

## Alliance Dilemma with the U.S. and the Reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper aims to explain the alliance dilemma as a determinant for the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism. Reconceptualization is understood here as a way to redirect more precise and more productive uses of the concepts. Still, it drifts away from dialectical interpretation toward a unidimensional interpretation, also weakening the explanatory value of the concepts. Despite its controversies, the Pacifist Constitution (Article 9) has been repeatedly adjusted and reinterpreted to justify any necessary policies Japan seemingly made. It implies the gradual reconceptualization of its Pacifism, which could be categorized into three big stages: (1) the creation of Self-Defense Forces (SDF); (2) SDF participation in the 1991 Gulf War; and (3) Japan's involvement in the US-led wars and hawkish policies during Abe administration. The issue would be addressed by using Glenn Snyder's Alliance Dilemma theory and James Morrow's Security and Autonomy concepts. It would be revealed that either likelihood of strategies with their prospective risks in the alliance dilemma between the US and Japan drives the latter to depart from the pacifism model into normalization path, thus inevitably resulted in its Pacifism being re-conceptualized.*

**Keywords:** reconceptualization; Japanese pacifism; article 9; alliance dilemma; the US-Japan alliance

### ABSTRAK

Tulisan ini menjelaskan dilema aliansi sebagai determinan terhadap rekonseptualisasi pasifisme Jepang. Rekonseptualisasi dalam konteks tulisan ini adalah sebuah cara mengarahkan ulang konsep untuk menjadi lebih tepat dan memiliki kegunaan yang lebih produktif, tetapi membuatnya berubah dari interpretasi dialektikal menjadi interpretasi unidimensional, yang juga melemahkan nilai eksplanasi dari konsep tersebut. Meskipun terdapat berbagai kontroversi, Konstitusi Pasifis (Pasal Sembilan) telah terus menerus mengalami perubahan dan reinterpretasi untuk membenarkan segala kebijakan Jepang. Hal tersebut mengimplikasikan rekonseptualisasi pasifisme yang terjadi secara bertahap dan dapat dikategorikan menjadi tiga tahapan besar: (1) pembentukan Self-Defense Forces (SDF); (2) partisipasi SDF dalam Perang Teluk tahun 1991; serta (3) keterlibatan Jepang dalam mendukung perang yang diinisiasi Amerika Serikat dan kebijakan *hawkish* dalam masa administrasi Abe. Permasalahan tersebut dibahas dengan menggunakan Teori Aliansi Dilema Glenn Snyder dan Konsep Keamanan dan Autonomi James Morrow. Tulisan ini menemukan bahwa kemungkinan strategi yang manapun dalam aliansi dilema antara AS dan Jepang dengan masing-masing risiko prospektifnya mendorong Jepang untuk menanggalkan model pasifisme dan memasuki jalan normalisasi sehingga mengakibatkan rekonseptualisasi pasifismenya yang tak dapat dihindari.

**Kata kunci:** rekonseptualisasi; pasifisme Jepang; pasal sembilan; dilema aliansi; aliansi AS-Jepang

## Introduction

The word "Pacifism" is closely related to peace and rejection of violence. However, the Pacifism for realities in Japan is rather complex as stated by Peace Researcher Fujiwara Osamu that there is no English word which is a precise equivalent to describe the Japanese peace-loving attitude or *heiwa shugi* ('peace' and 'ism') in its own language.<sup>1</sup> But along the way, this form of "Japanese Pacifism" is also addressed as "one-country pacifism."

One-Country Pacifism is a tendency to see overseas conflict as having no relevance to Japan. Sam Jameson illustrates it as, "If Japan is at peace, that is fine!". This unique view then has manifested into a Japan that is oblivious to world politics and its limited role in the international arena, especially in the security sphere. After World War II, these beliefs are firmly held by Japan and reflected in Article 9 of its constitution, which was primarily drafted by the United States officials at that time.<sup>2</sup> This constitution consists of two main clauses: renunciation of war and prohibition in maintaining military forces. For the most part, Article 9 is a simple promise made to the world: never again, Japan will show aggression to its neighbors.

This sacred tenet, however, is always under debate with repetitions of adjustment and reinterpretation. The Japanese military or formally recognized as the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) is allowed to be formed because of a politically ratified reinterpretation of Article 9.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mari Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-War Japan: The Rebirth of a Nation* (London: Routledge, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Michael K. Connors, Rémy Davison, and Jörn Dosch. *The New Global Politics of The Asia Pacific* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 63. See further James E. Auer, "Article Nine of Japan's Constitution: From Renunciation of Armed Force 'Forever' To The Third Largest Defense Budget In The World," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 53, no. 2 (1990): 173.

<sup>3</sup> Japanese military was formerly known as the National Police Reserve (NPR), created after the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 which was consisted of 75.000 personnel. See further Kizuhara Kazumi, "The Korean War

In the 1991 Gulf War, Japan once again made some adjustments to pass legislation that allowed the dispatch of its troops overseas for the first time since WWII.<sup>4</sup> After the 9/11 tragedy, Japan sent its SDF to Samawah, Iraq, to assist the United States "Coalition of the Willing."<sup>5</sup> In 2006, Japan's defense budget was over \$41 billion, was one of the five highest defense budgets in the world.<sup>6</sup> The SDF now has been dispatched for UN Peacekeeping operations (PKOs) to Cambodia and other places. Those activities reflected Shinzo Abe's "Proactive Contribution to Peace" principle that becomes the base of Japan's foreign policy in the post-Cold War era.<sup>7</sup>

The increasingly flexible reinterpretations of Article 9 indicate the process of 'reconceptualization' of its Pacifism. Reconceptualization is understood here as a way to redirect more precise and more productive uses of the concepts, but it drifts away from dialectical interpretation toward a unidimensional understanding, also weakening the explanatory value of the concepts.<sup>8</sup> The continuous strategies on reinterpreting the Pacifist Constitution have made a "getaway" for

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and The National Police Reserve of Japan: Impact of the US Army's Far East Command on Japan's Defense Capability," *NIDS Security Studies* 8, no. 3 (2006): 95.

<sup>4</sup> See Japan Ministry of Defense, *Japan Defense Focus* (MOD Publication No. 24), 2011, 3, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://www.mod.go.jp/e/jdf/pdf/jdf\\_no24.pdf](https://www.mod.go.jp/e/jdf/pdf/jdf_no24.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> See David Arase, "Japan, the Active State?: Security Policy after 9/11," *Asian Survey* 47, no. 4 (2007): 583, DOI: 10.1525/as.2007.47.4.560.

<sup>6</sup> See further Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and The Future of East Asia* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2007), 63.

<sup>7</sup> See further Akihiro Sado, "The End of Cold War and Japan's Participation in Peacekeeping Operations: Overseas Deployment of the Self-Defense Forces," *Japan's Diplomacy Series*, no. 638 (2015): 10. See also Shinichi Kitaoka, "A 'Proactive Contribution to Peace' and the Right of Collective Self-Defense: The Development of Security Policy in the Abe Administration," *Asia-Pacific Review*, 21 (2014): 2, 1-18. DOI: 10.1080/13439006.2014.985237.

<sup>8</sup> See further J. Douglas Orton and Karl E. Weick, "Loosely Coupled Systems: A Reconceptualization," *The Academy of Management Review* 15, no. 2 (1990): 203-233.

Japanese Pacifism to be deconstructed unremittingly in justifying any necessary policies. The process of the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism can be categorized into three big stages: (1) the creation of SDF; (2) the participation of SDF in Gulf War I; and (3) the dispatch of SDF to Iraq, as well as Abe Cabinet's current policy of 'Proactive Contribution to Peace.' These series of discrete steps have indicated a shift from the pacifism model into a normalization.

Each stage of its reconceptualization process is closely related with its alliance with the US. During the first stage, Japan deferred to the US demand to rearm in the wake of Korean War. Next, after facing harsh criticism from its ally to make a "real" contribution and not only exert its checkbook diplomacy, Japan has begun to take the first initiative to send its troops abroad and participate in international security. During the third stage, Japan who was seemingly afraid to risk abandonment from its ally has decided to realign its stance to follow the U.S.-led war on terrorism. The reaffirmation of the alliance has also been made as the central key to its security strategy.

As the title suggests, this paper will examine why the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism could have occurred and to what extent the alliance dilemma with the US impacted the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism. The first section will highlight different perspectives of scholars and experts regarding the case. Secondly, the paper will introduce the dynamics of alliance security dilemma articulated by Glenn Snyder and James D. Morrow's concepts of what autonomy and security are. Part three then outlines the three big stages leading to the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism. The next section then comprises of analysis and then will be closed by a summary of the discussion.

