CHAPTER VI

# EPISTEMIC SHIFT IN JAPANESE ODA POLICY AND DISCOURSIVE CO-OPTATION

6.1 Human Security as a Paradigm or *episteme*

It is clear that Human Security is much more than a practical approach to development and that it differs from other related trends in that it is a paradigm that goes beyond the field of development studies and attempts to encompass international relations as a whole. This is a very important point in that it indicates that in order to understand the true importance of Human Security as a paradigm or *episteme* it is necessary to zoom out and see the big picture. Such an ambitious theory claims to have answers to problems ranging from development to traditional security (strategic studies) and thus helps place the development field in perspective. The truly innovative idea introduced by Human Security is the way in which all areas of foreign policy are connected to each other and most importantly are given a common goal to strive for. According to the Human Security paradigm all areas of foreign policy are equally important and are interrelated and interdependent. This means that in order for human security to be achieved there must be policy coherence between the different policy areas. This coherence is achieved by means of co-operation and collaboration between all of the stakeholders in both the planning and the implementation stages of policy making. The comprehensive nature of human security makes it more than just a simple practical approach to development such as needs-based approach, or participatory development but rather represents an attempt at shifting the overarching paradigm in international relations from realism and institutionalist liberalism to

human security. The present study has attempted to show how the Human Security paradigm was adopted and promoted by Japan since the late 1990s and how it has affected its foreign policy. ODA policy was chosen as a representative area and the relative impact of the Human Security paradigm was assessed by means of an analysis of official discourse and case studies. This final chapter will attempt to sum up the findings of this study regarding the use of Human Security as a policy tool in official discourse.

6.1.1 Japan's use of Human Security as a Policy Tool in Official Discourse

Figure 1 Discursive Permeation of ODA Policy by the language of Human Security over time
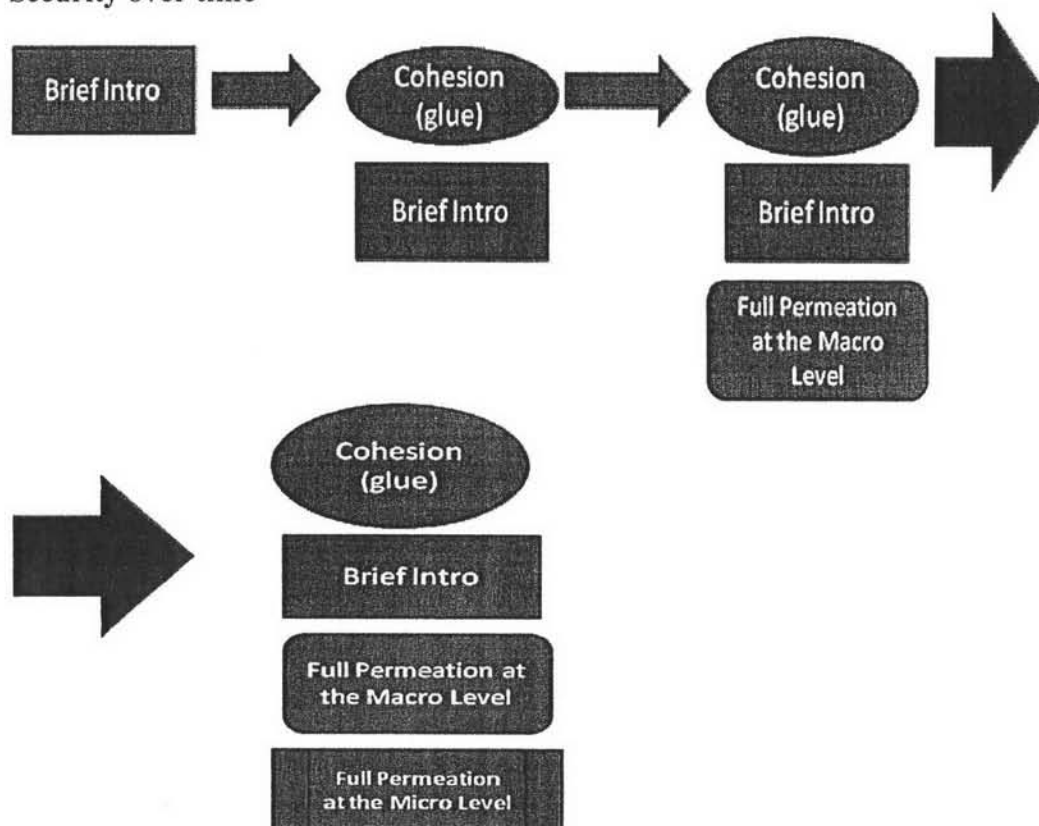
As discussed at length in chapters three and four of this dissertation, Japan has widely used the language of Human Security in its official discourse since the late
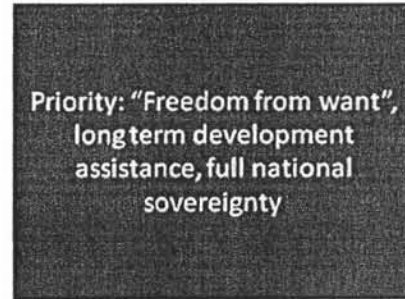
1990s. This change reflects a long term process of adaptation of Japan's foreign policy to external conditions. Nevertheless Japan's foreign policy does not necessarily coincide with its official discourse as was evident during most of the Cold War. In other words Japan's official discourse regarding ODA has gone through several stages as discussed in section 4.1. It was originally very functional and blunt and openly promoted Japan's economic interests abroad. However the paradigm present at the time, "developmentalism", did have some uniquely Japanese characteristics. This norm was based on the belief that the economic development of the region would benefit everyone economically including Japan. Thus Japan justified its foreign policy of "economism" by the parallel norm of "developmentalism". This was used in official discourse so as to present an image of coherence and to justify in the eyes of the world its economic policy towards the third world. This paradigm then gave way to common security and even later on to comprehensive security. Those two paradigms served to legitimize Japan's low-posture policy based on trade and "developmentalism". Comprehensive security provided a clear theoretical link between development and peace. Such a theory was perfectly compatible with Japan's non-military role in the international community. Due to Japan's limitation regarding international military participation a paradigm that shifts the emphasis of international security from conventional security (strategic studies) to development and peace building perfectly fit Japan's *de facto* foreign policy. This paradigm suffered a severe blow during the Gulf War after which Japan's foreign policy was judged to be opportunistic by the international community. At this point several factors both internal and external coincided in order to bring Human Security to the forefront of Japanese foreign policy.

