Leadership, Competitive Strategy and Entrepreneurship in International Relations

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Nothing brings the worlds of business, strategic studies, and foreign policy together the way strategy, leadership, and entrepreneurship does. Nothing inspires the imagination more than the feats of daring leaders and policy entrepreneurs who are able to seize stunning victories despite the (seemingly) overwhelming odds against them. The study and practice of leadership, strategy, and entrepreneurship is a practical pursuit. Often businesses, the military, and policy institutions invest heavily in leadership training. Yet, despite the demand for better leadership, articles in International Relations journals and books often find it necessary to "rescue" leadership from both the structurally heavy explanations and outright neglect. Focusing on my own experiences studying leadership, competitive strategy, and policy entrepreneurship in the area of Japanese defense politics, I reexamine the possibilities and dilemmas of leadership analysis in the field of International Relations (IR). IR scholars should focus their efforts not only on policy successes, but also on policy failures. Failures are important because they are often as influential as successes, because failures are similar to falsified hypotheses, and because surrounding actors usually learn too much from these failures. In the wreckage of policy catastrophes we may also see the beginnings of new forms of successful policy entrepreneurship.

Leadership, Competitive Strategy, and Policy Entrepreneurship: The Forbidden Discipline?

Whether it is through their charisma, their strategies, or their appetite for risk, individuals are of great importance to the workings of the world around us. Early examples of the difference that leadership makes in the success or failure of a military campaign or political success can be seen in the likes of Thucydides's*History of the Peloponnesian War*, in Sun Tzu's treatise on war, and in Machiavelli's *The Prince* (Thucydides, 1993; Machiavelli, 2004; Byman and Pollack, 2001; Grove, 2007; Preston, 2010; Sun Tzu, 2008; Rumelt, 2011). Thucydides contrasts between the realistic and cautious strategies of Pericles and the reckless and self-aggrandizing strategies of Alcibiades are early examples of how authors have explained outcomes in terms of the quality of strategy and leadership (Thucydides, 1993). More modern examples of leadership study have used comparative approaches to demonstrate how leaders in similar contexts have used different strategies to bring about different outcomes (see Samuels, 2003). More recent scholarship in leadership has sought to demonstrate how the quality of strategy can be evaluated across fields and disciplines. This approach demonstrates the utility of in depth case studies for examining when "good strategy" is taking place as opposed to "bad strategy" or even the absence of strategy (Rumelt, 2011). In a sense, Rumelt's (2011) recent study is little more than a deepening of Machiavelli's concepts *virtu* (virtue) and *fortuna* (fortune), though with the added vocabulary of systems theory and a new stock of case studies that span from modern politics, to business management, to education policy.

Despite the general recognition of the importance of leadership and choice in international affairs (especially by practitioners), in much of the International Relations (IR) scholarship, the role of individual agency is seen as something that must be recovered or even rescued from the excesses of structural theories (Byman and Pollack, 2001, p. 108; Hermann and Hagan, 1998; Samuels, 2003). This neglect of the role of leadership, however, does not extend to other disciplines. The role of the leader is still very much celebrated in history, management, and military studies (for a comprehensive review of how leadership is studied in different disciplines, see Ireland and Webb, 2007).

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At the heart of the neglect of leadership, strategy, and policy entrepreneurship are issues of method. As Patracia Maclachlan has written in a paper presented at the "Stanford Conference on Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Japan":

Leadership matters deeply in political studies, but the social scientist who cares about theory and methodological purity would be well advised not to touch it. As most scholars would agree, the definition, causes, and consequences of political leadership are conditioned by a complicated web of variables ranging from the leader's individual psychological characteristics and his relationship with his political constituency, to the structure of the institutional arena in which he operates (Maclachlan, 2010, p. 4).

Indeed, leaders, policy entrepreneurs, and strategists are often interesting because of the messiness they bring to the world. Their actions often defy our previous notions of what is possible in what would otherwise be an ordered and predictable world. The deviant nature of the leader or entrepreneur often inspires new inquiries into their learning, their motivations, and shifts in operational context that enabled their actions.