## Perspectives on the Reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism

This section will discuss pieces of literature related to the current research topic. However, let us first examine the word "pacifism" itself. It was briefly mentioned in the beginning that the Japanese Pacifism is unique. Hence Peace Researcher Osamu said that there was no equivalent in English word to describe Japanese people's peace-loving attitude, which is known as *heiwa shugi* (each means 'peace' and 'ism') in its native language.<sup>9</sup>

Mari Yamamoto quoted the concepts of *Pacifism* (absolute opposition to violence and belief that the war is never justifiable) and *pacificism* (the resistance of war and violence when truly necessary to advance the cause of peace) introduced by Ceadel to depict the attitude of the Japanese.<sup>10</sup> She argued that the Japanese Pacifism defies the distinction between those two concepts. Furthermore, Japanese people's outlook on peace varies a lot and tends to contradict, as well as does not exactly fall into a single category. However, she perceived that although most Japanese people, especially at the grassroots level, tend to have a limited understanding of their attitudes, the Pacifist Constitution (Article 9) is a powerful source of inspiration that makes them believe they are indeed "pacifists." Thus, although with some hesitations on her side, Yamamoto termed the majority of Japanese people's anti-war outlook as "popular pacifism."

Some scholars, on the other hand, argued that the term "anti-militarism" is more suitable than Pacifism.<sup>11</sup> However, Karl Gustafsson pointed out that Japanese security policies never revolved around anti-militarism (*higunjishugi*), but more around "Japanese pacifism" (*heiwashugi*) and Japan as a "peace state" (*heiwa*

<sup>9</sup> Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-War Japan*.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998).

*kokka*).<sup>12</sup> It is an identity that distinguish Japan from other non-pacifist.<sup>13</sup> Japan's Pacifism appears to serve as security policy restrictions, but at the same time, it also goes the other way: security restrictions substantiate the pacifist identity. However, this pacifism notion is seemingly being replaced with a normal state model as more Japanese policymakers seem to find the former model as abnormal and unrealistic.

Many scholars often relate to the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism as a more "normalized" or "realistic" Japan. Works of literature regarding the case goes back for decades as the term "normalization" was first popularized by Ichirou Ozawa in his influential book, *Blueprint for New Japan*, in 1993.<sup>14</sup> Since then, the idea of remaking Japan into a "normal country" (*futsuu no kuni*) become Japanese political discourse.

But the big question is, what makes Japan seemingly entered into the path of normalization in the first place? Peter Katzenstein answered with "Japan's security policy will continue to be shaped by domestic rather than the international balance of power."<sup>15</sup> Seemingly agreed with Katzenstein, Karol Zakowski added that Japanese foreign policy did not result from external pressures, but by domestic conditions and rational decision from the decision makers

who filtered the international stimuli.<sup>16</sup> Kenneth Pyle, on the other countered with "Repeatedly, through the course of 150 years of its modern history, each time the structure of the international system underwent a fundamental change, Japan adopted its foreign policies to that changed order and restructured its internal organization to take advantage."<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, Thomas Berger doubted the normalization and remilitarization process themselves. Still, he specified that "Japan's approach to defense will certainly continue to evolve as the result of changes in the international system. But the change will be incremental as it will still be influenced by the preferences of Japanese people and their leaders."<sup>18</sup>

Neither of their arguments is wrong. Their arguments of international pressure, domestic politics, or the interplay between them certainly give some influence to the course of Japan's security policies and the shift of its grand strategy. But let us take a look into what Richard J. Samuels stated in his work, "As there is no telling a priori which would drive the construction of Japanese grand strategy, there is no compelling reason to privilege one view or the other."<sup>19</sup> During the Cold War, it was rather obvious that the USSR military capabilities gave a higher threat than China's present military forces. Still, the Japanese government didn't make any decision to modernize their military and the debate regarding the normalization process only started after the Gulf War. So, what does this mean?

Based on what evidences the following kinds of literature show, there were other

<sup>12</sup> Karl Gustafsson, Linus Hagström, and Ulv Hanssen, "Long live pacifism! Narrative power and Japan's pacifist model," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, 4 (2019): 505. DOI: 10.1080/09557571.2019.1623174. See also Karl Gustafsson, Linus Hagström, and Ulv Hanssen, "Japan's Pacifism Is Dead, Survival," *Survival - Global Politics and Strategy* 60, 6 (2017): 137-158. DOI: 10.1080/00396338.2018.1542803.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> See Ichirou Ozawa. *Blueprint for a New Japan: The Rethinking of a Nation* (New York: Kodansha USA Inc, 1994). See also Yoshihide Soeya, David A. Welch, and Masayuki Tadokoro, eds., *Japan as a 'Normal Country'?: A Nation in Search of Its Place in the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011).

<sup>15</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1996), 204.

<sup>16</sup> Karol Zakowski, Beata Bochorodycz, and Marcin Socha, *Japan's Foreign Policy Making: Central Government Reforms, Decision-Making Processes, and Diplomacy* (Berlin: Springer, 2018).

<sup>17</sup> Kenneth B. Pyle, *Japan Rising: The Resurgence of the Japanese Power and Purpose* (New York: Public Affairs Book, 2007).

<sup>18</sup> Thomas U. Berger, "From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-militarism," *International Security* 17, no. 4 (1993): 119-150. DOI: 10.2307/2539024.

<sup>19</sup> Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 4.

different and more specific factors at play. There are two factions of views regarding the case. The first faction explores the interplay of the US influence and regional instability as the most prominent factors. The second faction believes that the US behavior as the main factor that forces Japan to begin acting like a normal state.<sup>20</sup> Yoshihide Soeya explained that "Japanese Pacifism" has evolved into a highly ideological "One-Country Pacifism" that rejected military force and military aggression toward its neighbors. He mentioned that this view has been eroded after the Cold War, and its significance has also been reduced in the minds of the young generation who did not experience war.<sup>21</sup> Japan has moved to become a "normal country," which is a full-fledged middle power. Following the above points, he argued that Japan has three dimensions of Post-Cold War changes.<sup>22</sup> First, Japan has begun to be involved in international security after it failed to fulfill the international demands to take part in logistical support during the 1991 Gulf War. Secondly, the changes led to the reaffirmation of the US-Japan alliance in the wake of new regional and global security challenges. The third domain of change then encompasses the focus of the importance of national defense. Previously, it relied on its security arrangements with the US and the postwar consensus. However, with the new instabilities, e.g. the North Korean nuclear crisis and the Taiwan Strait crisis in the mid-1990s, Japan made a few adjustments to allow its forces to become more mobile and adapt to dangers in

its vicinity. It began with the National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) in 1995 that articulated how the new Japan in the context of its commitment to the alliance with the US and its international contribution, will strive to ensure its national defense by upgrading, maintaining, and operating its capability, hence signaling the erosion of the "one-country pacifism".<sup>23</sup>

Sam Jameson presented a similar explanation as he described the development of one-country pacifism views in Japan and evaluated Japan's normalization process. He scrutinized that there is a piecemeal change occurs in Japanese one-country pacifism, and it is beginning to fade away since the 1991 Gulf War as it was the first time for Japan to deploy its troops overseas since WWII.<sup>24</sup> Jameson also discussed that the rise of China, North Korea's nuclear threats, and the sociological impact of the US military base in Okinawa articulate Japan's new strategic policies.<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, Michael Panton told a more theoretical answer to the question of how Japan reforms its defense policy. He laid out three prominent factors: (1) the limits of the US resources and its commitment to Japan and East Asia; (2) its alliances with the US; and (3) regional fears.<sup>26</sup> The explanation showed that the weakened economic prowess of the US indicates that it would be a bit difficult for America to continue assuming "the hegemon mantle" in Asia and thus perceived as a threat to Japan. Moreover, the burden-sharing issue on the US

<sup>20</sup> For further reference, review and discussion of publications cited in this section could also be seen in Axel Berkofsky, *A Pacifist Constitution for an Armed Empire: Past and Present of the Japanese Security and Defence Policies* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2012). Sheila A. Smith, *Japan Rearmed: The Politics of Military Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019). Yoshihide Soeya, David A. Welch, and Masayuki Tadokoro, eds., *Japan as a 'Normal Country': A Nation in Search of Its Place in the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011).

<sup>21</sup> Yoshihide, *Japan as a 'Normal Country.'*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1995, *National Defense Program Outline in and after FY 1996*, accessed June 11, 2020, retrieved from <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/security/defense96/contents.html>.

<sup>24</sup> See further Sam Jameson, "One-nation pacifism: Japan's security problems and challenges to the US-Japan alliance," *Asia Pacific Review* 5, no. 3 (1998): 71. DOI: 10.1080/13439009808719991.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Michael A. Panton, "Politics, Practice and Pacifism: Revising Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution," *Asian-Pacific Law & Policy Journal* 11, no. 2 (2010): 192.

side is additional evidence to its weakened economic prowess that is resulting in a decrease in its defense budget and thus causing a piecemeal withdrawal from the region. The next question, then, should the US commitment to Japan and the region fall entirely, how will Japan fare in the face of destabilizing threats from China and North Korea? Thus, the interplay of these three factors motivates Japan to gradually execute more hawkish policies, causing it to reinterpret Article 9 continuously and lead to paradoxes of constitutional reason.