Figure 2 "Protective" Human Security vs. "Development" Human Security

"PROTECTIVE" HUMAN
SECURITY

"DEVELOPMENT" HUMAN
SECURITY

Priority: "Freedom
from Fear",
responsibility to
protect, limited
national
sovereignty

Priority: "Freedom from want",
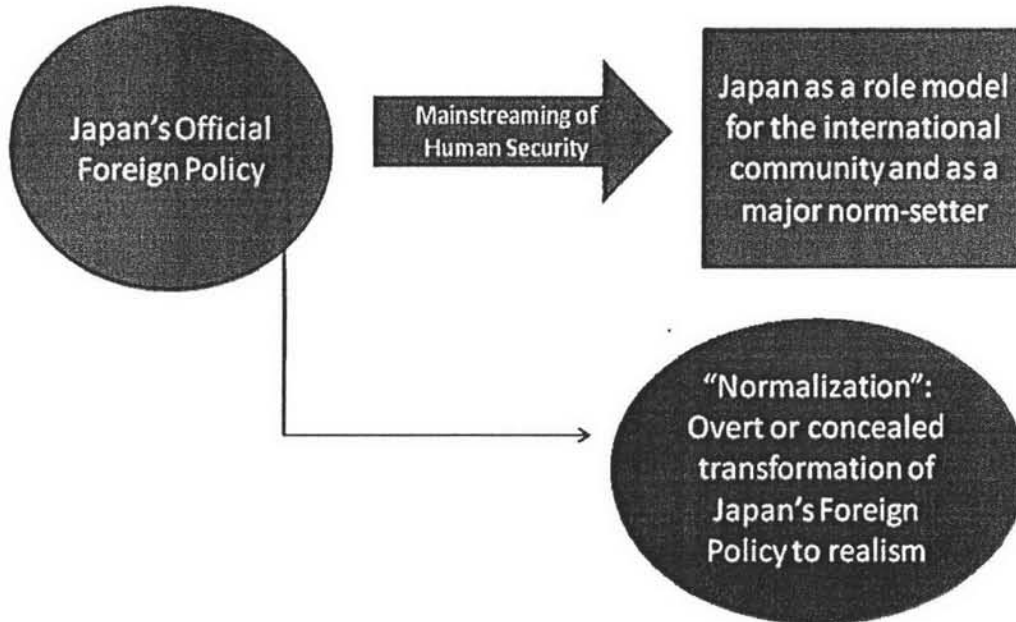long term development
assistance, full national
sovereignty

