



HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS

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Japan's Security Dilemma:

Altering Article 9

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Útdráttur

Markmið þessarar meistaraverkefnis er að kanna hvort það séu hagsmunir Japans að breyta 9. grein stjórnarskrár sinnar til að leyfa opinberan sjálfsvarnarher aðallega í varnarskyni gagnvart Kína og Norður-Kóreu, sem og að draga úr því hve háð Japan er vörnum Bandaríkjanna.

Fyrst verður farið í fræðilega hlutann þar sem fjallað er um raunsæishyggju. Næst mun ritgerðin kanna sagnfræðileg tengsl Japans við aðalgerendur ritgerðarinnar, þ.e. Bandaríkin, Kína og Norður-Kórea, og hvaða áhrif þessi tengsl hafa í dag. Næsti kafli tekur fyrir Kína og Norður-Kóreu í samtímanum og hvernig Japan stafar ógn af þessum löndum. Einnig verður bandalag Japans og Bandaríkjanna kannað. Síðasti meinkafli ritgerðarinnar mun síðan kanna rök með og á móti því að breyta 9. greininni. Ritgerðin var aðallega unnin úr rituðum heimildum, þ.e. úr bókum, rafrænum bókum og tímaritum og öðrum netmiðlum.

Meginniðurstaða ritgerðarinnar er sú, að þrátt fyrir andstöðu heima fyrir og frá nágrannaþjóðum, þjóni það hagsmunum Japans að breyta 9. grein stjórnarskrár sinnar til að leyfa opinberan sjálfsvarnarher. Helstu rökin fyrir þessu eru að það auðveldar núverandi sjálfsvarnarliði Japans að bregðast við hættum, aðallega frá Kína og Norður-Kóreu en einnig þeirri áhættu sem fylgir brotthvarfi Bandaríkjahers frá Japan. Niðurstaðan er einnig sú að Japan þurfi að fara mjög varlega í breyta stjórnarskránni.

Abstract

The objective of this M.A. thesis is to investigate whether it is in Japan's interest to alter Article 9 of its constitution to allow for an official self-defense military, mainly as a defense against China and North Korea, but also to limit its military dependence on the USA.

First, the realist theoretical framework for this analysis will be established. Then Japan's historical relations with the thesis' main actors related to the topic – namely the USA, China, and North Korea – will be examined, together with their impact on current relationships. The next chapter will analyze contemporary China and North Korea, and how they pose a threat to Japan. The Japan-USA alliance will also be explored. The last main chapter of the thesis will provide arguments for and against amending Article 9. The thesis draws mainly upon written material, i.e. books, electronic books and journals, and other internet sources.

The main conclusion of the thesis is that, despite domestic and international opposition, it is in Japan's interest to alter Article 9 of its constitution in order to allow for an official self-defense military. The chief argument is that this would make it easier for Japan's Self-Defense Forces to respond to threats, mainly from China and North Korea, but also the threat of US military abandonment. However, Japan needs to be very careful in the way it revises its constitution for these ends.

Preface

The inspiration to write about Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution came to me when I was studying political science as an exchange student at Stockholm University. The issue concerns me especially as I have close relations with Japan, having practiced the martial art of Judo for almost 7 years and studied as an exchange student in Tokyo for one year. Getting to know the Japanese people and culture has been a motivation for me to undertake this thesis as I am fascinated by the many things Japan represents, in particular its deep cultural values and the samurai spirit.

To me, the greatest obstacle in writing this thesis is that it hinges on military force, something I am personally opposed to. Nonetheless, I have come to acknowledge that Article 9 is an important issue and that Japan and other nation-states need militaries for self-defense.

This M.A. thesis in international relations counts for 30 ECTS. It was written by spending long hours at the library, going through and utilizing relevant references, while striving to the best of my ability to follow the instructions and guidance by my supervisor, Alyson J.K. Bailes, adjunct lecturer at the University of Iceland. I am deeply grateful for her invaluable advice and suggestions, without which this thesis could not have been created. I am also grateful for the advices I received from Toshiki Toma, Jun Morikawa, Kristófer Hannesson, and a staff member of the Japanese Embassy in Iceland. Last but not least I offer my deepest gratitude to my family; for their loving support and kind understanding during the process of this work, and to my father for proofreading the final draft.