Dupont also argued the same, but the unique part of his perception is his word choice for the reconceptualization of Pacifism.<sup>27</sup> He argued that the transition of Tokyo's embedded Pacifism towards pragmatic realism behavior is an evolutionary process.<sup>28</sup> The inclination emerges because of the need for a modern defense force that was now generally accepted and the participation of the SDF in PKOs that was no longer scandalous.

The other arguments highlight the factor of US influence. Even though he also agreed with the other faction, Samuel gave more emphasis on the US factor. He argued that the change in Tokyo's grand strategy lies in its internal political climate and the shifting of the balance of power in world politics, including regional and international arenas. The transformation of the Yoshida Doctrine began after the Cold War ended, and Japan has to endure the greatest humiliation of failing to meet international demands during the 1991 Gulf War.<sup>29</sup> Samuels wrote that the criticism by the US and the world on Japan's hesitancy urged the latter to start military modernization and gave birth to new legislation that allows its forces to be involved in UN PKOs.

<sup>27</sup> See further Alan Dupont, *Unsheathing the Samurai Sword: Japan's Changing Security Policy* (Sidney: Lowy Institute for International Policy Paper, 2004), 55.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>29</sup> Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 91.

Samuels believed that the greatest threat of all to Japan is regarding its alliance with the US.<sup>30</sup> When there are choices between endearing itself to the US and facing the risk of entrapment or being distanced and bearing the risk of abandonment, Japanese policymakers always reacted first and foremost to the threat of abandonment.<sup>31</sup> The Japanese policymakers generally believed that it would be pertinent to closely align Japan with the US should they wish to normalize their country.

Meanwhile, Christopher W. Hughes examined Japan's policies normalization after the period of the 1990s by giving special attention to the history of amendments to Article 9.<sup>32</sup> Hughes also related the same thing as Samuels in seeing the US as a more influential factor in the reinterpretation of Article 9. First, Japan took its first step to endear itself to America during the later stages of the Cold War by further integrating into the US regional and global strategies.<sup>33</sup> Next, Japan deferred to demands to send its troops and not only financial contributions during the Gulf War. Then, since 9/11, Japan has once again dispatched SDF overseas in support of US war on terror.

In addition, David Arase argued that Japan's alliance with Washington influences the change in the political orientation of the former based on his observation of Japan's records after the 9/11 era. The US continues to encourage Japan's remilitarization with increasing effect as Japan's role grows more active and receptive to the US pressure.<sup>34</sup> Add to this is the fact that the complexity of the East Asia region and the fluidity of Japan's ambitions suggest the need for caution above all else as Japan becomes more normalized.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>32</sup> See further Christopher W. Hughes, "Why Japan could revise its constitution and what it would mean for Japanese security policy," *Orbis* (Kidlington) 50, no. 4 (2006): 728-729. DOI: 10.1016/j.orbis.2006.07.011.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> See further Arase, "Japan, the Active State?," 583.

Meanwhile, Akiko Fukushima, in her publication, mentioned that the Japan-US Treaty had driven the former to be active in the areas of regional and global security.<sup>35</sup> There were many times that constitutional constraints had limited Japan's military activities. Still, she argued that Japan always adopted "a good global citizen" attitude where it always made financial contributions to countries in crisis or other international issues. But soon it learned that financial contribution is not enough and after the Cold War, especially with the terrorist attack in 2001, which the US then became involved in the war on terrorism and requested support from all of its allies.

This paper sides with the second faction in highlighting the US factor. However, looking at the above viewpoints from two separate factions on whatever contributed factors to the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism, they show several themes: (1) Japan's security policy has shifted to becoming more "normal" or realistic; (2) a staging dynamics in the Japanese policy; (3) key factors that push for the changes; and (4) adjustments of Article 9 along with the shift. Looking at the earlier reviews, it could be assumed that those four points are being discussed separately and limited in some parts. For instances, Jameson and Samuels's works show that their studies cover point (1), (2), and (3) without addressing the (4) while taking another example of Arase and Fukushima. Their points are more focused to (1) and (3). This study, however, seeks to go one step beyond their exploration. The four points above will be inspected in a more structured compilation and fit them into "the three big stages" mentioned before to show how the US takes part in each stage of the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism.

<sup>35</sup> Akiko Fukushima, "The Merits of Alliance: A Japanese Perspective-Logic Underpins Japan's Global and Regional Security Role," in *The US-Japan Security Alliance: Regional Multilateralism*, ed. T. Inoguchi and G. John Ikenberry (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 53-55.

### **The Alliance Security Dilemma and the Trade-Off between Security and Autonomy**

This study explains the featured phenomena using Glenn Snyder's theory of security alliance dilemma. The label "dilemma" means that there is a real choice and not only an inclination toward one alternative, but a wrong choice in either direction could result in unacceptable results. For Snyder, the security dilemma in alliance politics could be described in two possible scenarios: (1) **cooperate** ("C"), where cooperation means a strong commitment and full support in the adversary conflict and (2) **defect** ("D"), defection means a weak commitment and less support to the ally.<sup>36</sup>

Each strategy has both good and bad prospects as they paralleled each other. In the alliance security dilemma, the consequences of the prospective bad consisted of two situations: "abandonment" and "entrapment," while the consequences of the good side are the lessen risks of "abandonment" or "entrapment." In general, Snyder pointed out that "abandonment" is defection, which could take a lot of forms: (1) the ally may realign with the opponent; (2) he may merely de-align, canceling the alliance contract; (3) he may fail to make good on his explicit commitments; and (4) he may fail to provide support in contingencies where support is expected. With the latter of two forms, the alliance may remain intact, but the expectations of support that underlie it are weakened.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, entrapment means being entangled into its allies' conflict, whose interests one does not share fully or just none at all.<sup>38</sup> The risk of entrapment will happen when one places the value of its alliance above the cost of being dragged into the ally's conflict. If one gives a strong commitment and its dependence on its

<sup>36</sup> See further Glenn H. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (1984): 462. DOI:10.2307/2010183.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 466.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*

ally is rather high, then the risk of entrapment will more likely happen.<sup>39</sup>

A "C" strategy or a scenario where one puts a strong commitment into the alliance will lessen the risk of abandonment because the ally will have high confidence in one's support, thus prevent them from abandoning the alliance or in other words: defecting. In this strategy, one will receive an advantage in the form of security through the protection of its allies. However, this strategy will give one a cost of the higher risk of being entrapped with its allies specific adversary conflict, and it could potentially lose freedom of action and cause the one who chooses this strategy to have less security.<sup>40</sup> Another adverse effect of this strategy will include a decrease in bargaining leverage over the ally because the ally knows they are needed to be counted on to support the other.<sup>41</sup>

Meanwhile, the "D" strategy or a scenario where one provides a little commitment or being ambiguous will lessen the risk of entrapment. This strategy will give one relative independence (and potentially more security).<sup>42</sup> When one becomes less dependent, they will enjoy a preponderance of influence over their allies' policies. If the alliance were to be dissolved, the one with this strategy could handle the situation better than its ally, and by extension, it does not have to suit its policies to the allies taste.<sup>43</sup> However, this will inevitably cause the ally to be doubtful of the alliance and hence raise the risk of abandonment. Thus, it could be concluded that each strategy is like two sides of the same coin—reducing one risk tends to increase the other—and together, they constitute the alliance security dilemma.

In alliance dilemma, '**dependency**' is a principal determinant of the above strategies' options.<sup>44</sup> For Snyder, the concept of dependence in the security alliance categorized into a *direct* and *indirect* dependency. Direct dependence relates to four factors:

- 1) **a state's military power** (the lower its military capability, the more it will seek assistance from its ally in times of war);
- 2) **its ally's capacity to support or give the assistance** (the greater its allies capability, the more it will be heavily dependent on its ally);
- 3) **the state's degree of conflict with its adversary** (the higher the degree of the conflict, it will be more likely for the state to seek assistance from its ally);
- 4) **the state's realignment alternatives** (the more options the state has, the less the dependence on the current ally).<sup>45</sup>

Indirect dependence relates to **the degree of strategic interests**. Strategic interest is an interest in protecting the ally's resources from the adversary.<sup>46</sup> This determinant is slightly different from the previous ones because it refers to the interest of the ally to block an increase in its adversary's power, not the need for assistance when one is attacked. Regarding this indirect dependence, if one has a greater strategic interest, it will fear the risk of abandonment more. Thus, the differences in strategic interest made it clear why a powerful state in an alliance could fear the risk of abandonment and has a

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 467.

<sup>40</sup> See further Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 194.