Since the overall literature on leadership, strategy, and policy entrepreneurship is expansive, covering the fields of management, military studies, history (in addition to what has been written in the field of IR), the article will not try to comprehensively survey the field. Rather, it will present some basic issues of theory and method as a preface for an examination of the author's own experience examining policy entrepreneurship in the context of Japanese defense policy and politics. As this article argues, the study of leadership, strategy, and entrepreneurship is beyond the need for rescue. Leadership does matter and will continue to matter to IR scholars and political scientists because leaders and entrepreneurs are natural social scientists. Through their deviant action they often push the boundaries of what is known about a given system. However, the study of leaders, especially leaders as policy entrepreneurs, will necessarily be a messy process. One of the reasons for this messiness is that cases of entrepreneurship as "deviant cases" will demand interpretive approaches that defy experimental methods.

In addition, this article makes two claims: (1) that scholars and students should focus on instances of failure in leadership and entrepreneurship as much as success and (2) that single case studies can prove most useful when they are framed as narrative challenges to current theory. The essay will give a brief example of this approach through a summary of the prime ministership Hatoyama Yukio, the Japanese prime minister from 2009-2010.

Beyond Leadership Matters: A Brief Overview of the Study of Leadership, Strategy and Entrepreneurship

Conceptualizing Leadership

Despite the regularity with which leadership is often "rescued" from neglect and structural explanations, the study of leadership is perhaps one of the oldest of pursuits. Machiavelli provided us with the most robust understanding of leadership when he situated leaders within the limits of their skill (*virtu*) and their circumstance (*fortuna*). Others have attempted recapture the meaning of Machiavelli's insights by reworking his central insights with novel descriptions of the importance of leadership. For Samuels, skilled leaders are important because they are able to "stretch their constraints" (2003, p. 1, see p. 5-7). Gaunder, in her own research, suggests that leaders can "overcome" (2007, p. 3) their circumstances. In my own dissertation research, I have emphasized that leaders have often been able to accomplish great feats through extraordinary insights into resources and restraints that allow for advantages over competitors. Thus, leaders do not "overcome" or "stretch" their circumstances, but rather, they "conspire" with them by seeing resources and avoiding pitfall that other actors miss. Quite frequently, policy entrepreneurs acquire their talent for seeing unique resources through creative discovery and through the painful lessons of past failures.

Despite the antiquity of the study of leadership, beyond Machiavelli's chief concepts, there has been a dearth of comprehensive theories of effective leadership. This state of affairs has led two scholars to write, "Never have so many labored so long to say so little," and "leadership is the most studied and least understood topic of any in the social sciences" (Bennis and Nanus, 1985, 4, 20). Such sentiments reflect the reality that leadership is a highly context-driven enterprise. What represents effective leadership in one context may not reflect effective leadership in another. In addition, there are also important definitional issues that have muddied the water of progress in the study

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of leadership. Leadership has at times been a catchall term for such different attributes as: the ability to motivate others, management skill, the ability to bargain or coerce, as well as the ability to create strategies (see Preston, 2010; Klein et al, 2010).

Still, studies of leadership have been able to find some useful principles. One such concept is the idea of *leader replaceability.* As Samuels writes, "In the real world, some leaders do little more than bob like corks on a restless sea" (2003, p. 1). When leaders with different motivations and backgrounds end up following the same actions, we find *high leadership replaceability*, the persistence of strong structural causes, and thus little reason to study leaders themselves. However, when different leaders make different decisions in the same contexts with drastically different results, we have reason to explore the motivation, insights, and methods of these leaders. In short, leaders matter when we can show that results would have been otherwise without their efforts.

In addition, scholars have been able to come up with some general principles for studying leadership that go beyond proving that "leaders matter." Authors have been able to hypothesize (and find solid evidence) for several general principles: that leaders matter more in times of crisis; that leaders matter most when they are more risk-accepting; and that the more dramatic the means by which leaders come to power, the more potential they will have for dramatic impact once they are in power (Byman and Pollack, 2001; Hermann, 1976; see also, Preston, 2010).