A growing awareness in the development field that traditional development was not benefiting some sectors of society and in the field of security studies that conventional peace keeping operations were not able to cope with complex humanitarian emergencies were connected by the rising Human Security Paradigm. The fact that most conflicts in the late 20th and early 21st centuries were internal rather than inter-state also helped to emphasize that securing the state was not enough. In addition to that the fact that a large proportion of the most bloody conflicts were ethnic in nature helped destroy the myth of the ideal nation-state based on ethnic and cultural unity. Human Security was able to explain all of those relatively new insecurities at least at the theoretical level by shifting the referent from the state to the individual and the securitizer from the military apparatus of the state to a wide range of concerned stakeholders. Japan seized the opportunity to promote this paradigm as a way to justify its historic emphasis on economic rather than military aid. Furthermore the embryonic paradigm gave middle powers such as Canada, Australia, and Japan the

opportunity to take a greater role in international affairs beyond that expected of them based on relative military power. Japan wanted to seize a power which was potentially as powerful as that of the military, and that was the power to set international norms. Norm setting at the international level is a long process that happens gradually by short and sporadic moments of cooperation between states in international fora. Those norms are confined to the space allowed by the prevalent *episteme* or paradigm. Therefore, any new norms are always expected to conform to the prevalent paradigm which serves as the glue that brings cohesion to the international system. The present *episteme* is arguably the Westphalia system of independent nation states and on a more theoretical level the leading paradigm is still realism. It is clear that operation within the confines of the Westphalia system at the practical level and of realism at the theoretical level is disadvantageous for Japan. As a state that has emphasized "economism" and "developmentalism" since the end of World War II it is clear that an analysis of its foreign policy based on realism would be problematic to say the least. It was therefore necessary for Japan to follow two twin approaches to the previously mentioned policy dilemma.

One approach would be the one espoused by realists and neo-realists and would mean that Japan should attempt to become what conservatives call a "normal" country. In other words, for Japan to amend or circumvent the constitutional prohibition on military forces so as to better fit the ideal of the nation-state under the Westphalian system. Needless to say this is an approach that has been followed especially since the Gulf War shock and has reached its peak in recent months with the discussion on an amendment to the Constitution in order to legalize the army. As

evidence for this assertion one may mention the notable increase in Japan's

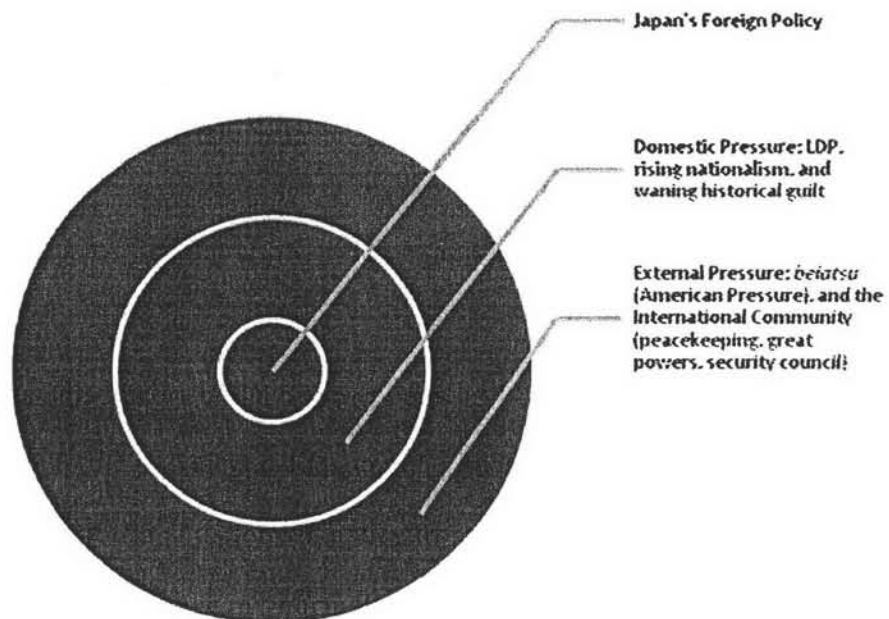participation in peace-keeping and peace-making operations in the last few years.

