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BOOK REVIEW

Alexandra Sakaki, Hanns W. Maull, Kerstin Lukner, Ellis S. Krauss, and Thomas U. Berger, *Reluctant Warriors: Germany, Japan, and Their U.S. Alliance Dilemma*

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Germany and Japan are two of the most important allies of the United States and are the leading middle powers in today's international politics. However, until now, both states' military contributions toward the United States have been somewhat limited, considering their huge economic and diplomatic influence on global society, as the main title of the book *Reluctant Warriors* suggests.

But what are the sources of such anomalies in German and Japanese security policies? Why have they restrained military buildup despite significant achievements in the economic sphere? According to the authors, the answer lies in the anti-militaristic cultures of both states, which are essentially products of their historical legacies as defeated nations of World War II. The purpose of the book is to understand the causal effect of such anti-militaristic cultures on their security policies in the future by exploring what happened to them over the past three decades.

The book is composed of four empirical chapters, followed by a concluding one. Chapter 2 reviews the evolution of German and Japanese anti-militaristic cultures during the Cold War, explaining how the two states made few changes in their security policies despite intense pressures from the United States.

Chapter 3 analyzes the trajectories of German and Japanese security policies after the end of the Cold War, showing that there occurred salient events in the international system during this time (such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, the rise of the threat of North Korea, and the emergence of China as a great power), which brought about significant changes in their overall security policies.

Chapter 4 deals with specific German and Japanese intervention policies. The authors find that the two states did not participate directly in military interventions during the Cold War but instead relied on indirect ways of assistance because the elites in both countries had to obtain legitimacy for their preferred foreign policies.

Chapter 5 explores German and Japanese arms export policies, finding that their policies differed quite sharply already during the Cold War, with the former emerging as a leading arms exporter by the end of the Cold War and the latter still clinging to a highly restrictive policy that came too close to an export ban.

In the final chapter, the authors compare the two states and conclude that Germany has achieved somewhat relative autonomy within a multilateral alliance system, whereas Japan is more dependent on the United States within a bilateral alliance system. Consequently, it is expected that when the adverse shift in the international system prompts both states to change their anti-militaristic culture, Germany will find itself in an advantageous position for coping with the situation by cooperating with multiple actors while Japan will find itself in a vulnerable position because it has only one option: relying on the extended deterrence of the United States, whose value is now diminishing faced with the emergence of China as a global power.

The main contribution of the book is to empirically examine Glenn Snyder's thesis of 'the alliance dilemma' as the subtitle of this book 'Germany, Japan, and Their U.S. Alliance Dilemma' suggests. The concept 'the alliance dilemma' was first introduced into International Relations in his seminal article 'The security dilemma in alliance politics.' According to Snyder, alliances are concerned about two opposing fears: the fear of abandonment and of entanglement. When a state faces aggression from another state, its ally may choose not to honor its commitment to defend the attacked state. This situation induces the state to take measures to strengthen the bond with the ally for fear of abandonment. On the other hand, a state may hold a fear of becoming involved in its ally's costly affairs, which prompts the former to distance itself from the latter. This problem is called the fear of entanglement. Considering the existence of such two contradicting concerns, Synder dubbed it as 'the alliance dilemma' (Snyder, 1984).

Borrowing the concept 'alliance dilemma,' the authors argue that, in the case of Germany and Japan, the fear of entanglement is more urgent because of the anti-militaristic cultures, which prompted them to restrain from security cooperation with the United States. When a leader shares an anti-militaristic culture with the public, it may weaken motivation to pursue security cooperation with the United States. Even if a leader does not share an anti-militaristic culture, this culture may constrain his ability to pursue security cooperation with the United States.

Therefore, combining the fear of entanglement and the anti-militaristic culture, there emerge strong tendencies to restrain themselves from cooperating with the United States in the security sphere. When the United States adopts policies that are perceived as too aggressive to accept for Germany and Japan, they will find themselves in a difficult position to cooperate with the United States.

For example, well before the invasion of Iraq was launched by the United States and its allies, Germany stated that, even if the United Nations Security Council decided to authorize the invasion, Germany would not intervene. Such a stance of Germany was caused by the fear of entanglement and the culture of anti-militarism.

Although this book can explain the anomalous behaviors of Germany and Japan – that they have restrained themselves from pursuing military cooperation with the United States despite huge economic and diplomatic influence in the international system – from the theoretical point of view, there is one potential for improvement: namely, the nature and degree of the causal effect of cultural variables on states' security policies.