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List of abbreviations

BoP	Balance of Power
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of (North) Korea
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (in Afghanistan)
JCG	Japan Coast Guard
KPA	(North) Korean People's Army
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party (of Japan)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
PAP	People's Armed Police (of China)
PKO	Peace Keeping Operations
PLA	People's Liberation Army (of China)
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROK	Republic of (South) Korea
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SDF	(Japan's) Self-Defense Forces
SIPRI	Stockholm Peace Research Institute
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
WWII	Second World War

1 INTRODUCTION

Ever since the end of the Second World War (WWII), Japan has been faced with a security dilemma: under Article 9 of the constitution it is not clear how much right Japan has to defend itself with the use of military force. In the post-Second World War period, the occupation forces under the leadership of the USA rewrote Japan's constitution, with Article 9 forbidding Japan's possession of any kind of military force – although Japan currently maintains what are called Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF). However, with the rise of China, the new North Korean nuclear threat and uncertainties of the Japan-USA alliance, many have started to question whether it is not time for Japan to rewrite its own constitution, changing it into one where Japan would be allowed to have its own official military for self-defense purposes. This leads to the following thesis question: “Is it in Japan's interest to change Article 9 of its constitution in order to have its own official military for self-defense purposes, mainly against North Korea and China, as well as to limit its military dependency on its ally, the USA?” The pros and cons of this idea will be analyzed, while focusing on China, North Korea, and the USA as the main actors in relation to Japan.

The second chapter of the thesis provides the theoretical framework. At the beginning of this chapter, there will be a general introduction to realism which will be followed by descriptions of concepts closely related to realism: the balance of power, power itself and security. The theory will be used to briefly examine Japan's security situation and a map will be provided to demonstrate Japan's realist position in the region. There will also be a short discussion about alternative theories at the end of this chapter.

The third chapter will look into the historical aspect of the issue, that is, Japan's relations with the USA, China, and Korea before and during the Second World War. First, Japan's warrior traditions and nationalism will be explored. Next, Japan's historical relations with the USA will be examined. Then there will be an analysis of the amendment of Japan's constitution after WWII and how it is related to Germany's post-war constitution. It is valid to make this comparison since both states were involved in WWII as the belligerent parties and had their constitutions altered by the Allied Forces.

However, the articles that concern military affairs differ significantly between Germany and Japan, making it a relevant point for research. Then Japan's historical relations and past conflicts with China and Korea will be examined. How these historical issues affect today's relations will also be investigated, and issues such as the Nanking massacre, Yasukuni Shrine, the Japanese school history textbooks controversy, and the abductees issue, will be discussed.

Chapter four will focus on the contemporary situation and the security dilemma Japan now faces in its relation with China and North Korea, and in its alliance with the USA. This chapter provides the central and weightiest part of the thesis and will consist of three sub-chapters. The first sub-chapter will be about China. First, there will be an analysis of China's rising military and its capabilities. Then there will be a review of the potential for a possible conflict between China and the allies, Japan and the USA. The thesis will then take a look at the Taiwan issue, the most likely scenario under which a large scale conflict could break out between China and the USA, and where Japan would be dragged in. This will be followed by a balancing section on positive elements in Sino-Japanese relations where arguments for peace will be provided. The contemporary China sub-chapter will end with an evaluation of China's attempts to legitimate its rising military.

A similar analysis as for China will be provided in the sub-chapter on North Korea. First the country and its regime will be examined. Then North Korea as a threat to Japan will be explored, followed by a look at North Korean People's Army (KPA). The thesis will then cover the most important challenge posed by North Korea, its nuclear and missile threat. Some of Japan's reactions to these threats will be probed. Then the six-party talks will be briefly analyzed and the sub-chapter will end with a brief look at North Korean-Japanese relations.

The third and final sub-chapter will focus on Japan's alliance with the USA, starting with how the alliance is currently being redefined. The thesis will then explore motives for the USA and Japan to maintain the alliance. This will be followed by the contrary argument on incentives for the USA to remove its troops from Japan. The chapter will end with a discussion on why it would be in Japan's interest to decrease its military dependence on the USA.