<sup>41</sup> Snyder, "The Security Dilemma," 467.

<sup>42</sup> Reiter and Gartner, *Small States and Alliances*, 90.

<sup>43</sup> Glenn H. Snyder, "Alliance Theory: A Neorealist First Cut," *Journal of International Affairs* 44, no. 1 (1990): 114.

<sup>44</sup> The source mentioned that together with direct and indirect dependence, there are three more determinants to pinpoint the likelihood of strategy each party in the alliance will choose. However, this study believes that it is better to articulate the analysis using the only scope of dependency factor to narrow down Japan's case effectively as this research paper is more focused on dissecting the alliance between the US and Japan. See Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," 473-475.

<sup>45</sup> Snyder, "The Security Dilemma," 472.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*



little leverage over its allies. If the stronger state's strategic interest could easily be scrutinized by the lesser one, the former could not threaten to defect or realign with others.<sup>47</sup>

In conclusion, the higher the level of dependency of one state on its ally (directly or indirectly), the more the likelihoods of the state to be more inclined to choose "C" strategy (cooperation) because a stronger commitment to the alliance will reassure the ally and decrease the risk of abandonment. Of course, the reverse conditions will tend to induce the opposite strategy.

In relation to the alliance dilemma, Morrow proposes a composition about the *trade-off* between security and autonomy in an alliance. He argues that alliances have effects on the allies' security and autonomy.<sup>48</sup> 'Security' is a state's ability to preserve the current status quo or the resolution of the issues it is striving for. Meanwhile, 'autonomy' is the degree of how far the state is willing to pursue the change it aspired in the status quo.<sup>49</sup> A nation's autonomy and security in military alliances are generally constrained to move in opposite directions.

In an asymmetric alliance, where the parties involved will receive different benefits from the alliance, the stronger parties will obtain autonomy and give security to its allies (the lesser ones).<sup>50</sup> For the stronger states, an alliance with the weaker ones will reduce their security, but raise their autonomy because the latter will give concessions to preserve the alliance. The concessions could take many forms, such as offering its soil as military bases to the stronger state or agreements for the state to allow its stronger ally to intervene in its domestic policies

in the future.<sup>51</sup> The other advantages could include the expansion of the stronger state's foreign policy to influence the other.<sup>52</sup> This type of alliance may benefit the weaker parties as their security will increase because the major powers will guarantee to protect their territory and population against military aggression. However, one thing regarding this type of alliance is the danger of "entrapment." Generally, the security that an ally provides rises with the ally's power but can be harmful to weak, exposed allies or if the ally advances a controversial position.<sup>53</sup>

### **The Three Big Stages: From Pacifism to the Normalization Path.**

In the aftermath of WWII, 'One-Country Pacifism' or *heiwa kokkaron* has become conventional thinking for all defense issues in Japan. One-country pacifism has a particular correlation to the Yoshida Doctrine—a foreign policy during PM Yoshida Shigeru's period in power (1946-1954) that had its eye on 'economic first' principle and tendency to avoid any involvement in international political-strategic issues.<sup>54</sup> Taking these into account, post-war Japan indeed really invested in "low politics," which eventually is one of the reasons why Japan could become an economic power by the end of the 1960s. At that time, 'high politics' issues were managed by the US, while Japan's responsibility was to become a loyal ally to the former.<sup>55</sup> As Japan also avoided any involvement in international politics, *ergo* this establishment

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 473.

<sup>48</sup> See further James D. Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry: An Alternative to the Capability Aggregation Model of Alliances," *American Journal of Political Science* 35, no. 4 (1991): 910. DOI: 10.2307/2111499.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 908.

<sup>50</sup> See further Birthe Hansen, *Unipolarity and World Politics: A Theory and Its Implications* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 26.

<sup>51</sup> Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry," 914.

<sup>52</sup> Reiter and Gartner, *Small States and Alliances*, 18.

<sup>53</sup> Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry," 912.

<sup>54</sup> For further details could be seen at Bert Edstrom, *Japan's Foreign Policy in Transition: The Way Forward for Japan as an International Actor in a World Flux* (Singapore: Institute for Security and Development Policy, 2011), 12-13. See also Kevin J. Crooney, *Japan's Foreign Policy Since 1945* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2006), 36.

<sup>55</sup> Further details could be seen at Edward Friedman, (Eds.), *The Politics of Democratization: Generalizing East Asian Experiences* (New York: Westview Press, Inc., 1994).

allowed one-country pacifism to triumph before the 1990s.

The basic of the Yoshida Doctrine is Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution that contains two preeminent clauses: renunciation of war and prohibition in maintaining military forces.<sup>56</sup> The denial of Japan's self-defense right is corresponded with the predominant interest of the US to demolish Japan's military forces at that time.<sup>57</sup> However, the stance did not last long, as the US demanded Japan to begin rearmament in the face of the Korean War. Thus, the Japanese government created the National Police Reserve (NPR) in 1954 as a pioneer for the establishment of SDF.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the intensity of one-country pacifism starts to decline as the Gulf War I taught Japan a traumatic lesson. Citing Article 9, Japan was adamant about keeping its soldiers at the home base, while it chose to exercise "checkbook diplomacy" by contributing \$13 billion in the war against Iraq. The US was angered and demanded Japan to assume a more active role.<sup>58</sup> Japan then sent six-vessels minesweeping unit to the Persian Gulf, signaling the first time in history that Tokyo deployed its troops overseas since WWII.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, Japan also passed the PKO Act by reinterpreting Article 9 that allowed the dispatch of its troops to participate in maintaining global peace, as long as criteria are

met.<sup>60</sup>

Post 9/11 highlights the intensity of one-country pacifism that deteriorates more than ever. There is a transformation in Japan's policy that has no severe hesitation to embrace a more pertinent role in world politics. Japan became a supportive ally for the US, especially during the Iraq Crisis. During the war in Iraq, Japan justified a controversial step by sending SDF to Samawah, where there was a high risk of armed combat.<sup>61</sup> Albeit two Japanese diplomats were killed in Tikrit at that time, PM Koizumi Junichiro explained the decision had to be done to prove Japan as a trustworthy ally for the US<sup>62</sup> Koizumi also said that Japan has "only a single ally, the US... [and] must not be isolated in international society."<sup>63</sup> At that time, it created claims that Japan could not afford to risk being abandoned by the US when North Korea was threatening and China was rising.

During Abe Cabinet (2012—now), the 'Proactive Contribution to Peace' principle permits the transformation of laws and regulation that allows Japanese leaders to take any form of favorable decisions to protect its people and ally.<sup>64</sup> Albeit confrontations in the

<sup>56</sup> See Kantei, *The Constitution of Japan* (November 1946), accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution\\_and\\_government\\_of\\_japan/constitution\\_e.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html)

<sup>57</sup> See further Edstrom, *Japan's Foreign Policy in Transition*, 11-12. See also John Welfield, *An Empire in Eclipse: Japan in the Post-War American Alliance System: A Study in the Interaction of the Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 64. <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>59</sup> See further Narusawa Muneo, "The Overseas of Japan's Self-Defense Forces and US War Preparations 自衛隊海外派遣と米国の戦争準備," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 12, no. 31 (2014): 1. See also Japan Ministry of Defense, *Japan Defense Focus* (MOD Publication No. 24), 2011, 3, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://www.mod.go.jp/e/jdf/pdf/jdf\\_no24.pdf](https://www.mod.go.jp/e/jdf/pdf/jdf_no24.pdf).

<sup>60</sup> See further Robert B. Funk, "Japan's Constitution and UN.N. Obligations in the Persian Gulf War: A Case for Non-Military in U.N. Enforcement Actions," *Cornell International Law Journal* 25, no. 2 (1992): 366. See also Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, *Outline of Japan's International Peace Cooperation*, May 2015, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/ipc/page22e\\_000683.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/ipc/page22e_000683.html).

<sup>61</sup> See Arase, "Japan, the Active State?," 571. See also Yukiko Nishikawa, *Japan's Changing Role in Humanitarian Crises* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 1.

<sup>62</sup> See further Glen Segell, *Disarming Iraq* (London: Glen Segell, 2004), 645.

<sup>63</sup> See further Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 98. See also Michael Penn, *Japan and the War on Terror: Military Force and Political Pressure in the US-Japan Alliance* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2014), 250.

