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From Phoenix to Fire Hazard

**Perceptions of Japanese leadership
in the Asia Pacific 1960-2000**

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Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction	7
The Study of Perception in International Relations	17
Regional Foreign Policy and Japan	23
Contrasting perceptions of Japanese leadership in East Asia	28
Chapter 2 – Smoke and Mirrors	37
Leadership in International Relations	42
Why States follow the Leader	48
Japan and Leadership	58
Role Theory in Foreign Policy Analysis and International Relations	64
Japan, leadership and role from an historical perspective	67
Conclusion	77
Chapter 3 – From the Ashes	80
The Occupation and the Reformation of Japan	83
US interests, Japan's role in the 'Reverse Course'	88
'Miraculous': role perceptions of Japan's postwar economic success	101
Southeast Asian role perceptions of Japan (1960-1973)	115
Conclusion	127
Chapter 4 – Phoenix Arisen?	130
Japan's success: its own perspective	132
Japan as an unlikely hegemon	135
Greater Responsibilities: Japan, the US alliance and internationalisation	139
East Asia and Japan's regional role	155
Japan as Economic Model	167
Conclusion	175
Chapter 5 – Nichibei, <i>Torii</i>, Leader?	178
Japan-US relations: Supplant or support?	187
Japan-US Trade: Perceptions of Responsibility	192
'Which Role? This Role' – Japan and the Gulf War	198
Japan and East Asia	209
Japan and the Politics of Regional Economics	213
Beyond an Economic role	228
Conclusion	236
Chapter 6 – Adrift or adroit	239
Japan – Good Model, Bad Example	244
The Asian Financial Crisis	255
Responsibility and Leadership? The case of the Asian Monetary Fund	264
Japan's role and East Asian Regionalism in the late 1990s	273
Japan's limited role beyond economic agency	280
Leadership, Japan and the rise of China	284
The broader Japan-US partnership	288
Conclusion	293
Chapter 7 – Conclusion	296
Future Directions and the question of leadership in the Asia Pacific	304
Bibliography –	316

Summary/ Synopsis

From the middle of the 1970s, an increasing amount of scholarly analysis centred around the concept of leadership in international relations at a time when US post-Second World War leadership began to decline. As a major beneficiary of this decline, Japan assumed the mantle of a replacement in the burgeoning field devoted to the study of changes in the international political economy. A major problem became the way in which the study of leadership in international relations became hostage to the singular example of the United States. The conflation between leadership on the one hand, with US interests and responsibilities on the other, rendered much of the analysis flawed. The growing disparities between the supply of international public goods and narrowly conceived US foreign policy interests undermined the overall study of international leadership. Research into leadership also faced growing struggle between perceptions and facts on the ground.

Japan, as the country during the 1980s perceived most likely to supplant the US as the largest and most influential capitalist economy, became the centre of interest in this field. This thesis seeks to more comprehensively measure and analyse Japanese leadership in a more contextual and thorough means through the comparative use of case studies between 1960 and 2000. Through noting the differences in country and regional reactions to Japanese foreign policy, this study demonstrates that leadership perceptions are more often than not driven by national self interest rather than an ideal type of responsible leadership. When dealing with East Asian and United States perceptions of what Japanese leadership should be, this conflated with their specific interests within international relations.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Alex Stephens
28th August 2006

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Acronyms

ADB – Asia Development Bank
 APEC – Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
 ARF – ASEAN Regional Forum
 ASEAN – Association of the Southeast Asian Nations
 BIS – Bank of International Settlements
 EAEC – East Asian Economic Caucus
 FDI – Foreign Direct Investment
 GATT – General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
 GEACS – Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere
 IBRD – International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
 IFI – International Financial Institution
 IMF – International Monetary Fund
 IPE – International Political Economy
 IT – Information Technology
 JASA – Japan-American Security Agreement
 JETRO – Japan External Trade Organisation
 JICA – Japan Investment Cooperation Agency
 MITI – Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Japan)
 MOF – Ministry of Finance (Japan)
 NAFTA – North American Free Trade Agreement
 NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
 NIE – Newly Industrialising Economies
 ODA – Official Development Assistance
 OECF – Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund
 PAFTA – Pacific Free Trade Agreement
 PBEC – Pacific Basin Economic Council
 PECC – Pacific Economic Cooperation Council
 PRC – People's Republic of China
 RTA – Regional Trade Agreement
 SDF – Self Defence Force (Japan)
 SEATO – Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation
 SME – Small Medium Enterprise
 UN – United Nations
 US – United States of America
 WTO – World Trade Organisation
 ZOPFAN – Zone of Peace Freedom and Neutrality

For future reference, when dollars are mentioned in this thesis, they refer to United States Dollars, unless otherwise noted.