapter One of the author's PhD thesis, due in March 2020, that explicates the whole research design.*

2. Abstract

This thesis investigates the sweeping transformations of Japanese foreign policy in the 1970s which had a deep impact on the country's identity and the East Asian regional order for the ensuing decades. Particularly significant are the following four policy changes: (1) Tokyo's explicit decision to consolidate its security policy centred on the bilateral treaty with the U.S., (2) Japan's willingness to restrain its trade and macroeconomic policy in order to manage America's growing frustrations against Japanese economic strength, (3) Japan's choice to acknowledge the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a focal point of regional multilateral diplomacy, and (4) Tokyo's expeditious decision to normalise its relations with Beijing and support communist China's enmeshment into the international order among non-communist countries. The central research question of this thesis is: why did Japan choose to transform its foreign policy so significantly in the 1970s? While the mainstream approach of the existing literature is to examine discrete policy areas such as defence, economic policy and regional diplomacy separately, this thesis criticises such compartmentalised investigations as failing to account for a bigger picture, of which each specific policy change was a part. To overcome this discrepancy, the author proposes to analyse and conceptualise the sweeping transformations of Japanese foreign policy in the 1970s as the renegotiation process of the foundational bargain by which Japan originally agreed with the U.S. and many non-communist partners at the end of the U.S.-led Allied occupation in the early 1950s so that its devastated wartime enemy could be rehabilitated into international society and economically nurtured therein. As Japan was no longer an underdeveloped country but became a preeminent economic power by the 1970s, the country started to renegotiate the terms of the bargain for the new purpose of ensuring that its growing strength would be

accommodated in international society.

3. Relevance

The renegotiation of the bargain was a difficult and divisive process for Japanese society. On the one hand, many Japanese preferred the maintenance of the bargain, under which the country had been so successful in realising its national prosperity and security. On the other hand, many other Japanese simultaneously understood that the terms of the original bargain were increasingly out of touch with the emergent reality of a strong Japan. The thesis' investigation of such dualistic domestic sentiments would make a direct contribution to workshop's discussions on domestic drivers of foreign policy.

4. Resonance

This thesis is neither a theory building exercise nor a detailed historiographical description. Instead it conducts a concept-based analysis of Japanese foreign policy. By using the International Relations concept of the bargain as an analytical framework, it aims to make sense of the historical evolution of Japanese foreign policy in the broader context of the East Asian regional order and international society.