<sup>64</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, *Cabinet Decision on Development of Seamless Security Legislation to Ensure Japan's Survival and Protect its People*, July 2014, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page23e\\_000273.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page23e_000273.html). See also Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, *Development of Security Legislation*, 2016, retrieved from [http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/gaiyou/jimu/pdf/anpohosei\\_eng.pdf](http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/gaiyou/jimu/pdf/anpohosei_eng.pdf)

Diet and public protests, the new policy allows a form of collective self-defense and limited use of force. It also could authorize Japan's military deployment to fight overseas for the first time since the end of WWII.<sup>65</sup> In his speech at The 13<sup>th</sup> IISS Summit, Abe noted that it is essential for Japan to set its alliance with the US as the cornerstone to achieving peace and security.<sup>66</sup> It is in line with Japan's 2013 National Security Strategy (NSS) that highlights the strategic key steps of reinforcing the US and Japan alliance by building up cooperation in the defense area and maintaining the US military forces in Japan<sup>67</sup>

Based on the above discussion, there are three main points that could be found. First, there is a diminishing intensity of one-country pacifism in Japan, beginning in the post-Cold War to the post-9/11 period. Second, there is a series of flexible reinterpretations of Article 9 that continues presently. As mentioned before, there was a consensus to deny Japan the right of self-defense, albeit its withdrawal during the Korean War. Japan later created SDF and its role was deemed to be "exclusively defensive,"

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. Further discourses regarding Abe's principle of Proactive Contribution to Peace and its significance to the US-Japan alliance could be seen at Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Foreign and Security Policy under the 'Abe Doctrine': New Dynamism or New Dead End?* (London: Palgrave Pivot, 2015), 28-78.

<sup>65</sup> For further details could be seen at Carlos Ramirez, "Japan's Foreign and Security Policy under Abe: From Neoconservatism and Neoautonomy to Pragmatic Realism," *The Pacific Review* (2019): 24. DOI: 10.1080/09512748.2019.1653358. Reiji Yoshida and Mizuho Aoki, "Diet Enacts Security Laws, Marking Japan's Departure from Pacifism," *The Japan Times*, September 19, 2015, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/09/19/national/politics-diplomacy/diet-enacts-security-laws-marking-japans-departure-from-pacifism-2/>.

<sup>66</sup> See Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, *The 13<sup>th</sup> IISS Asian Security Summit – The Shangri-La Dialogue – Keynote Address by Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister, Japan*, May 2014, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/96\\_abe/statement/201405/0530kic\\_hokoen.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/96_abe/statement/201405/0530kic_hokoen.html).

<sup>67</sup> Kantei, *National Security Strategy* (NSS Report), 2013, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [http://japan.kantei.go.jp/96\\_abe/documents/2013/icsFiles/afieldfile/2013/12/18/NSS.pdf](http://japan.kantei.go.jp/96_abe/documents/2013/icsFiles/afieldfile/2013/12/18/NSS.pdf).

meaning: (1) no SDF use except in defense of Japan (taken to mean the nation's territory); (2) no collective defense (i.e., no military action on behalf of another state or its interests); and (3) no overseas dispatch of troops.<sup>68</sup> Later, the three limitations were breached during the period of the 1990s as Japan rendered the PKO Act to permit collective security, and afterward, the collective self-defense along with limited use of force in the post-9/11 period. Three, the U.S. is seemingly an important figure which has been always there in each stage implying a vital role it plays for influencing Japanese security policy. Figure I portrays a more comprehensive illustration of the reconceptualization process disclosed previously.

### **The Level of Dependency of Japan on the US in the Alliance Security Dilemma**

Snyder pointed out that there are two phases in the alliance game: (1) primary phase, which occurs during the process of alliance formation, and (2) secondary phase, which on the other occurs when alliances have begun to form.<sup>69</sup> As this study focuses on the secondary game, it will not look into how or why they chose to make alliances in the first place and instead move to address the issue of how firm the parties involved commit themselves to the alliance and how much support they give in conflict with adversaries.

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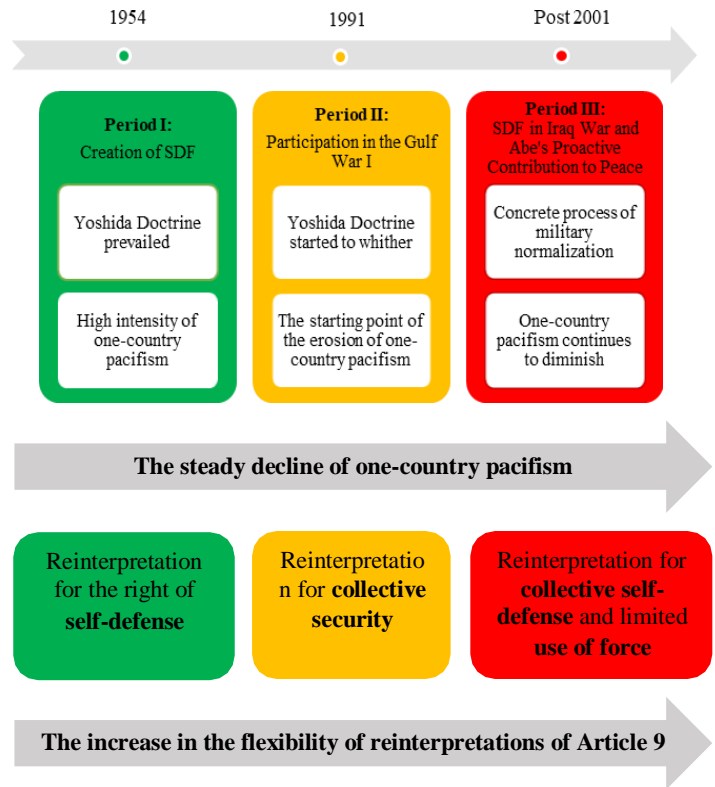
<sup>68</sup> Arase, "Japan, the Active State?," 563.

<sup>69</sup> Snyder, "Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," 466.

The alliance security dilemma, as characterized by Snyder, is reflected in two strategies: cooperation ("C") and defection ("D"). The state's probability of choosing between those two options is related to **the level of dependency** in the alliance, which is based on **the five determinants** mentioned before. With this in mind, let us first examine the five determinants in the US-Japan alliance from Japan's perspective and then discuss the possibility of strategy that Japan has most likely opted for based on the results. Then, with the revelation of the chosen option in the alliance and the related prospects, it could be answered why the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism could have occurred.

*a. Comparison of Japan, North Korea, and China's military power*

With the emergence of new power holders in East Asia, Japan makes it clear that Tokyo faces security challenges from its two neighbors: North Korea and China.<sup>70</sup> The comparison of their power can be summarized as follows:



**Figure I.** Summary Matrix of the Reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism

<sup>70</sup> Japan Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan* [White Paper], 2018, 45, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_paper/pdf/2018/DOJ2018\\_Full\\_1130.pdf](https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2018/DOJ2018_Full_1130.pdf).

Determinant	Japan	North Korea	China
<b>Defense Spending Ranking in 2019</b>	8	<i>Lack of data</i>	2
<b>Population</b>	125,853,035	25,513,061	1,397,462,098
<b>GDP</b>	5.15 trillion USD	<i>Lack of data</i>	14.1 trillion USD
<b>Defense Budget</b>	48.6 billion USD	<i>Lack of data</i>	181.1 billion USD
<b>Active Military Personnel</b>	247,150	1,280,000	2,035,000
<b>Air Force</b>	46,950	110,000	395,000
<b>Aircraft (combat capable)</b>	546	545	2,517
<b>Fighter</b>	201	401+	759
<b>Ground Attack</b>	137	34	140
<b>Ground Forces</b>	150,850 (est.)	1,100,000 (est.)	975,000 (est.)
<b>Main Battle Tank</b>	617	3,500+	5,850
<b>Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV)</b>	68	32	5,800
<b>Artillery</b>	1,716	21,600+	8,994+
<b>Navy</b>	45,350 (est.)	60,000 (est.)	250,000 (est.)
<b>Aircraft Carriers</b>	4	0	1
<b>Submarines</b>	21	73	59
<b>Frigates</b>	11	2	52
<b>Destroyers</b>	34	0	28
<b>Patrol Vessels</b>	6	383+	208 (est.)

**Figure II.** Power Comparison of Japan, North Korea, and China<sup>71</sup>

Source: *Military Balance and SIPRI, 2020 (edited)*

<sup>71</sup> No data was available on North Korea from Military Balance and SIPRI, excluding data related to its military forces. Quoting explanation from CIPRI: “The figures for North Korea are reported by North Korean Authorities. Due to lack of economic data, no figures are provided for current USD, constant USD, spending as a share of GDP, per capita and as a share of government spending.” See Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *Data for all countries 1949-2019* (SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, 2020).

Figure II shows that in terms of military power, Japan suffers enough setback compared to North Korea and China. It is no wonder because of the constitutional inhibitions of Article 9 for Japan and budget "cap" on its defense expenditures to 1 percent of GNP only.<sup>72</sup> North Korea and China are also continuously engaged in a rapid military build-up, putting more far resources in its military than Japan could match.