Chapter five focusses finally on the constitutional issue, that is, whether Article 9 should be altered. This chapter will review arguments for and against changing the constitution. A

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of a hypothetical change to Article 9 will be provided, followed by possible options for precisely how Article 9 might be altered. The fifth chapter will then discuss where Article 9 is heading in actuality, with political and public attitudes towards the Article being examined, concluding with the question whether we may actually expect a change at all.

The thesis ends with a conclusion where the key points will be rehearsed and the most feasible solution identified. As this is a much-debated topic and many different views exist, it is a challenging if not impossible task to select any one correct solution. In this thesis the options will be evaluated essentially from a realist point of view, as defined and indicated in the theoretical chapter. The final conclusion is that it is in Japan's overall interest to amend Article 9 of its constitution to allow for an official military for self-defense, but that it should proceed with caution and diplomacy to minimize the likely negative reactions.

2 REALISM – A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The most dominant theory in international relations, realism, will be used as the main theoretical foundation of this thesis. Let us first have a look at a basic description of political realism as it is understood in international relations. Realism sees the world through pessimistic glasses. It proposes that nation-states are the key actors in international affairs, wishing to maximize their power. By seeking out maximum power, nation-states increase their chances for survival, which, for the state, is considered to be the most important factor. This scenario takes place within a “survival of the fittest” system, where the law of the jungle is rampant and the strongest prevail. States consider their national interest to be of the highest priority and the leaders of states are considered to be rational decision-makers who always try to assure the national interest of their own country. It is ideal for a state to achieve hegemony since that gives the state more potential to control the international system and to shape it according to its interests.

Realists view international institutions as offering the possibility of limited cooperation between states, though they do not believe that international institutions or sub-national entities have much power¹ or influence over states. Rather, the realists believe that the institutions are in their nature weak and claim that states can make their own decisions regardless of institutional pressure. Consequently, an anarchy prevails in the international community as there is no universal government that can completely restrain the actions of the states, particularly the powerful ones. In this reigning anarchy, states fear for their survival and are afraid of each other; there is distrust and a feeling of insecurity prevails, increasing the chances of arms races. Peace is maintained merely by a balance of power, and the formation of alliances is the most common method of cooperation, often designed to maintain this power balance. States have to be careful of their actions since making a wrong move might be exploited by other states, who are always watching for weaknesses and opportunities. This also applies to the risk of over-extension where a powerful state or empire can meet with failure if it over-expands its

¹ Refer to definition of power on p. 17.

² This refers to a theoretical game scenario, where two prisoners, A and B, are under the suspicion of having committed a crime but there is lack of evidence. If both prisoners cooperate and remain silent,

powers. States may also opt for preemptive strikes if they feel threatened, and thus attack other states before they become too powerful.

Realism sees states' basic motivation as only working for their own interests and striving for the biggest slice of the pie they can get, since the theory assumes the world to be a zero-sum scenario. Cooperation is possible though unlikely, since helping your neighbour state might be counterproductive, should it decide to use its increased powers against you. Therefore, each actor is always evaluating the relative gains, asking: "If we both gain, how much will the other gain and how will it affect ourselves?" A state will not cooperate with another state if this makes the other state so powerful that it disturbs the balance of power to its own disadvantage. States are also afraid of the others' cheating as there is a lack of a universal agency that can ensure that states keep their promises. As illustrated by the 'Prisoners Dilemma',² states would prefer to defect from an agreement rather than being betrayed by another state, even though both would be better off cooperating. Thus, states are reluctant to cooperate even with states that share common interests. In this sense, countries are egoistic, selfish and self-reliant as they believe it pays to behave in such a way in a self-help system. Realists do not believe in the liberalistic ideas of global co-prosperity and global interest; rather, they think of the prosperity of the state.