Beyond Leadership Matters: Strategy and Entrepreneurship

When leaders matter, we are encouraged to go beyond their influence and ask "how" and "why" questions that probe the mechanisms of their ability to lead. Some scholars have looked at different personality sets and subsets to try to predict when leaders are apt to pursue certain policies. Other scholars have sought to define "charisma" and to theorize how it has mattered. My own research has looked at two important components of leadership: *political strategy* and *policy entrepreneurship*. While the term "strategy" will be well recognized the term "entrepreneurship" may be less so. For most scholars, entrepreneurship is largely associated with the fields of economics and business. Nevertheless, "entrepreneurship" is increasingly being recognized as a trait that exists in nearly every sphere of human activity (Stockley, Frank, and Stough, 2009, p. 3; MacLachlan, 2010, p. 1; Klein et al, 2010).

The leadership literature often associates entrepreneurship with creativity, innovation, and in some cases even deviance (Boyett, 1996; Klein et al, 2010; Samuels, 2003). Entrepreneurs are different because they engage in "creative discovery," exploring new opportunities to push their ideas and achieve their objectives (Porter, 1996; Kirzner, 1973, 1997; King and Roberts, 1991). The creative discovery of policy entrepreneurs can be both purposeful and accidental. As one author writes, many major discoveries by policy entrepreneurs come from serendipitous moments, "aha" moments, where new resources or strengths are discovered (Dew, 2009; see also, Rumelt, 2011).

My own work in Japanese defense politics retains the focus on creativity, innovation, and the ability of entrepreneurial agents to see opportunities and resources that other agents miss. This conception is bound up in the managerial and business management literature and borrows from the Kirznerian notion that entrepreneurial behavior is "alertness to hitherto unnoticed opportunities" (Kirzner, 1973, p. 39; see also, Klein et al, 2010; Samuels, 2003). This is not to suggest that "entrepreneurs" are pure agents, unbounded and free. Instead, my use of the concept of policy entrepreneurship posits that agents are able to exert an unusual amount of power through their relationship with structures. In my conceptualization of policy entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs are able to understand and learn from their environments—often intuitively—in ways that allow them to see resources and constraints in ways others do not, thus providing them with a competitive advantage. As Rumelt (2011) recognizes in his study of strategy, there is a strong relationship between good strategy and entrepreneurial insight. Since all strategy begins with a diagnosis of the situation, good strategy usually includes a moment of insight where a new resource or advantage is discovered. As Rumelt writes, "[i]n a changing world, a good strategy must have an *entrepreneurial* component. That is, it must embody some ideas or insights into new combinations of resources for dealing with new risks and opportunities" (2011, p. 244).

Case Study Approaches to Leadership, Strategy, and Policy Entrepreneurship

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A great deal of the research on leadership, strategy, and policy entrepreneurship has relied on case studies. Our understanding of the strengths and limitations of the case study method has developed much over the years (Bennett and George, 2001; Collier, 1993; George and Bennett, 2005; Bennett and Elman, 2007). George and Bennett list the four strong advantages of case methods as 1) its high conceptual validity 2) its strong potential for fostering new hypotheses 3) its ability to foster a close examination of causal mechanisms and 4) its ability to address causal complexity (2005, p. 19-22). As prior studies of leadership demonstrate, leadership—and especially outstanding forms of leadership—can only really be examined through a rich understanding of the circumstances in which they occur. Closely addressing causal mechanisms and causal complexity is necessary to prevent scholars from replicating the mystification of leadership that was often produced through the "great man" tradition of leadership. In short, the problem of the "great man" tradition in leadership studies is that it often ascribes too much agency to individual leaders and their personalities while ignoring larger contextual aspects and the causal power of various forms of structures (Van Wart, 2003, p. 218-220).

However, the comparative case study method also comes with a number of limitations. These issues include: 1) the tension between historically rich description and the need to produce generalizations that apply broadly 2) the problem of case selection as well as 3) the often strong independence of cases (George and Bennett, 2005, p. 22-34). As will be seen, strategy and entrepreneurship remain highly context-driven activities. What makes for good strategy in one context is often rendered obsolete by even small changes in operational context.

Prior approaches to leadership have been able to examine the effects of leadership through case study design. One possible approach, as demonstrated in Samuels' (2003) comparison of Italian and Japanese leaders, is to structure comparisons in such a way as to create a rough control on operational context. Thus, by structuring comparisons, Samuels is able to demonstrate how different leaders were able to make significant difference through their decision-making, and how these decisions led to policy success or failure and influenced historical trajectories. As discussed above, this approach can be an extremely tricky one because the effectiveness of leaders can be impacted by even small operational details—some which may not be apparent until immersed in the details of the case—that greatly influence how the leader is able to perform.