Figure 3 Twin Approaches to Ruling Paradigm

Japan's Official Foreign Policy

Mainstreaming of Human Security

Japan as a role model for the international community and as a major norm-setter

"Normalization": Overt or concealed transformation of Japan's Foreign Policy to realism

This trend reflects a rise in nationalism and a recovery in the influence of the

Liberal Democratic Party in the government. In addition to that external factors such

as the United States' pressure on Japan , *beiatsu*, regarding military cooperation in the

Asia Pacific region has prompted the government to assume some of the security

burden in East Asia. Thus this approach of "normalization" is being promoted by

conservative politicians at home and the pressure of Japan's most important ally, the

United States. It should be noted at this point that the language used in this approach.

"Normalization" implies that there is a set mold to be followed, an ideal. This ideal is

a nation-state that possesses armed forces proportionate to its resources and

population and that assumes its duty in helping maintain international security

through global or regional policing. It is clear that this ideal is that prescribed by

realist and neo-realist theorists. Thus this approach of "normalization" is one that attempts to adapt to the prevalent paradigm rather than attempting to shift it in order to attain legitimacy for Japan's foreign policy from the international community.

Figure 4 Sources of Pressure to "normalize"

Japan's Foreign Policy

Domestic Pressure: LDP, rising nationalism, and waning historical guilt

External Pressure: *beiatsu* (American Pressure), and the International Community (peacekeeping, great powers, security council)

The second approach is the mainstreaming of the Human Security paradigm. This approach attempts to provoke a paradigmatic shift in order to bring Human Security to primacy and thus face more favorable rules by which to be judged. In other words, this approach attempts to change what is considered normal by the international community in order for it to resemble more closely Japan's traditional foreign policy. As discussed in section 3.6, Human Security is highly compatible with Japan's traditional foreign policy and therefore its rise to primacy would mean that Japan would become an example to be followed rather than a country to be "normalized".

The second approach grows in complexity when one analyses Japan's official discourse and finds that the language of Human Security is also used in order to promote realist and neo-realist policies. However this does not mean that some neo-realist policies are not compatible with Human Security but they differ in their ultimate goal. In the case of Human Security policies should serve to secure the individual while in the case of realism they should serve to secure the state. One more concrete example of this is the growing emphasis on peace-keeping and nation-building. While those two are important aspects of Human Security they tend to be promoted by conservative politicians as a way to sugarcoat the first approach, "normalization". Japan's international responsibility to protect and to empower is used as a way to justify the improvement of the armed forces and the softening of the limits on military cooperation. This is a clear case of discursive co-optation since realist stakeholders are using the language of human security to justify policies that further their goals. Nevertheless the result at the official discourse level does reflect a balanced view of Human Security. As discussed in section 4.2, Japan's official view of Human Security tends to be very balanced compared to other middle powers and civil society organizations. Japan's view of Human Security at the official discourse level presents a picture of perfect balance between "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear" and between "protection" and "development". This is probably due to the pull effect created by the recent neo-realist and neo-liberal wave in Japanese politics and their attempt to make Japan and more "normal" country. This phenomenon helped move Japan's foreign policy along the "want"-"fear" continuum from the far end of the "want" side to the middle. Thus the resulting policy tends to

resemble that recommended by the UN Commission on Human Security in its final report, *Human Security Now* (United-Nations, 2003).

6.1.2 Japan's official ODA Policy as an Example of a Paradigmatic Shift

As explained in the previous section, Japan's official foreign policy has gone through a process in which the language of Human Security has been used for two main purposes. The first purpose was to bring cohesion to its foreign policy and to promote the mainstreaming of a favorable paradigm. The second was to promote individual policies which would help further the goal of making Japan a "normal" country without raising internal and external opposition, circumventing historical guilt.