The North Korea military forces mostly consist of infantry, and about two-thirds of them are estimated to be stationed at the DMZ line. Despite limited resources, North Korea continues to improve its equipment, such as tanks and rockets. Further, the development of WMDs and missiles of North Korea is perceived to have a breakthrough with the sixth nuclear test.<sup>73</sup> It is also widely believed that present North Korea has an abundant supply of missiles that could potentially aim long-range targets, including the US mainland, as most fears.<sup>74</sup>

Japan's offensive power may not be powerful, but its navy has a one-up in air defense and anti-submarine warfare.<sup>75</sup> It has an advanced defense-industrial base, while North Korea's forces are more conventional. Japan also has a better advantage pertaining to economic prowess in contrast to North Korea that is no longer backed by China and Russia. To this day, North Korea suffers from slow economic growth and food shortage.<sup>76</sup> It could be concluded that the military prowess of North Korea is, although unsettling, not the gravest threat to Japan.

The more significant concern perhaps comes from China. For long, China's military power has been perceived by Japan as a long-term threat to its national interest.<sup>77</sup> China's economic and military prowess are several times higher than Japan, and its defense budget comes second place after the US last year.<sup>78</sup> Today, China remains one of the world's largest armed forces with increasingly modern, advanced equipment and a myriad of ballistic missiles with various ranges and types.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) has five theatre commands with each designated region focus to not only protect China's periphery but also to support its activities and interests.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>72</sup> See further John C. Wright, "The Persistent Power of 1 Percent," *Sasakawa USA*, no. 4 (2016): 2.

<sup>73</sup> MOD, *Defense of Japan 2018*, 66.

<sup>74</sup> "North Korea's missile and nuclear programme," *BBC News*, October 9, 2019, accessed November 6, 2019, retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41174689>.

<sup>75</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance* (2017 report), 299.

<sup>76</sup> See Jameson, "One-nation pacifism," 76. See also Prableen Bajpai, "How the North Korea Economy Works," *Investopedia*, October 6, 2019, accessed November 6, 2019, retrieved from <http://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/-013015/how-north-korea-economy-works.asp>.

<sup>77</sup> See further Michael Green, *Japan's Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 93.

<sup>78</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance* (2020 report), 21.

<sup>79</sup> See Japan Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan* [White Paper], 2019, 63-67, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_paper/pdf/2019/DOJ2019\\_Full.pdf](https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2019/DOJ2019_Full.pdf).

<sup>80</sup> Further details could be seen at IISS, *The Military Balance* (2017 Report), 253-255.



**Figure III.** Illustration of PLA Theatre Commands

Source: *Military Balance*, 2017

Responding to the threats, enhancing its alliance with the US remains as a principal strategic approach, Japan chooses to ensure its national security as emphasized in the NSS document. Present Japan is strengthening cooperation with the US military forces and spending approximately 1.3 % of GDP on its defense sector.<sup>81</sup> The increase in military spending marks a "new" Japan that finally has crossed the "psychological threshold," limiting its defense spending.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> See further Robin Harding, "Japan seeks to resist US pressure on military spending," *Financial Times*, April 9, 2019, accessed November 6, 2019, retrieved from <https://www.ft.com/content/be60c66e-5ab1-11e9-9dde-7aedca0a081a>.

<sup>82</sup> It is not the first time for Japan to drop the budget constraint on national security. PM Nakasone Yasuhiro proposed in late 1985 to formally drop a 1 % limit, and the government leaders agreed to a 6.9 % increase. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Japanese were previously not eager to cross the psychological threshold limiting the military spending, and it is surprising that Japan drops the cap. Further details could be seen at Louis D. Hayes, *Introduction to Japanese Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

### *b. The US military capacity as Japan's ally*

Although confidence in its military's dominance has waned over the past years, currently, the US is the sole military power with the ability to project military dominance at a distance and scale from its homeland across the land, sea, air, space, and electromagnetic spectrums.<sup>83</sup> No countries are able to match the US in this way so far. The US is also by far still the biggest spender when it comes to military spending with a total of \$643 billion in 2018. Figure IV shows an overview of the US military prowess.

The US defense department has 11 combatant commands called the Unified Command Plan (UCP), each with geographic responsibility that provides control of its forces in times of peace and war.<sup>84</sup> One of the responsibility areas is the Asia Pacific, which is the operation base for the US-Indo Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) and supported by multiple components.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>83</sup> See further Bastian Giegerich, Nick Childs, and James Hackett, "Military capability and international status," *The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)*, July 4, 2018, accessed November 7, 2019, retrieved from <https://www.iiss.org/blogs/military-balance/2018/07/military-capability-and-international-status>.

<sup>84</sup> The UCP consists of 11 combatant commands: (1) Africa Command; (2) Central Command; (3) Cyber Command; (4) European Command; (5) Indo-Pacific Command; (6) Northern Command; (7) Southern Command; (8) Space Command; (9) Special Operations Command; (10) Strategic Command; and (11) Transportation Command. See US Department of Defense, "Combatant Commands," 2019, accessed November 7, 2019, retrieved from <https://www.defense.gov/Our-Story/Combatant-Commands/>.

<sup>85</sup> Further details could be seen at US-Indo Pacific Command, "USINDOPACOM Area of Responsibility," (*USINDOPACOM*), US Department of Defense, accessed on March 14, 2020, retrieved from [www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/USPACOM-Area-of-Responsibility/](http://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/USPACOM-Area-of-Responsibility/).



**Figure IV.** The United States Military Strength

Determinant	United States
Defense Spending Rankin in 2019	1
Population	331,883,986
GDP	21.44 trillion USD
Defense Budget	684.6 billion USD
Military Personnel	1,379,800 (est.)
Air Force	332,650
Aircraft (combat capable)	1,522
Fighter	271
Ground Attack	143
Ground Forces	481,750
Main Battle Tank	2,389
Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV)	2,931
Artillery	5,444
Navy	337,100
Aircraft Carriers	11
Submarines	67
Frigates	19
Destroyers	67
Patrol Vessels	84

Source: *Military Balance*, 2020 (edited)

The US remains the world's most capable military power on a global basis.<sup>86</sup> The military spending centers on modernization priorities, including the renewal of strategic nuclear capabilities and air assets, as well as developing its defensive and offensive cyber capabilities.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>86</sup> US Department of Defense, *The 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, 2018, 4, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>.

<sup>87</sup> See further Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, *Defense Budget Overview* (OSD Report), US Department of Defense, 2018, 1, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/FY2019->

**Figure V.** The Unified Command Plan

Source: *US Department of Defense*, 2018

The US also has made its commitment clear towards the Indo-Pacific region, especially in the security sphere, and clarify its intent to redouble the effort and commitment to its loyal allies.<sup>88</sup> With the US as a "nuclear umbrella," it is hardly surprising for Japan to continuously treat the US-Japan security treaty as the cornerstone of its defense strategies.<sup>89</sup>

### c. *The degree of conflict in the East Asia region: China in-focus*

In the 2018 white paper, Japan highlights three destabilizing factors from its neighbors: the threat of North Korea missiles, rising China, and the increase of military activities of the Russian army near territories of Japan.<sup>90</sup> Hence Japan describes the situation in its region as a "gray

Budget-Request-Overview-Book.pdf. See also IISS, *The Military Balance* (2018 report), 47.

<sup>88</sup> The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (NSS Report), 2017, 46-47, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

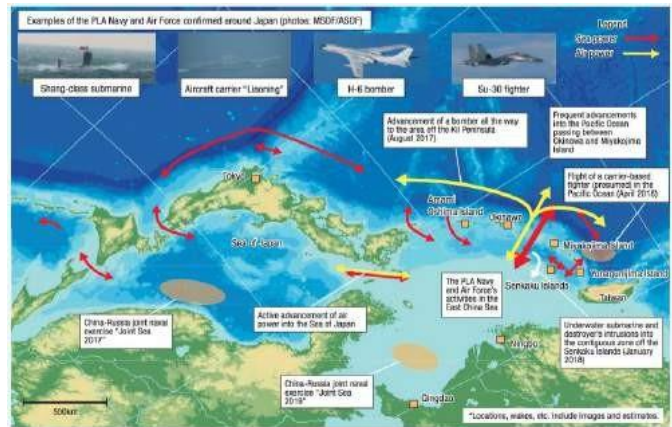
<sup>89</sup> See further Robert F. Reed, *The US-Japan Alliance: Sharing the Burden of Defense* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1983), 51.

<sup>90</sup> See further Japan Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan* [White Paper], 2018, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_paper/pdf/2018/DOJ2018\\_Full\\_1130.pdf](https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2018/DOJ2018_Full_1130.pdf).



zone," because while they provide challenges to its sovereignty, those threats are not headed into a full-scale armed conflict." The 2019 document emphasizes how the expansion of the Chinese military in the Pacific Ocean represents a serious security concern for Japan.<sup>91</sup> This white paper, however, is distinguishing as this is the first time assessment on China has come to second place after the section on the US as its ally, pushing North Korea into the third position.