Perhaps the most risky form of analysis is *counterfactual analysis*: the "what if" scenario. In essence, the political scientist is asked to imagine how the case may have developed if the leader had chosen differently. In a sense, counterfactual analysis is one of the most useful approaches to leadership, strategy, and policy entrepreneurship (regularly employed by organizations in the form of after-action studies and lessons-learned seminars), allowing scholars and analysts to use creative discovery to come up with new lessons. However, like much of the leadership literature that is based on case studies, the lack of reliability in this approach is a major issue.

In short, much of the scholarship on leadership frequently uses a case study approach—with low reliability—that is highly interpretative, multi-causal, and features rich description and interpretation over generalizable theories and rigorous hypothesis testing. For this reason, the study of leadership, strategy, and policy entrepreneurship are often important tools for theory integration, finding new hypotheses, and challenging entrenched theory. Like Samuels, I do not see the study of leadership as opposed to the study of structural contexts as important causes. As Samuels writes, leadership is "that constrained place where imagination, resources, and opportunity converge" (2003, p. 6) and thus, "in the contingency of leadership, is where we are apt to find a connection between agency and structure" (2003, p. 10). A focus on entrepreneurship can demonstrate how different political strategies either helped or hindered actors within these structural contexts, and thus reveal to us aspects of structure that we may not have previously been aware of. As Rumelt (2011) has written, policy entrepreneurs are in some ways like natural scientists, testing new hypotheses in the world through their deviant actions.

For this reason, scholars may wish to find policy entrepreneurship that blatantly challenges established ways of seeing in a given field. Through rich descriptions of their actions, case studies of policy entrepreneurs can be framed as challenges to established principles in a given subfield.

The Legacy of Not-so-Great Men (and Women) or Why Study Failure

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The Importance of Studying Failure

A great deal of the literature on entrepreneurship highlights the positive functions of entrepreneurs as agents of change. But what about failed leadership and policy entrepreneurship? If entrepreneurs are influential through their deviance, then how do failed examples of entrepreneurship impact the world around us?

Studying failure should be an important aspect of IR research. Failure is important for scholars because: 1) cases of failed policy entrepreneurship tend to serve as hypotheses falsified; 2) because policy failures tend to have lasting influences for groups who followed the failed leader; and 3) because surrounding actors almost always tend to learn more from spectacular failures than is warranted by the failure.

My own research has focused on the role of entrepreneurs in Japanese defense politics, in particular, the role of prime ministers as agents of change. At first sight, Japanese politics would seem like an unlikely setting for a study of leadership, strategy, and policy entrepreneurship. After all, Japanese politics is usually associated with tedious consensus-building, gradualism, and at times even immobilism (Curtis, 1999; Hayao, 1993; Mulgan, 2002; Sebata, 2010; Samuels, 2007; Shinoda, 2011), not creativity, flexibility, and innovation. Nevertheless, Japan has had some extraordinary political leaders, individuals who, in spite of the centrifugal forces working against them, were able to enact major changes.

Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro (2001-2006) was one such figure. Koizumi was able to accomplish amazing feats, what many termed "Koizumi magic." He delivered groundbreaking legislation in support of US operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, in the return of abductees from North Korea, and in his landmark postal reforms. Indeed, many studies of Japanese defense policy and foreign affairs have focused on the dramatic successes of Koizumi (Kliman, 2006; Shinoda, 2007; Gaunder, 2007). This heavy focus has created a situation where most scholars come away with one model for success in Japanese politics, without an understanding of how prime ministers succeed using methods quite different from Koizumi (for example, backroom deals and consensus-making), and without understanding the significance of prime ministerial failures.

The Case of Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio

A closer look at one failure in particular, the case of Hatoyama Yukio (2009-2010), however, demonstrates that leaders can be as influential in failure as in success.