Figure 5 Epistemic Shift from Realism to Human Security
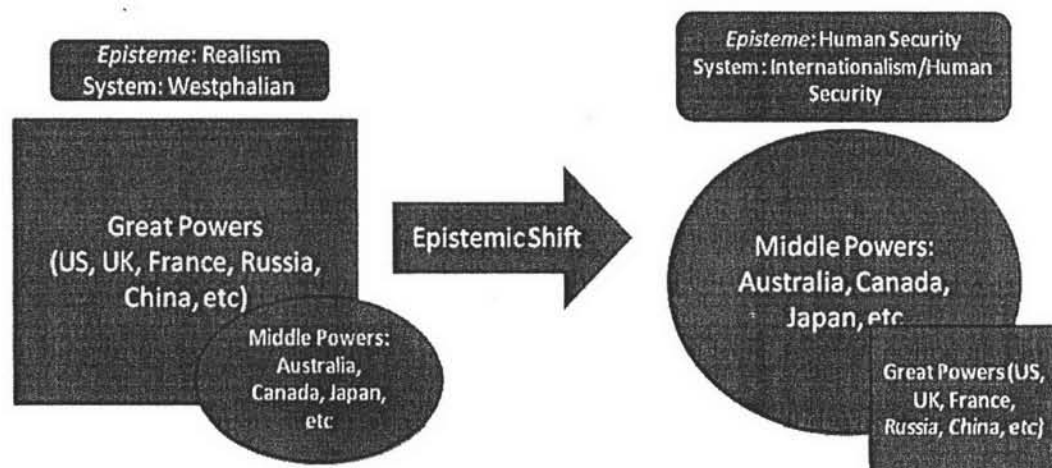
Section 4.2 shows how ODA policy has undergone a process of permeation with the language of human security. This was demonstrated by the detailed analysis of pivotal official policy papers in Chapter IV. Thus it is clear that the Human Security paradigm has had a strong impact on official ODA policy. Its language is

used through most policy papers in order to justify individual policies and in order to bring cohesion to ODA policy as a whole.

The resulting official ODA policy is one that truly reflects the Human Security approach to development and to humanitarian intervention including both protection and empowerment. The latest trends in development are integrated into Japan's official ODA policy as reflected by the 2003 ODA Charter on a macro level and by JICA's Policy Paper on Human Security on a micro level. Nevertheless this ideal picture depicted by official ODA policy is not always reflected by actual ODA funded projects.

6.2 Official Discourse and ODA Case Studies

Chapter five dealt with specific case studies of projects claiming to follow the Human Security approach for ODA. While it is clear that on a discursive level, human security has thoroughly permeated JICA and the language used in its project reports, it is not so clear whether Human Security provided the guiding policy for their formulation and implementation. There are two main problems when assessing Japan's Official ODA discourse regarding Human Security and comparing it to actual case studies. The first is the problem of the chicken and the egg. Which one came first? This is not a major problem when analyzing Japan's Official ODA discourse at the macro level since most important policy documents like the ODA Charter and the Mid-term Policy Paper on ODA were carefully drafted and clearly try to show that Human Security was the guiding paradigm behind them, at least at the discoursive level. Therefore, in this case it is clear that Human Security came first and then the

other specific policy areas were molded and adapted to fit the general paradigm. However, this is not so clear when dealing with specific case studies.

When analyzing specific case studies one is able to identify one clear commonality. All reports provided by JICA attempt to use the language of Human Security so as to give them coherence and legitimacy. Nevertheless it is also clear that some projects were formulated having other approaches other than human security in mind and were then sugarcoated with human security language in order to disguise them. This does not mean that the projects reviewed in Chapter V are not compatible with Human Security but rather than some where adapted to fit the language of human security but were inspired by other contemporary approaches in the field of development studies such as sustainable development and participatory development. One such example is the Community Empowerment Project with Civil Society in Indonesia. This project was described and analyzed in detail in section 5.2.4 and it was concluded that it was a clear example of community-based participatory development. This is an approach that is relatively compatible with Human Security but is distinctly different at the theoretical level. Its emphasis on the community over the individual does not present a major obstacle at the practical level but is clearly incompatible at the theoretical level. Simply because if the individual is prioritized by the security label then there should be no need to prioritize the community. And if one community is prioritized then that community is being favored above other groups. In summary, this project is an example of how some case studies represent projects inspired by different development approaches and then adapted to fit the language of human security.

A second problem encountered while analyzing specific case studies of the use of Human Security in Japanese funded ODA projects was that some projects tended to place more emphasis on "freedom from want" than on "freedom from fear". It is clear from the 2003 ODA Charter that Japan connects ODA to respect for human rights and to democracy. Section 4.2.2 on the ODA Charter clearly shows how there is a principle of conditionality similar to that of the Western Powers which attempts to use ODA as a tool to promote "freedom from fear". This important aspect of Human Security is often ignored when dealing with rogue states such as Myanmar and with regions with a high regard for national sovereignty such as South East Asia.