The long shadow of history between Japan and China has become an obstacle to their relationship for a long time. The issue that becomes the most considerable focus of tension between them was the dispute over the Senkaku Islands (*Diaoyutai* in Chinese). Both China and Japan had declared their claims over the island by pulling out their historical records. The latter had declared its sovereignty over the islands by a cabinet decision in 1895, but it did not discourage Chinese ships and planes from beginning incessant operations near the islands.<sup>92</sup> Japan white paper has noted that in December 2008, China Maritime Surveillance vessels hovered inside Japan's periphery around the islands. These activities have been intensified after September 2012, when Japan acquired property rights to and ownership of three of the Senkaku Islands (Uotsurishima, Kitakojima, and Minamikojima).<sup>93</sup> Since then, numerous Chinese vessels have been intruding on Japan's territories with activities as below



**Figure VI.** PLA's Recent Activities in the Surrounding Sea and Airspace of Japan

Source: *Defense of Japan, 2019*

Japan believes those activities indicate a power projection to change the status quo by force. Beijing insists its exploration is conducted on its side of the border, but since the reserves straddle the border, Tokyo suspects that China will suck up resources on its side as well.<sup>94</sup> Faced with a strong China, Japan has every reason to maintain ties with the US. In October 2018, the US and Japan were preparing to respond to any possible future China incursions around the disputed islands with defense cooperation.<sup>95</sup> The US also disinvited China from the 2018 Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises, unless China ceased all land reclamation activities and its continued build-up and militarization of the South China Sea sites.<sup>96</sup> This diplomatic move could be seen as a display of the US soft power and encouragement for Japan.

<sup>94</sup> Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 143.

<sup>95</sup> "Explained: Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands Dispute," *South China Morning Post*, February 21, 2019, accessed November 6, 2019, retrieved from <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/explained/article/2187161/explained-diaoyu-senkaku-islands-dispute>.

<sup>96</sup> See further Nicole L. Freiner, "What China's RIMPAC Exclusion Means for US Allies," *The Diplomat*, May 26, 2018, accessed November 7, 2019, retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/what-chinas-rimpac-exclusion-means-for-us-allies/>.

<sup>91</sup> See further Japan Ministry of Defense, *Defense of Japan* [White Paper], 2019, 44, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_paper/pdf/2019/DOJ2019\\_Full.pdf](https://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2019/DOJ2019_Full.pdf).

<sup>92</sup> See further Ezra F. Vogel, *China and Japan: Facing history* (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019), 373-374.

<sup>93</sup> MOD, *Defense of Japan 2019*, 74.

#### *d. Japan's realignment alternatives?*

It is quite difficult for Japan to have another alternative besides the alliance with the US, and there are three pieces of evidence supporting this reasoning. First, it was initially Japan's own decision to offer the use of the bases in its territory to the US in the post-peace security period. At that time, PM Yoshida's concern over the rapidly deteriorating situation in East Asia and the worsening relations between the US and Soviets would be threatening for demilitarized Japan if left unprotected.<sup>97</sup>

Second, today's Japan is not ready to leave and be abandoned by the US because it has been accustomed to the US presence for decades. The 1951 Japan-US Security Treaty, with the *quid pro quo* of the US to maintain Japan's security and to receive the latter's autonomy in return, was one of the "hearts" of the Yoshida Doctrine.<sup>98</sup> To this day, the alliance is continuously at the core of Japan's national security strategy.

Lastly, Japan has no more attractive strategic option than the US, *at least not now*.<sup>99</sup> The potential allies would be China, who is presently challenging the US dominance in Asia, or perhaps Russia, its infamous adversary. China and Japan perhaps could form a positive relationship over their economic sphere, but not political-strategic ties. It was clear that China and Japan have embedded resentments toward each other over historical issues and regional

disputes. As for Russia, its relationship with Japan has not reached normalization as the territorial dispute over the Kuril Islands remains the greatest obstacle to their bilateral relations.<sup>100</sup>

#### *e. Strategic interests in the US-Japan alliance*

Snyder characterizes the concept of strategic interest as an interest in protecting the ally's resources from the adversary. If this were so, then it could be argued that Japan holds no strategic interest in its ally. It stands to reason that the US could protect itself just fine from its adversaries. However, the same thing could not be said for the US strategic interest in Japan.

During the Cold War, the US National Security Council stated that the US could not risk losing Japan to the Soviets.<sup>101</sup> Its policy required Japan to be the "unsinkable aircraft carrier" and the geostrategic key to an "America-friendly" in Asia, in which the northern Pacific trade routes and transit through East China, South China, and Japan seas would all be preserved.<sup>102</sup>

In the post-Cold War era, as the US faces strategic competitions from China, it steadfastly determined to retain its hegemonic status, especially in East Asia, and considers Japan (and South Korea) as an "offensive bow" to China.<sup>103</sup> For this reason, Japan always needs not to fear being abandoned by the US<sup>104</sup> However, the US has made it clear several times that Japan's cheap ride is not free. It calls Japan to be part of its

<sup>97</sup> See further Robert D. Eldridge and Ayako Kusunoki, "To Base or Not To Base? Yoshida Shigeru, the 1950 Ikeda Mission, and Post Treaty Japanese Security Conceptions, *Kobe University Law Review* no. 33 (1999): 106-108. See also Bert Edstrom, *Japan's Evolving Foreign Policy Doctrine: From Yoshida to Miyazawa* (New York: Palgrave, 1999), 15-16.

<sup>98</sup> For further details regarding the Yoshida Doctrine, see Edstrom, *Japan's Foreign Policy in Transition*, 12.

<sup>99</sup> Paul R. Daniels, "Beyond 'Better Than Ever': Japanese Independence and the Future of the US-Japan Relationship," *IIPS Policy paper* 308E (Tokyo: Institute for International Policy Studies, July 2004).

<sup>100</sup> Further details pertaining to the Kuril Islands dispute, see Joseph Ferguson, *Japanese-Russian Relations, 1907-2007* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 3.

<sup>101</sup> Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 40.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> See further Cheng-Feng Shih, "American Military Posture in East Asia: With A Special Focus on Taiwan," *Taiwan International Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (2005): 83-108.

<sup>104</sup> See further Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Security Agenda: Military, Economic & Environmental Dimensions* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004), 190.

security strategy and to rearm, which Japan fears as it will be entrapped in the US war.<sup>105</sup>

### **Japan-US Alliance Security Dilemma and the Reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism: The Catalyst for the Change?**

Based on the evidence from the above section, in the wake of the gray zone situation as noted in its white paper, the power disparity between its own and adversaries' urges Japan to be dependent on the US to deter its opponents. As Japan does not have any other alternatives for realignment, and its ally has far more reliable military capabilities, Japan perceives the presence of the US to be very important to ensure its security and establish regional peace. Although the US has a more significant strategic interest than Japan's, the direct dependence on the latter's side weights more, thus renders the discrepancy nullified.

Thus, it could be argued that Japan's high dependence on the US displays the likelihood of it to pick the "C" strategy to avoid the risk of abandonment. However, it was learned that the "C" strategy has a prospective bad consequence of the higher risk of entrapment and a reduction of its bargaining leverage over its partner. Both effects are the reason why the alliance with the US has led to the reconceptualization of its Pacifism. The US gains more bargaining leverage and autonomy over Japan, and from what already learned in the previous section, the weaker party will give concession (in exchange for security) to the stronger ones in the form of domestic policy intervention. Another form of concession is the stronger party could influence the other with the expansion of its foreign policies. The facts shown in three big stages are undeniable evidence of how the US exerted its bargaining power over Japan's security policy,

inducing the latter to step into the normalization path.

During the first stage, the US pushed Japan to remilitarize in the wake of the Korean War. Japan continued to refuse its demand, using constitutional grounds and economic conditions as a shield, as well as citing public opinions to stand its ground.<sup>106</sup> As Japan was concerned with the risk of entrapment in the US regional strategy, it prevented itself from giving a full commitment to military cooperation with the US. Still, with the intensification of the war, the US decided to deploy its troops stationed in Japan to Korea. The "military vacuum" situation finally compelled Japan to yield to the US and formulated National Police Reserves (NPR). This era then indicated an asymmetric relation in the alliance and that the US bargaining leverage over Japan was not fully powerful to influence the latter's policies. One-country Pacifism also remained strong in this era, as Japan opted to balance "C" and "D" strategies.

However, that condition was threatened to become undone in the post-Cold War period as new challenges (globally and regionally) emerged for both countries.<sup>107</sup> The Gulf War then became a lesson that marked for the first time Japan deployed its troops abroad with the enactment of a new law and reinterpretation of Article 9. Japan's decision to exert checkbook diplomacy previously angered its ally, and in return, the US pressured Japan to "put its boots on the ground." The second stage became the pivotal moment of the diminishing intensity of one-country Pacifism, and it showed how the US used its increased leverage to press Japan to take a more regional security role.