The relatively short prime ministership of Hatoyama Yukio (September 16, 2009-June 4, 2010) is an important case study in Japanese defense politics because it is the first time in recent history that a prime minister has challenged—however subtle that challenge may have been—the primacy of the US-Japan defense alliance. In contrast to other Japanese prime ministers (like Koizumi Junichiro) who had believed in the importance of the alliance and helped deepen the alliance through their charisma and personal involvement, Hatoyama had throughout his political career stood against the deepening of the US-Japan alliance. In a sense, this distaste for the US military presence in Japan was generational. As the grandson of Hatoyama Ichiro, who as prime minister in the tumultuous political climate of the 1950s had espoused an end to the US base presence, Hatoyama Yukio was the heir to a trend of political thought that saw the US base presence in Okinawa as unnatural and an affront to Japan's sovereignty. From his early political career, Hatoyama and the fellow founders of the early DPJ party had campaigned tirelessly against the continuation of strong bureaucratic rule in Japan. In the historic campaign of 2009, the party had campaigned on the theme of: *shifting power from collusion between bureaucrats and politicians to cooperation between politicians and citizens*. Given that the US-Japan alliance had benefited from the close ties and the accumulated personal networks of key bureaucrats, Hatoyama's challenge to bureaucratic power was significant. Moreover, in his political rhetoric Hatoyama demonstrated a desire to strengthen the spirit of Japanese anti-militarism by becoming more active in civilian internationalist activities that Japanese felt more comfortable with: nuclear disarmament, climate change diplomacy, and regional order building. Indeed, some of his actions early in his administration demonstrated that he hoped to displace the military aspects of the US-Japan alliance through contributions in these areas.

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Yet, despite coming to power with overwhelming public support and new ideas about the direction of defense policy, Hatoyama would have to resign within a short period of time after embroilment in a money scandal and mismanaging the relocation of Futenma Air Base. This was the first time in the post cold war period that a Japanese prime minister's resignation was directly due to the mishandling of a defense issue. By the end of his approximately eight months in office, Hatoyama's popularity figures had plummeted from their post-election high of 71 percent to a mere 17 percent (Economist, 2010, June 2). During the historic DPJ campaign, Hatoyama had promised the people of the Okinawa that he would move Futenma Base "outside of Japan, or at least outside the prefecture." However, during the short tenure of his administration, Hatoyama would fail to make due on this promise, at some points suggesting he might backtrack on his campaign pledge and at other times suggesting he would press on to find a solution to the problem.

Certainly, personal failings played a large part in his administration's failure. Foremost amongst his failings was Hatoyama's striking inability to choose. In his relations with his own cabinet, with the minority party, and with his US counterparts, Hatoyama was the consummate "peace lover" (see Hayao, 1993; Shinoda, 2000) hoping to appease all parties with nuanced and delicate compromises. Despite the limitations of this approach, there was nevertheless a basic logic to it. The DPJ had come to power mainly on the strength of its platform on economy and livelihood issues, not on security and foreign policy. Moreover, the DPJ suffered from a fractured view on security more severe than anything the LDP had faced since the early years of its inception. The party ranks included the more conservative views of Hatoyama and Ozawa Ichiro who endorsed constitutional revision and an independent military force, pro-US alliance conservatives like Maehara Seiji, as well as moderates such as Kan Naoto. In addition, important party members, such as former Socialist Yokomichi Takahiro, held extremely pacifist views (Easley et al, 2010, p. 5; p. 2-3; Sneider, 2009, p. 7-8; Koellner, 2011).

Hatoyama's situation within his own administration was also surprisingly unsettled, despite trends that would suggest otherwise. The DPJ had come to power on a platform that promised a shift of power and responsibility from bureaucrats to politicians. The DPJ had taken concrete steps to pursue this course through the use of a greater number of political appointees, the abolition of coordinating meetings of the Vice Ministers (a key policy coordinating mechanism for bureaucrats), the creation of a National Strategy Unit, and deliberate steps to exercise power without the bureaucrats. Moreover, under the Hatoyama cabinet, the DPJ's Policy Research Council had been abolished, significantly weakening the power of DPJ backbenchers to object to policies. Despite all of these changes in favor of policy-making from the cabinet, Hatoyama's position was nevertheless a comparatively weak one. Whereas other prime ministers had been both prime minister and head of the party, de facto power had been split with powerful party insider Ozawa Ichiro. Compounding his situation was the composition of his cabinet. The cabinet had been filled with powerful faction leaders and heads of the coalition party, many of whom had little hesitation in presenting their own (often differing) views on issues directly to the public. The difficulty of Hatoyama's situation became embarrassingly apparent during the Futenma crisis, where different cabinet ministers publicly voiced different views on their preferred option to resolve the issue.