The authors used four variables to explain German and Japanese security policies: anti-militaristic culture and alliance structure (i.e., bilateral and multilateral framework) as independent variables and leaders' perception of regional environments (e.g., threat, opportunity, or risk) and political institution as intervening variables. But, is it really valid to regard cultures as independent variables?

When considering such a problem, it is useful to reflect on the critical debate about cultural factors in international relations between constructivists and realists. Constructivism, which attempts to theorize the effect of culture on international politics, starts from the premise that the incentive and constraint of the international system are fundamentally indeterminate and must be interpreted through a cultural filter for influencing foreign policies.

In other words, constructivists argue that culture shapes state security policies in the following ways. First, culture influences how state leaders interpret the incentive and constraint of the international system. Second, it provides a filter for judging the efficiency of foreign policies. Third, it provides the prescriptive criteria for determining the definition of national interest, in which culture plays instrumental and normative roles.

Here, the third point is worth noting: culture shapes national identity by legitimizing the course of action. The violation of culturally prescribed national goals sometimes triggers fierce domestic opposition. An actor (an elite or the public) internalizes a certain culture through formal or informal institutionalization, by which that culture can limit the range of foreign policy choices (Desch, 1998).

In contrast to constructivists, realists maintain that international systemic pressures and constraints exert determinate influence on state security policies. According to realists, the competitive nature of the international anarchy prevents states from cooperating with each other. There always exists

uncertainty over the intentions of other states, which urges policymakers to maximize their relative power or security. In such a nasty Hobbesian world, culture is essentially epiphenomenal: it may exist, but it has little influence on state foreign policies (Mearsheimer, 2002).

Put simply, the incentive and constraint of the international system not only shape state foreign policies but also overwhelm cultural factors. Although culturally colored political discourse is used to legitimize certain policies, the true reason for the actions lies in strategic factors. If so, how can theorists reconcile constructivist explanations with realist ones?

To deal with such a problem, it is important for theorists to use neoclassical realism in the realist research program. Neoclassical realism is an influential realist theory that takes cultural variables seriously. From the perspective of neoclassical realism, since opportunities and constraints of the international system exert more significant pressure on state foreign policies (especially in security domain where struggle for survival in international anarchy is salient) than domestic factors, cultural variables should be treated not as independent but intervening variables.

Neoclassical realism explains state foreign policies in the following ways. First, it regards the international system as the ultimate cause of state behaviors. It assumes that the adoption of certain foreign policies is caused mainly by the incentive and constraint of the international system, such as the relative distribution of power, offense-defense balance, and alliance structure. Neoclassical realists would suggest that state foreign policies are usually rational responses to the international system, rather than responses to domestic factors such as political institution, culture, domestic politics, and leaders' perception. Thus, for instance, like the other variant of realist theories such as offensive realism, it predicts that, if states become more powerful, they tend to adopt more aggressive foreign policies. Conversely, when states become less powerful, they tend to adopt more moderate foreign policies (Rose, 1998; Lobell *et al*., 2009; Ripsman*et al*., 2016).

In sum, although neoclassical realists agree with constructivists that cultural factors affect the preferences of state leaders in a way that delimits the range of acceptable security policies, their roles remain as intervening variables, which distort the causal effect of the international system (independent variables), thereby bringing about the actual foreign policies (dependent variables).

For instance, according to Christopher Layne, the United States' pursuit of hegemony outside the Western sphere (so-called extra-regional hegemony) is mainly driven by domestic factors such as an open-door culture and not the incentives and constraints of the international system. Layne admits that, in most cases, states act according to the offensive realist dictum; they maximize their relative power whenever possible and aim to become not global but regional hegemons, adopting the offshore balancing strategy. However, he finds that states sometimes deviate from such rational, optimal behaviors because of ideational reasons such as culture, ideology, and norms. According to Layne, this was the case with the United States during the Cold War, which culminated in the US-led liberal international order that has lasted until now.

Contrary to conventional realist theories, which predict that the United States engages in offshore balancing, it has pursued extra-regional hegemony. This anomalous behavior was driven by the open-door culture to create an international system composed of nations that internalize the liberal, open-door culture (Layne, 2006).

Although there is such a problem regarding cultural variables, this does not necessarily impair the value of the book. Its importance for understanding the puzzle of German and Japanese reluctance in sharing the defense burdens of the alliance with the United States is enormous. For that reason, it is worth reading for all students of political science.

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