Realism attempts to see the world as it is, using a scientific approach. Realists believe in certain unchangeable principles that govern international relations, and argue that recognizing and adhering to these principles allows states to make the most rational choices in most situations. These principles relate to human nature, which realists believe can be studied scientifically and which therefore allows states' actions to be predicted to some extent. However, Hans J. Morgenthau, one of the founding fathers of 20th. political realism, admits that it is never possible to look at international relations from a 100% objective viewpoint. He feels the same about the balance of power: that is,

² This refers to a theoretical game scenario, where two prisoners, A and B, are under the suspicion of having committed a crime but there is lack of evidence. If both prisoners cooperate and remain silent, they will receive only 6 months' sentence each. If prisoner A betrays B, A goes free while B serves 10 years and vice versa. If both betray each other, both receive 5 years' sentence. Hence, the best overall outcome would be achieved if they both cooperated. But out of fear of being betrayed both are most likely to defect.

the balance can never be absolutely accurate. Realism therefore attempts to look at the best available approximation of the situation.³

In the next three sections we will be looking at different concepts that are important to realism. These concepts are Balance of Power, Power, and Security. This chapter tries to define these concepts insofar as they are relevant to this thesis. It is important to note that the text does not claim to give some ultimate and complete description, as these concepts are broad and can be defined in innumerable ways depending on the precise context.

2.1 Balance of Power (BoP)

The BoP concept is important to realism, since realism assumes states will tend to form alliances to balance each other. The actors seek to maintain this balance of power, lest one of the actors or a group of them should grow too powerful and threaten the rest. As was mentioned before, we often see the formation of alliances in order to maintain the BoP, as was the case with Sparta and the smaller states that allied against the more powerful Athens in classical times.

Another example is how the world was split up after WWII into two superpowers, on the one hand the USA and its Western allies and on the other hand the Soviet Union and its allies. Both sets of actors, NATO and the Warsaw Pact allies, were able to balance each other in a bipolar fashion. The great powers of past Europe relied more on multipolar balance. For example, after the Napoleonic Wars, five great powers were able to balance each other: the United Kingdom, France, Prussia, Habsburg Austria, and Russia. However, throughout the centuries, the balance would sometimes change depending on whether one state was becoming too powerful or not. The UK was very good at maintaining Europe's balance and it was often said that the UK let others fight its wars to prevent any other European power from growing too powerful. Later, during the Cold War and in today's society, the BoP has largely been maintained due to nuclear deterrence, even though the USA is the undisputed hegemon of the world, which disturbs the balance. The USA also helps to maintain the BoP in East Asia, even though some worry that the BoP is now shifting due to a rising China and a nuclearized North Korea.

³ Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth W. Thompson, *Politics among Nations : The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 6th. ed. (New York: Knopf, 1985), 10.

2.2 Power

The notion of ‘power’ is important to realism and BoP, and therefore it is worth looking at what power actually articulates in the case of realism. Richard K. Ashley points out the importance of power: “Inescapably, whether they acknowledge it or not, all states and statesmen – indeed, all people – are potentially the objects of power. As they are, they have an objectively necessary interest in power.”⁴ But how is it possible to define such a broad concept as ‘power’? In this thesis, it is important to come up with a definition that applies to states. Steven Lukes gives us a fundamental explanation of power: “The absolutely basic common core to, or primitive notion lying behind, all talk of power is the notion that *A* in some way affects *B*.”⁵ This is the basic definition of power and gives us the idea that state *A* affects state *B*.

In this thesis, however, we need a somewhat more concrete definition of power, such as the one Terrence Ball provides: “Power is, in sum, the ability of an agent in a relation of conflict to alter his and/or others’ situation so as to promote his individual interests.”⁶ This is the definition that is so important to realism and the international system. If this definition is transferred to the international system, it means that states use their powers to promote their own interests. Karen A. Mingst points out that: “...to realists, power is the currency of international relations.”⁷ This is how important power is from the realistic viewpoint.

Let us have a look at how power affects the individual level. “[Realists] assume that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined in terms of power...”⁸ This explains why they act generally in a power-seeking manner. Power can also be used to define ethical values⁹ and that can be particularly important in controlling states’ populations. Statesmen can attempt to convince the general public of what is ‘good’ in ethical terms and in that way, ethics can function as power over people or biopower, a term coined by Michel Foucault. By controlling the population, the statesmen can control the state.