Despite these limitations on Hatoyama's power, in the immediate aftermath of the DPJ's historic victory, his administration showed signs that its shift in foreign policy might have a chance at success. An important pillar of Hatoyama's approach would be the use of civilian internationalist issues such as nuclear nonproliferation and climate change as platforms for international leadership and as common ground for a close relationship with the US. In a sense, this approach substituted softer "international" agendas for regional ones that addressed the growing security dilemma. Hatoyama's early speeches at the United Nations in September of 2009 would emphasize his government's pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and his desire for Japan to act as a bridge between the developed and developing world (Hatoyama Yukio, 2009, September 22). He would also frequently state his desire to work with the Obama administration toward a world free of nuclear weapons. Early meetings between Hatoyama and President Obama also demonstrated the prime minister's desire to reformulate the US-Japan bilateral relationship around these common civilian goals of nuclear nonproliferation and climate change. These early meetings had been well-planned by advisors on both sides who had counselled the leaders to avoid contentious issues such as Futenma Air Base and Hatoyama's stated desire to review the Host Nation Support and the Status of Forces Agreement. For the Hatoyama administration, another unstated purpose of this greater emphasis on nonproliferation and climate change was to capture two of the most popular themes of

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Obama's historic campaign—which had been widely followed in Japan—and to use them as a way of putting distance between Japan and the military aspects of US global security strategy.

Prior to the November 2009 summit meeting with the US, Hatoyama's government would announce that his government would not extend refuelling assistance to allied forces in the Indian Ocean after January. As the opposition party, the DPJ had regularly pointed out the problematic nature of fuel assistance given the constitutional ban on collective self-defense. As they had argued frequently in their battles with the LDP in the Diet, there was no way of knowing whether the fuel would be used for combat or noncombat missions. Since at least some of the fuel would plausibly be used in support of combat missions, fuel assistance could be seen as a violation of the ban on collective self-defense. Rather than directly repudiating the law, however, the administration would let the current legislation simply expire. As a replacement for this fuel assistance, Hatoyama's government would support job training and agricultural assistance in Afghanistan with five billion dollars of aid over five years (Yomiuri Shinbun Seiji-bu, 2010).

Though these early policy moves were largely successful, it soon became clear that the DPJ would face stiff resistance from the US when it came to renegotiating the military base issue. From public statements and high level bilateral contacts down to working level meetings, the Obama administration sent clear messages early in the new DPJ administration that it would not renegotiate the 2006 agreement that would transfer the functions of Futenma Air Base within Okinawa prefecture. When the issue was brought up during their summit meeting in November of 2009, Hatoyama uttered the words "trust me" to Obama on the issue of Futenma, leading the president to believe that his administration would implement the original agreement. Instead, Hatoyama and his administration would undertake a lengthy reevaluation process that would drag on for several months. Hatoyama's failure to support the 2006 plan from the outset, ironically, would eventually erode his ability to remain relevant in one of the civilian internationalist issues he cared about most. After months of mixed statements and contradictory proposals from the Hatoyama cabinet on Futenma Air Base, the Obama administration would deny Hatoyama a full meeting at the Washington Nuclear Summit in April of 2010 (Yomiuri Shimbun Seiji-bu, 2010). Hatoyama would instead have to settle for a ten-minute sidebar. The brevity of this meeting would contrast sharply with the 90-minute meeting secured by his Chinese counterparts. This inability to secure a meeting with the US would turn out to be a significant political failure and signal a steep decline in the prime minister's support ratings.