Economic considerations continue to have precedence over political ones in the eyes of the Japanese government. This can be observed clearly in the cases of Japan's ODA Policy towards countries like Myanmar and Vietnam. Both countries have authoritarian governments with a dark past regarding human rights violations. Due to the economic importance of ASEAN for the Japanese economy, considerations regarding human rights and the spread of democracy are put aside in favor of national interest. An attempt is made to justify this by connecting development to long term peace and the gradual transformation of authoritarian regimes to democracies. In other words, Japan justifies its ODA to those states by stressing the importance of a peaceful and gradual move towards democracy rather than by confrontation. In addition to that Japan has to navigate the dangerous waters of Southeast Asian nationalism. The colonial period left the region stuck in what Fukuyama calls "history" and thus the political trends encountered reflect those of Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Fukuyama, 1992). That factor combined to Japan's historical guilt make it very difficult for Japan to press on issues of human rights and

democracy. ASEAN has also made it clear that its way is to avoid intervention in the internal affairs of member countries and the promotion of economic cooperation.

Projects undertaken in Myanmar and Vietnam lack any mention of human rights or of democratic participation and tend to concentrate on tackling "freedom from want" as a means to promote mutually beneficial economic partnerships. In the case of Myanmar the Technical Cooperation Project for the Eradication of Opium Poppy Cultivation and Poverty Reduction in Kokang Special Region No. 1 is a clear example of a cooperation with an authoritarian government in order to tackle "freedom from want" while obviating "freedom from fear".

There are some cases in which Japan does attempt to tackle "freedom from fear" but usually only in cases in which there is little to no opposition from the beneficiary. This is the case of Cambodia and of the Project of Judicial Reform. Due to the peculiarly propitious circumstances present in Cambodia at the time, Japan and the international community were able to put into practice the Human Security approach for nation-building. This is a case in which both "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want" were tackled and given equal emphasis.

Most other projects fall in between the cases previously described. Japan is clearly attempting to implement the human security approach but has opted for adapting to external circumstances. In other words, the approach has had to adapt to the realities and exigencies of *real politik*. It is also clear that Japan's ODA is becoming more strategic as a tool for promoting Japan's economic foreign policy.

Table 5 Japan's ODA Policy on Paper and in Practice

Japan's ODA Policy's Components	Official ODA Policy	ODA recipient: *nationalist, high regard for national sovereignty*	ODA recipient: *Internationalist or in the process of nation building*
Conditionality based on Human Rights and Democracy	Yes	No	Yes
Promotion of free market policies	Yes	Yes	Yes
Attempts to tackle "freedom from want"	Yes	Yes	Yes
Attempts to tackle "freedom from fear"	Yes	No	Yes
Resulting Policy:	*Human Security*	*"developmentalism", truncated version of Human Security*	*Human Security*

Note: The present table summarizes results from case studies.

6.3 21st Century Official Development Assistance Policy Apologetics and Discursive Co-optation

Apologetics is a field of theology developed by the Roman Catholic Church in order to study how to defend and legitimize the teachings of the Church. The methods used to defend the Church at a theoretical level are very similar to those used by governments in official discourse. The first step is always to attempt to set the ruling paradigm by which everything else will be judged. The Church was able to do this for several centuries by means of developing complex paradigms such as divine and natural law and by having Doctors of the Church like St. Thomas Aquinas writing treatises connecting all areas of life to those central tenets. In other words, the main

purpose of those treatises was to promote the mainstreaming of the paradigm in addition to providing legitimacy to specific Church practices.