The dynamics then change after 9/11 as the US requested Japan's to join in its "war on terror" initiatives, and Japan responded with

<sup>105</sup> Jake A. Douglas, "Commitment without control: The burden sharing dilemma in the US," (Paper 28), [Honor Theses, College of William and Mary, 2014], 25-26.

<sup>106</sup> See further Kizuhara, "The Korean War and The National Police Reserve of JapanUS," 96.

<sup>107</sup> See further Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Re-emergence as a 'Normal' Military Power* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 97-98.

unprecedented speed. Heeding President Bush's "You're either with us or with the terrorists," PM Koizumi quickly agreed to join the US to invade Afghanistan.<sup>108</sup> Japan also sent its SDF to Iraq, but it was neither requested by the host country government nor sanctioned by the UN, two conditions that are required under the PKO Law.<sup>109</sup> Japan, at that time, was concerned about the risk of entrapment as they were about abandonment. However, the taken actions reflected the fears of abandonment weighted more to meet the US expectations as it also readjusted Article 9 to permit troops to be deployed overseas.

The predominant view was that Japan has an 'irreversible dependence' on the US.<sup>110</sup> This notion is an exact mirror of Japan's present situation. Albeit the public opposition, the Abe administration introduced Proactive Contribution to Peace principle as it allows limited use of force and a form of collective self-defense, hence troops may be mobilized overseas for the first time since the end of WWII. In addition, the Abe administration makes the US-Japan alliance a crucial key to its security policy and continuously realign its alliance with the US.<sup>111</sup> The third era then reflected the "C" strategy that Japan's anxiously willing to take, as it is compelled to take a dip in the entrapment of the US wars.

The prospect of Japan to choose "C" strategy shown over the three big stages has given an opening of an increase in the US

bargaining leverage and the risk of entrapment. In the asymmetric alliance, Morrow stated that it is logical if one party gains security while the other autonomy. The alliance with the US has guaranteed Japan security protection against its adversaries, but at what cost? The nuclear umbrella privilege has created a huge dependence on Japan's sole ally to the point that Japan could not bear the prospective risk of abandonment, as the regional instabilities become more apparent. Yet, the US forces have been seemingly reduced and redeployed.<sup>112</sup>

As Japan sacrifices its autonomy for security, it gives the concession to the US in the form of power to influence Japan's security policies. It began with Japan's decision to offer a military base and later on with PM Koizumi's most salient decision to put SDF in Samawah to join "the coalition of the willing." The present generation of Japanese policymakers also has put its alliance with the US at the heart of the Japan strategic approach to its national interest and generated more hawkish and debatable policies. As the US continues to pressure Japan's normalization, the latter's identity of one-country Pacifism then continues to decline.

However, one could argue that if the "C" strategy that Japan unwillingly chose has made a getaway for the reconceptualization of its Pacifism, does it mean the "D" strategy is the key to salvation to "save" Japanese Pacifism?

Before the puzzle could be solved, it comes to the authors' mind to first kindly remind that the "D" strategy or defection in alliance dilemma does not always mean abandonment in a literal sense. Snyder pointed out that in this strategy, the alliance could remain intact as the abandonment could take other forms, such as where one of the parties doesn't give support and/or fail to live its commitment towards the other.<sup>113</sup> So in this sense, if Japan's disposition

<sup>108</sup> See "Bush: 'You Are Either With Us, Or With the 'Terrorists' – 2001-09-21," *VOA News*, October 27, 2009, accessed June 12, 2020, retrieved from <https://www.voanews.com/archive/bush-you-are-either-us-or-terrorists-2001-09-21>

<sup>109</sup> Arase, *Japan, the Active State?* 570.

<sup>110</sup> Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 83.

<sup>111</sup> See further Reiji Yoshida, "Abe and Trump reaffirm military alliance despite dangerous dual nature of US leader," *The Japan Times*, June 28, 2019, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/06/28/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-touts-alliance-bilateral-talks-trump-g20-u-s-leaders-incendiary-remarks/>.

<sup>112</sup> Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 85.

<sup>113</sup> See page 7-8 for Snyder's view regarding defect and abandonment.

towards its alliance with the US is likely to be the “D” strategy, it does not certainly imply that Japan will end its alliance with the US and vice versa. Besides, if that were so, then the alliance would not have been this resilient for decades.

Now to shed light on the above question, disposition to “C” strategy does not mean Japan has never asserted any hedging policies before to retaliate against the entanglement, which means opted for the “D” strategy. It has been previously discussed in the first and second stages. Japan has defended its “pacifism” several times, and it caused a burden-sharing issue within its alliance with the US along the way. The issues of burden-sharing become very apparent when President Nixon insisted on defense burden-sharing with Japan.<sup>114</sup> Although the US acknowledged Japan’s substantial funding for foreign assistance and cost-sharing for the former’s stationing costs in Okinawa, the US criticized how Japan didn’t fulfill its fair share of military personnel and forces, especially in international PKOs.<sup>115</sup> The Japanese Council on Defense Studies even concluded that neither treaties nor shared values would suffice to hold the partnerships together: “The key to alliances now is risk-sharing.”<sup>116</sup> And we know how Japan fared in the 1991 Gulf War and learned its lesson the hard way.

Cooperating and readjusting its commitment towards the alliance has caused Japan to be entangled in its ally’ wars. Meanwhile, defecting will risk no support from

its ally, also condemning Japan within its own capability to face the conflict with its adversaries by itself. The conclusion is rather obvious: either way or strategy between “C” or “D” in this case, will inevitably drive Japan to depart from the pacifism model into a normalization path. As we know, both “C” and “D” strategies and each of their prospective risks have an inverse relationship, but together, they constitute the alliance dilemma itself. Hence, we argue that the alliance dilemma between the US-Japan is the reason behind why the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism could have occurred in the first place.

### Conclusion

The above discussion supports several conclusions regarding how the alliance dilemma between the United States and Japan impacts the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism.

First, the process of the reconceptualization of Japanese Pacifism is characterized by a decrease in one-country pacifism intensity and resulted in the fundamental doctrinal change: from the Yoshida Doctrine into the path of normalization. This change could be seen in the series of discrete stages: (1) the creation of SDF; (2) SDF participation in the Gulf War I, and (3) involvement in the war on terrorism and the Abe administration’s hawkish policies. The three big stages also reflected how the incessant readjustments and reinterpretations of Article 9 had been made to suit the controversial policies the Japanese policymakers willing to produce.

Next, this paper argued that the alliance dilemma between Japan and the US is the reason behind the reconceptualization of the former’s Pacifism. The “C” (cooperation) strategy Japan opted towards the alliance with the US to avoid the scenario of being abandoned. The precarious situation in the East Asia region and the fall short of its military capabilities compel Japan to fully embrace the US as the main deterrence

<sup>114</sup> T. Inoguchi and G. John Ikenberry, eds., *The US-Japan Security Alliance: Regional Multilateralism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 61.

<sup>115</sup> See further The Secretary of Defense, *Report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense*, US Department, 2002, accessed November 9, 2019, retrieved from [https://archive.defense.gov/pubs/allied\\_contrib2002/allied2002.pdf](https://archive.defense.gov/pubs/allied_contrib2002/allied2002.pdf). See also Kent E. Calder, *Pacific Alliance: Reviving US Japan Relations* (Bloomsbury: Yale University Press, 2009)

<sup>116</sup> National Institute for Defense Studies, *2001-2002 Report on Defense and Strategic Studies: Council of Defense Strategic Studies* (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies, 2003), 15.

against its adversaries. Additionally, Japan has no other alternatives for realignment. A high dependency on the US thus made Japan places the alliance as the key to its strategic approach to national security. However, there were downsides of the “C” strategy as it decreased Japan’s bargaining leverage towards the US and enabled a higher risk of entrapment. With the increased bargaining leverage and gained autonomy over Japan, the US could influence Japan’s policies, and it became apparent with the most salient example of Japan’s record since 9/11. Meanwhile, if it were to choose the “D” strategy, it would have risk abandonment and less support from its ally, thus leave Japan in its own capability to handle the “gray zone” situation in its region. The alliance dilemma then becomes a vicious cycle: either strategy will inevitably enable an evolution in Japanese security strategy, thus making the one-country Pacifism to be eventually re-conceptualized.

It was clear that the US cheers these changes and continues to encourage Japan’s remilitarization as the latter grows active increasingly, better prepared legally, and more receptive to its demands. In the asymmetrical alliance, this kind of relationship is logical, with one receiving autonomy and the other security. However, it appears that no matter how much the Japanese were prepared to increase its contributions, it was never quite enough to the US Tokyo could decide to opt for a symmetrical alliance with the US, perhaps to save its “pacifism” and/or achieve independence. Still, with the irreversible dependence on the latter’s side, the probability remains contestable, *at least for now*.

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