Over the course of Hatoyama's re-evaluation of the Futenma plan, there would be plenty of material for the media to harp on. Reports would leak out that members of the Obama administration had found Hatoyama to be increasingly "loopy." Other reports would suggest Obama officials were nervous about Hatoyama's pledge for a comprehensive review of the alliance (Yomiuri Shimbun Seiji-bu, 2010). To make matters worse, visible signs of the security dilemma would appear in ways that would provide the media with fuel to point out Hatoyama's neglect of the alliance. If Hatoyama had hoped to emphasize "*Yuai*" diplomacy—creating relationships of trust and friendship—with countries in the region, North Korean belligerency would provide a poor backdrop for his approach. On March 26, a North Korean torpedo sank the South Korean naval ship *Cheonan*, heightening tensions in the region. As Hatoyama would later state in an interview, the sinking of the *Cheonan* was on his mind during the negotiations for Futenma and would help shift momentum back to the original 2006 plan (Norimatsu 2011, February 28). Small incidents with China in the East China Sea would also crop up late in Hatoyama's administration, upsetting hopes of closer ties with China as a way of decreasing Japan's "dependence" on the US. In April, a Chinese surveillance helicopter would come within 90 meters of a Japanese Marine Self Defense Force destroyer during a People's Liberation Army naval exercise near Japanese territorial waters. Also, in early May a Japanese research ship operating within Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) would be pursued by a Chinese ship and ordered to cease its activities (Przystup, 2010). These incidents would be a harbinger of the much more serious incident in September during the Kan Naoto administration when a diplomatic row would ensue after a Chinese trawler clashed with a Japanese Coast Guard vessel. Each of these incidents served as a reminder of the sensitive security environment in the region and the importance of the US military presence as a stabilizing force. (For more on the ongoing tensions between Japan and China over the Senkaku/ Diaoyu Islands, as well as Japan's ongoing defense evolution, please see my article here.)

As has been demonstrated thus far, Hatoyama's broad strategic approach to defense corresponded poorly to his operational environment. Not only did he misjudge the degree to which he could substitute civilian internationalist

policies for maintenance of the military aspects of the alliance with the US, but he also misjudged the degree to which overtures towards China would be rewarded with an alleviation of the security dilemma. Compounding the weaknesses of Hatoyama's strategy, however, was poor execution and policy management. Failures at this level would include a callous approach to speaking about the US-Japan alliance, lax management of his cabinet, and shutting out valuable expertise in the Japanese bureaucracy.

By the end of May 2010, his popularity figures having plummeted to the high teens, Hatoyama would announce that he would endorse the original 2006 plan to relocate Futenma within Okinawa prefecture. In essence, he had capitulated to pressure from the US and had backtracked on his campaign pledge. Shortly afterward, he would have to dismiss Social Democratic Party (SDP) head Fukushima Mizuho from the cabinet for failing to approve the cabinet order that endorsed in principle the original 2006 plan. In his subsequent speeches, Hatoyama would apologize to the people of Okinawa and to Japan, characterizing the failure to move the base out of Okinawa as a personal one, not a failure of his party. In his resignation speech Hatoyama would say that he was disappointed that he could not get the people of Japan to approve his ideas with regards to the Futenma Air Base and security more generally. In addition, he would state that his ideas were not necessarily meant to refer to the present, but rather to a Japan five, ten, or twenty years from now, and that he one day hoped to see a Japan without permanent US bases (Hatoyama, 2010, June 2).

Analysis

Hypotheses falsified? As demonstrated in the case study, the basic premises of Hatoyama's approach was that the US could not be challenged directly, and that given this situation, a gradual approach to displacing the alliance would need to be taken. Hatoyama's approach was to try to use civilian internationalist policies and overtures to regional powers to gradually displace the influence of the alliance.

A simple reading of the Hatoyama case would suggest that each of these premises proved incorrect. However, though we know that Hatoyama's approach to challenging the US's influence in defense affairs failed, we do not know if all such attempts would fail. For example, we still do not know if *direct* challenges from individual prime ministers would be more successful than *gradual* challenges across subsequent administrations. The case demonstrates that *gradual* challenges to US influence (and perhaps any entrenched interest group in Japanese politics) have natural drawbacks: they alert the actor to the prime minister's intentions and allow them time to find ways to frustrate the prime minister's agenda, fuelling what Hayao (1993) has described as the natural centrifugal tendencies of Japanese government.