⁴ Richard K. Ashley, “Political Realism and Human Interests,” *International Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1981): 219, <http://www.jstor.org>.

⁵ Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 30.

⁶ Terrence Ball, “The Changing Face of Power,” in *Transforming Political Discourse: Political Theory and Critical Conceptual History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 84.

⁷ Karen A. Mingst, *Essentials of International Relations*, 4th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 107.

⁸ Qtd. in Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 25.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

Power can also be in the form of appearing to have power by faking it. If others believe you are powerful, you can act in a powerful manner. That can give the state the advantage of being taken more seriously and having more influence in the international community. Hence, it is natural for states to want to appear more powerful and superior than they actually are. Realism sees power in international relations as many different things, including power over the economy, over populations, and political power but most importantly of all, military power. Let us now have a look at military security as seen from a realistic point of view.

2.3 Security

While ‘security’ is a socially constructed word, it is fundamental to human happiness. Without security, everything the people of a nation-state seek, such as happiness and freedom, may be lost. The notion of security developed under realism is very important for the topic of this thesis and it could be said that the security notion covers a big chunk of the realist theory. Joseph M. Grieco observes that: “It is widely accepted – even by neoliberals – that realism has great explanatory power in national security affairs.”¹⁰ Thus, realism is well equipped to handle the security focus of this thesis. There are many forms of security but this thesis focuses primarily on inter-state military security.

Security becomes especially important when considering the zero-sum scenario of the world stage, where states sometimes choose to literally fight for the slices of the pie. In relation to this, Morgenthau mentions that: “In international politics in particular, armed strength as a threat or a potentiality is the most important material factor making for the political power of a nation. If it becomes an actuality in war, it signifies the substitution of military for political power.”¹¹ This demonstrates that political power without the backing of military strength will not suffice if it comes to military conflict, i.e. military power replaces political power. Consequently, it is important for states to have military muscles in order to back up their political power.

¹⁰ Joseph M. Grieco, “Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism,” *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (1988): 553, <http://www.jstor.org>.

¹¹ Hans Morgenthau, “Political Power,” in *Essential Readings in World Politics*, ed. Karen A. Mingst and Jack L. Snyder (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 58.

John Mearsheimer writes that: "...realism depicts a world characterized by security competition and war."¹² This means that states are always trying to increase their military capability in a competition against each other. This has been referred to as the 'security dilemma', and another term for it is the arms race. Although Mearsheimer mentions war, realism does not proclaim that the world is in a constant state of war, but rather that there is always the likelihood of war breaking out, since there is little to prevent it: and realists point to historical events to back up that argument. Thus, realism places emphasis on the security of states and at the same time relates it principally to military security.

Realism describes states as protectors of their citizens, as that is a prerequisite for the survival of the state itself. Put in military terms, the state has to defend itself, lest it be invaded by another state and risks losing its sovereignty. Due to nuclear weapons, today's states even face the threat of total annihilation and human extinction. Realists have argued that this has helped to sustain peace, since using nuclear weapons against a nuclear state with second strike capability would not serve anyone's interests, and a nuclear balance has therefore worked as a deterrent to war between nuclear states.

States will go very far to ensure their survival. Mearsheimer notes that: "...great powers are rational actors. They are aware of their external environment and they think strategically about how to survive in it ... [and] the only assumption dealing with a specific motive that is common to all states says that their principal objective is to survive..."¹³ Thus, states seek to secure themselves, mostly through military force and/or alliances.

This is important when taking into account that the realm of states is more ruthless than the realm of individuals, or as Hollis and Smith point out: "While an individual may have a duty to act in the defense of moral principles, the same cannot apply to the state, since the state's action has to be judged by a different criterion: that of national survival."¹⁴ If we compare this to a real-life situation, individuals usually do not possess many weapons to defend themselves against, say, potential foes or burglars. Instead, they usually rely on the police to protect them and presume that they can dial the emergency number if and when the need arises.

¹² John Mearsheimer, "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power," in *Essential Readings in World Politics*, ed. Karen A. Mingst and Jack L. Snyder (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 61.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁴ Hollis and Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, 26.