This process of apologetics was eagerly adopted by many other fields and institutions one of which was states. In an age of democratic accountability and more recently international responsibility it is necessary for a government to publicly defend its policies. A State must publicly announce the goal of its policies and the process by which they were formulated and implemented. This is the case of foreign policy which is a unique field in that a policy must gain national and international legitimacy to be considered successful. Thus the dilemma of reconciling national interest with international responsibility is brought to the fore for the first time in political science.
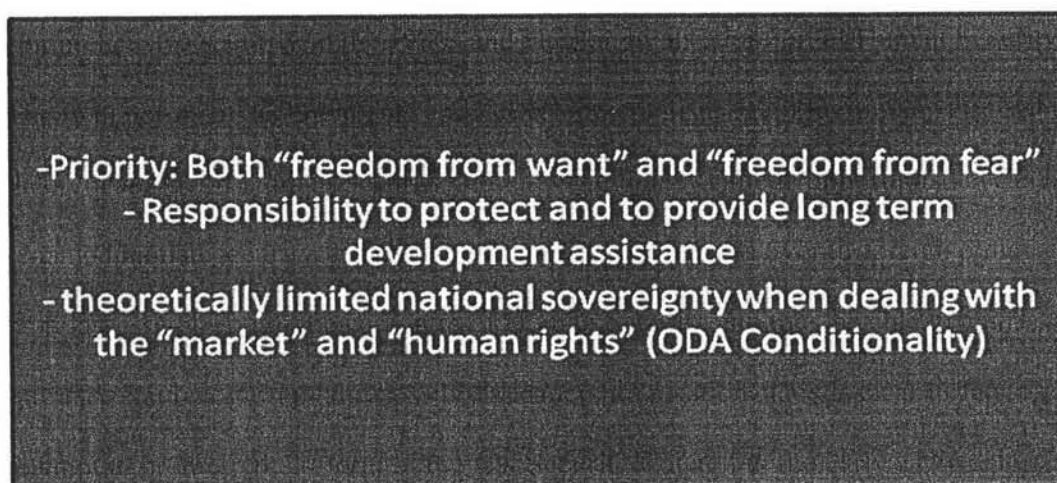
This study has used an specific policy field in order to show in detail how the process of what I call 21st Century Policy Apologetics takes place. A State adopts a beneficial paradigm and attempts to promote its acceptance by the international community. This process of mainstreaming is expected to ultimately lead to a shift in paradigms or *epistemes* from which the promoting state gains legitimacy and norm setting power.

The field of international relations is currently contested by several paradigms ranging from realism to critical theory and human security. Those paradigms compete against each other for primacy and most importantly for the recognition of policy makers. This is the path from the University to the Capitol. Currently the two most widely accepted and influential paradigms are neo-realism and institutional liberalism. Those two paradigms more closely resemble the foreign policies of the great powers. This in turn prompts middle powers and developing countries to promote their own

paradigms in order to legitimize their own foreign policies and world views. This was the case of dependency theory by the third world and is currently the case of Japan and Canada with Human Security.

It is therefore natural for middle powers such as Japan to try to mainstream a paradigm that favors their foreign policy. Japan has done this through its support for comprehensive security in the 1980s and later on by its adoption of Human Security. The twin norms of "economism" and "developmentalism" gain legitimacy through the theoretical glue of Human Security. Policies previously called "opportunistic" can be renamed human security friendly. Most importantly Japan's overall foreign policy can be re-assessed through the paradigm of Human Security and thus be able to gain international recognition and possibly a leadership position. This is clear in Japan's attempt to promote the reform of the UN Security Council in the early 21st Century and the use of Human Security language as a way to claim recognition for its contribution to international peace and security.

Figure 6 Japan's Well-balanced view of Human Security in Theory

-Priority: Both "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear"
- Responsibility to protect and to provide long term development assistance
- theoretically limited national sovereignty when dealing with the "market" and "human rights" (ODA Conditionality)

As described throughout this dissertation, policy making is a complex process involving many stakeholders and factors. It is therefore important to remember that

governments are not unitary actors but their actions represent the final result of a tug-o-war between competing policies and factions. Japan's ODA Policy is no exception to this and thus it is clear that its Official ODA Policy is a result of complex negotiations and interactions between stakeholders both inside and outside Japan responding to their national and international environment.

Discursive Co-optation is the process in which policies are disguised by means of official discourse in order to make them more acceptable for the public both at home and abroad. The case in point is that of conservative politicians of the Liberal Democratic Party promoting the "normalization" of Japan by means of official discourse that uses the language of Human Security. "Normalization" refers to a neo-realist ideal that favors the legalization of the armed forces and the softening of the ban on international military cooperation while Human Security refers to the protection and empowerment of the individual. The goal behind neo-realist policies should always be the security of the state and the relative increase in power of the state in question in the international system. On the contrary the goal behind the Human Security paradigm is the attainment of human security for all individuals regardless of geographic location. It is clear that the methods used to achieve those two different goals may coincide as in the case of peace-keeping operations and nation-building but it is also clear that the final goals are different. Therefore in the case of Japanese ODA Policy, conservative politicians have identified the opportunity of using the language of Human Security in order to promote certain policies which are compatible with both paradigms. However it is clear that by using the language of Human Security they are trying to misguide the public and the international community regarding their true intentions and final goal. Thus, this is a clear case of

discursive co-optation. The discourse of Human Security has been and is still being co-opted by neo-realist elements in the Japanese government who share the goal of making Japan a "normal" country in the neo-realist sense.