In addition, there is some evidence to suggest that Hatoyama had chosen the wrong tools for displacing the influence of the US-Japan alliance. Civilian internationalist approaches, such as human security, climate diplomacy, disaster governance, and international public health have long been a staple of Japanese foreign policy. However, these approaches have never been seen as sufficient for the protection of Japan, and few if any prime ministers have treated these approaches as equivalent to US military power. Indeed, I would suggest that Hatoyama may have fared better if he had proposed ways to substitute Japanese military capabilities for US ones. This could have been accomplished through advisory councils or joint commissions that advised the use of joint basing of Japanese and US forces and/ or a comprehensive package the included the revision or reinterpretation of Article 9 along with the gradual reversion of US bases to Japan. These approaches would have also acknowledged the security dilemma in the region.

Did other actors learn too much from Hatoyama? In the aftermath of Hatoyama's failure, the DPJ's defense policy more or less reverted to the LDP status quo. Whether one interprets this as the DPJ learning how to yield to US *gaiatsu*, learning the wisdom of realism in the East Asian security dilemma, or the DPJ learning not to take on too many entrenched interests at once, I believe that one could make a case that the surrounding actors learned too much from Hatoyama's failure.

The one lesson that should not have been learned was the declining utility of civilian internationalist approaches. While these approaches certainly have limited utility in displacing the influence of the US as an actor in defense,

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civilian internationalist approaches are important aspects of Japan's charm power and serve as an important supplement to the US-Japan bilateral treaty. Indeed, prior prime ministers have shown that civilian internationalist approaches have worked well when added to a vibrant US-Japan bilateral relationship. In addition, DPJ leaders following Hatoyama can be faulted for not following up on his agenda of regional reconciliation. In particular, leaders failed to pick up two of Hatoyama's ideas that could have created tangible security benefits that enhanced the US-Japan alliance. One idea was to propose a replacement shrine for Yasukuni Shrine (which has a noxious ideological underpinning that often inhibits relations with regional powers). The other idea was to improve on the official apology for wartime atrocities made by Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi in 1995. Both of these actions could have helped Japan in relations with two important powers in the region (China and South Korea) while enhancing relations with the US.

The strong impact of failure? Hatoyama's failure has been very influential. As a result of his political decline, his party would lose its coalition partners, damage their prospects for electoral success in the July 2010 Upper House elections, alienate the US and Okinawa, and set the stage for longer delays in the relocation of Futenma Air Base. As a result of Hatoyama's decision to reopen negotiations, implementation of the prior agreement seemed more unlikely than at any time in the past, and Futenma Air Base continues to sit in the same crowded area it has for quite some time. At the time of this writing, the DPJ has lost substantial power in the Lower House and the LDP has returned with the nationalist, Abe Shinzo, as its leader.

Conclusion: What Role for Leadership, Strategy, and Entrepreneurship?

The study of leadership, strategy, and policy entrepreneurship is *not* in need of rescuing. The tradition of taking leaders, their strategies, and their entrepreneurial activities seriously as important causes will continue, regardless of how the discipline of IR regards the topic. A robust tradition of studying leadership exists that spans the study of management, military history, and the political sciences more broadly. This tradition has generally been more successful at using rich descriptions of leadership as a tool for examining causal complexity and challenging established thinking in a given subfield than in creating comprehensive theories of leadership. Despite all the scholarly work on leadership, generalized theory on the subject has progressed little beyond the Machiavelli's concepts of *virtu* and *fortuna.*

Case study approaches to the impact of leadership can be a messy enterprise, one that involves grappling with a variety of different kinds of causes. Cultures of parsimony in academia will often lead to intense pressures to choose between one of a number of causes, in some cases to choose between *either* structure or agency. However, case study approaches do better when they are used as events for creative exploration, theory building, theory integration, and narrative challenges to established theory. These are the natural strengths of the case study approach.

Thus, in many instances social scientists will need to be like entrepreneurs themselves, risking much time and effort seeking discoveries that may prove dead ends in the short run.

Just as important as examining successes is the practice of exploring failures. Failures are important because they may offer important instances of natural hypotheses falsified. As the example of the case of Hatoyama Yukio demonstrates, however, one must be careful not to learn too much from any particular case. Close examination of causes of failure often demonstrate that there are significant aspects of the leader's approach worth rescuing—aspects that other leaders may have missed.

Acknowledgements

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