However, as seen from a realist perspective, this is not the case in the international community since it is characterized by anarchy. A state may try to dial the emergency number but can never be sure whether help will arrive. This is the reason that even permanently neutral countries like Sweden, Austria and Switzerland have militaries for self-defense purposes. Neutral states rely on the loyalty of the international system while most of them also have militaries for self-defense. Then we have peaceful countries, like Iceland, which choose to meet their defense needs through security alliances such as NATO. Yet, both the peaceful state and the neutral country face a security uncertainty, as the peaceful state in the alliance can never be 100% sure that any other allied country or countries will come to its aid in case of an emergency, and the neutral country can never be sure that its neutrality will be respected by other more aggressive states. Such is the nature of the realist world.

2.4 Japan and Realism

The previous section helps to explain why Japan should *prima facie* want to maintain an official military for self-defense purposes and in this section, the thesis will briefly explore Japan's security situation as seen from the realist viewpoint. The connection with basic realist theories of the state is one that, in Japanese politics, the Young Diet Members' Group has already highlighted. This group has advocated that Japan should "defend its national interest based upon 'realism'."¹⁵ Reading between the lines, their position could be interpreted as actually advocating that Japan should have its own official military, otherwise Japan might not be able to sufficiently defend itself from a realist viewpoint.

There has been much debate about Japan's foreign policy: whether it should adhere to a more realist point of view, or continue to stick to idealism. One Japanese scholar feels that: "...one of the great misfortunes of Japanese history has been the extent to which idealism has dominated realism."¹⁶ This is interesting in the light of Hollis's and Smith's statement that: "... 'Realism' [...] refers to a school opposed to 'Idealism'."¹⁷ It is certain that when it comes to military security, Japan has been following an idealistic approach since WWII. The reality of the rest of the world, including Japan's close

¹⁵ Qtd. in Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2007), 71.

¹⁶ Qtd. in *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁷ Hollis and Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, 10.

neighbourhood, is different, and Takashi Hoshiyama believes that: "...Japan has at last set out on the path to normalization on realism."¹⁸ That is, he believes that Japan is adapting to the reality of the world.

But what does it mean for Japan to follow a more realistic approach? The realist interpretation would be that in a self-help system, Japan must be able to take care of its own defenses. Although having allies can be helpful, it can also be risky. Richard J. Samuels notes that: "...alliances, like contracts, can easily be broken"¹⁹... and the consequent fact that no state can be certain of its safety."²⁰ Thus, Japan should seek to secure its defenses through self-reliance. Mingst provides arguments for this, noting that: "...realist approaches to managing security place less faith in the international community and more faith in individual state power."²¹ In this case, Mingst is referring to the international community's role in providing a kind of safety net, such as international laws and/or organizations which have the potential to prevent international conflict. But as realists have pointed out, this has not been enough to stop wars from breaking out in the past. As a result, the only guarantee of a state's security is to adhere to a realist perspective and take care of its own defenses.

2.5 Japan's Realist Position

As was mentioned before, realism does not give much credence to inter-state cooperation and the non-zero-sum option of increasing the size of the pie. Consequently, systems that use integration to achieve added value through synthesis such as the model of the EU, for example, are difficult to explain using realism. The same applies to the closeness of the Western security community in the second half of the 20th century: realists predicted that it would not remain intact for long after the fall of the Soviet Union, because as the common enemy disappeared the allies would have no reason to stick together anymore. In reality, the Western security community remains intact to this day even though it may not be as solid as it was during the Cold War.²² As a result, liberal institutionalism would be better equipped to explain the phenomena of European cooperation.

¹⁸ Takashi Hoshiyama, "New Japan-China Relations and the Corresponding Positioning of the United States—History, Values, Realism in a Changing World," *Asia-Pacific Review* 15, no. 2 (2008): 69, <http://ebscohost.com>.

¹⁹ Qtd. in Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, 7.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Mingst, *Essentials of International Relations*, 239.

²² Andrew Cottey, *Security in the New Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 29.