Table 6 Discursive Co-optation of Human Security in Japan's ODA Policy

Overarching Theory	Willingnes s to tackle "freedom from want"	Willingnes s to tackle "freedom from fear"	Willingness to increase Japan's cooperation in peace-building	Language used in Official Policy	Goal
Neo-realist stakeholders	Yes	When convenient	Yes	Human Security	"Normaliz ation" of Japan
Human Security Approach	Yes	Yes	Yes	Human Security	Achievem ent of Human Security

6.4 "Earning" versus "Spending"

A common way of defining an ODA policy is the dichotomy of "earning" vs. "spending". While helpful in describing the major characteristics of ODA as a strategy it oversimplifies the complex nature of ODA policy. Trinidad makes the case in his paper on the disbursement of Japanese ODA to Southeast Asia that Japan is moving towards a "spending" strategy (Trinidad, 2007). He bases this assertion on a quantitative study of Japan's ODA from 1991 to 2004. While some of the conclusions he reaches form his analysis are backed by strong quantitative evidence others tend to be logical jumps. One example of this is that while Trinidad shows that Japan has progressively allocated more ODA in the form of grants rather than loans he tend to equate those grants with humanitarian intentions. In other words, Trinidad equates

"spending" strategies with humanitarian concerns and altruism. The logical jump takes place from identifying an increased "spending" strategy with humanitarian intentions and altruism. Thus, while several important trends identified by Trinidad such as Japan's increasingly strategic use of ODA due to domestic pressure under strict budgetary constraints and more sparing use grant aid for nation-building are valid and rest on solid empirical and cognitive ground, his final conclusion and especially his forecast do not. Trinidad claims that Japan's ODA is moving towards a "spending" strategy which he equates with altruism and humanitarian concerns as opposed to "earning" and geoeconomic concerns (Trinidad, 2007). In the present dissertation I have shown the exact opposite. That while Japan claims to follow humanitarian concerns in the form of the concept of Human Security, it continues to follow geoeconomic and geopolitical concerns as the driving force behind its ODA Policy. Finally, it was clearly shown that the empirical evidence provided by quantitative data of Japan's ODA from 1991 to 2004 conform to the theoretical model presented by the present dissertation. Furthermore, the logical leap taken by Trinidad in his quantitative analysis of Japanese ODA to Southeast Asia is complemented by a detailed discursive analysis of Japan's Official ODA Discourse and predicts a very different landing for Japan's future ODA policy. In conclusion "spending" and "earning" strategies do not represent a perfect dichotomy and may be used interchangeably to further geoeconomic and geopolitical goals.

6.5 An Uncertain Path towards Human Security

It is unclear at this point whether Human Security will attain primacy over competing paradigms. However, the paradigm has already had a deep impact in the

fields of humanitarian aid and development assistance. This is partly due to the role played by middle powers like Japan and the Nordic Countries in those fields. The all-encompassing nature of the paradigm is one of its most alluring qualities while also one of its most important weaknesses.

Attacks at the paradigm come from two main fronts. From an academic point of view, the paradigm presents some major flaws and incongruities such as those identified by MacFarlane and Khong who go as far a as excluding economic security as part of Human Security (Khong, 2006). Another front is that of practitioners and stakeholders, otherwise known as the real world. In this front the most common attack is on the actual value of the approach for policy making. Its all encompassing and vague-nature make it difficult to use for policy making and implementation. While at the same time that same vagueness gives it the necessary flexibility to garner the support of a varied group of stakeholders

The strong point of the Human Security paradigm is how it connects the local to the global and most importantly how it shifts the emphasis of security from the state to the individual. Therefore, the power of this paradigm may not be its theoretical traction but rather its ideological pull. Human Security resembles a philosophy more than a theory of international relations not only in its normative basis but also in its all encompassing nature.

Japan's foreign policy has and will continue to be influenced by this rising paradigm but whether Human Security will stay with us long enough to reach primacy over neo-realism is another story. It is clear that it has impacted some policy areas more than others and that while official discourse tends to reflect the paradigm most policy makers remain skeptical and uncommitted to its most basic tenets.