However, this thesis is looking at East Asia where there has not been the same kind of cooperation and integration as witnessed in Western Europe. China and North Korea still bear historical resentments against Japan, mostly from acts that Japan committed before and during WWII, and that serves as a hindrance to cooperation. It has been said that even though Japan, China and both Koreas are very close geographically, there is a great psychological barrier that separates these nations.

Robert D. Kaplan has described Asia's realist scenario further in an interview on China: "[Asia] is an area of the world where nationalism still lives, where militaries are not something to be embarrassed or shamed about the way they are in parts of Europe." The interviewer, Gideon Rose, responds: "So this is basically a thesis of – similar to Aaron Friedberg's one in 'Ripe for Rivalry,' in which Europe may be peaceful and post-historical and so forth, but Asia is going back to classic Westphalian multipolarity and the basic security problems..."²³ Taking these realistic factors into account, it could be argued that East Asia presents a more realist model of inter-state relations than Western Europe. Consequently, realism as a guiding concept is more applicable to this region of the world.

On the right is a map showing Japan's position in relation to its neighbours. As can be seen, Japan is situated close to China, both Koreas and Russia,²⁴ with the most immediate threatening neighbour being North Korea which has an extremist, unpredictable regime and is the only state that might be imagined as ready to use nuclear missiles. As was mentioned before, realism assumes political leaders to be rational actors and that would be



Source: Iceland Online

Figure 1 Map of Japan

²³ Gideon Rose, "Q&A with Robert Kaplan on China," Council on Foreign Relations, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/discussions/interviews/qa-with-robert-kaplan-on-china?page=2>.

²⁴ Even though Russia might be considered a possible threat to Japan, this thesis will not focus on Russia.

realism's explanation of why North Korea has not yet launched an attack against its neighbours. Japan is currently in dispute with Russia over the Kurile Islands (see the picture's top right corner). It has also been disputing with Taiwan and China over the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands (labeled Senkaku Shotō in the lower left of above picture) which have potential for oil and gas extraction. All these geographical factors contribute to Japan's realist environment.

2.6 Alternative theories

Even though this thesis uses realism, there are many other theories that might have been applicable as well. Realism has come under many types of criticism and in the end, it is just a theory, one of many different approaches to help understand how the international system works. However, due to the security focus of this thesis, the author considered realism to be the most applicable theory.

It might have been considered that neorealism would also have a place alongside realism. Yet, neorealism would not have added much to realism in this thesis. Neorealism puts more emphasis on institutions and the structure of the international system and how that can shape the options for and behaviors of states. It also puts more emphasis on the economic factor which is relevant considering the close relationship between security and economy. China's powerful economy might, indeed, affect Japan in security terms. However, the thesis question: "Is it in Japan's interest to change Article 9 of its constitution in order to have its own official military for self-defense purposes, mainly against North Korea and China, as well as to limit its military dependency on its ally, the USA?," focuses on military security, where realism and neorealism do not differ in their prescriptions. The main immediate threat dealt with in this thesis comes from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), a state that does not seem to be much affected by institutions or the structure of the international system, as it makes a great point of going its own way.²⁵ Finally, even those East Asian states having more stable security relations than North Korea have not so far wished or been able to build strong cooperative institutions among themselves. Consequently, the author feels neorealism would not have added much to realism if it had been used in this thesis.

²⁵ The official strategy of North Korea is based on '*Juche*', which means self-reliance.

If the focus of the thesis had been on the degree or absence of cooperation in Japan's region and the reasons for this, the theory of liberal institutionalism could have been used to set a frame of reference. It differs fundamentally from realism and has sometimes been compared with idealism, which is a vision of how the world should be. However, when it comes to military security, states usually adhere to the more vigorous realism or as Mearsheimer claims: "[liberal institutionalism's] proponents pay little attention to the security realm, where questions about war and peace are of central importance."²⁶ Cooperation is ideal, but like Mearsheimer points out, it is hard to use cooperation as an explanation when it comes to military security. Hence the choice to use realism exclusively in this thesis.

²⁶ John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," in *The Politics of Global Governance: International Organizations in an Interdependent World*, ed. Paul F. Diehl (London: Lynne Rienner, 2005), 65.

3 HISTORICAL CHAPTER

In order to consider Japan's contemporary situation, it is important to look at the historical background of the region, since this profoundly affects today's relations between the main actors involved. At the beginning of the chapter there will be a short reflection on Japan's history concerning military and warrior ethics, followed by a short section about Japanese nationalism. As the most important actors in this thesis are Japan, the USA, China and North Korea, historical relations between Japan and the three other countries will be covered. The central focus will be on the period from the 1850s until 1945, though some earlier and later relevant accounts will be mentioned as well. A brief comparison of Japan's and Germany's constitutions will be covered. As this is not an historical thesis, only the most relevant points will be examined and key historical events summarized.

3.1 Japan's Warrior Traditions

Japan has a long history of conflicts and development of the martial spirit. Nelly Delay mentions that: "In the old days Japan was made up of small rival states that were almost permanently at war. Soldiers recruited by nobility set themselves up as a caste enjoying special privileges. Known as the *samurai*, they established a code of honour for themselves, *bushidō*, governing their conduct in war and their spiritual life."²⁷ As can be seen from this quotation, there was a strong tradition of fighting and an honor associated with being a warrior in Japan. These traditions have lived on throughout the centuries and no doubt contributed to how fiercely the Japanese soldiers fought in the Second World War. Even though the warrior tradition was probably stronger in the past than it is today, the Japanese people are generally proud of their warrior traditions.

After Japan was defeated in WWII and its constitution altered, Japan was no longer allowed to maintain an official military – which placed the country in an odd situation compared to its past warrior traditions. Understandably, most Japanese people were confused after the war. The devastating war left many Japanese with the impression that

²⁷ Nelly Delay, *The Art and Culture of Japan*, Discoveries (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999), 65.

war was abhorrent and should be avoided at all costs. Having suffered constant bombardments aimed at civilians for more than one year before surrender, including two atomic bombs, almost all Japanese people had become war-weary. No doubt, this contributed heavily to most Japanese taking on a more pacifist point of view after the war. At the same time, Japanese soldiers and warriors lost their identity and position in some sense. In sum, to change Japan's constitution by forbidding any form of military action was in contrast with Japan's warrior traditions.

Many Japanese and foreigners alike look upon the way of the warrior as a noble tradition and see it from an artistic point of view. The Japanese swords, known to be the best in the world, are considered masterpieces of art and, depending on the quality and historical relevance, some of them can even cost more than a million dollars. The warriors of Japan, throughout the centuries and right up until the end of the Second World War, were expected to be self-sacrificing and to abandon themselves for a just cause. Hence, a noble and virtuous vision was related to the warrior ethics. Compared to its warrior-like past, it could be said that Japan is leading a more peaceful existence today but there is no doubt that the warrior spirit lives on.

3.2 Japanese Nationalism

Coming from an island with their own language and culture stretching back thousands of years, the Japanese have always been a proud nation. They have also believed that Japan was the country of the gods and was protected by them, as was the case with the kamikaze ('sacred wind') typhoon that destroyed the Mongolian fleet in late 13th century. They have also had the emperor, a symbol of the whole people, whose direct lineage is said to stretch back at least 2600 years.

When the Meiji Restoration²⁸ was officially completed in 1868, Japan went through major transformations and adopted many Western elements including modernization of its military, something that would have dramatic effects in the years to come. The Japanese cherished their national spirit while utilizing Western technology, referred to as *wakon yōsai*.²⁹ During the Meiji period, nationalism was highly regarded and promoted in Japan, both in the community and the educational system. People were taught to revere and respect

²⁸ Very summarized, the Meiji Restoration includes the end of the Shogunate and the restoration of powers and authority to the emperor.

²⁹ 和魂洋才, literal transl. Japanese spirit with Western learning.

the emperor and to be loyal to him. Thus developed the father-child relationship between the emperor and his subjects, the Japanese people. Many Japanese believed the emperor to be a god reincarnated. Whether the emperor was a god or not, the mental power of the authorities over the Japanese people was very strong and nationalism was growing all the way until Japan started losing the Second World War.³⁰

By using this nationalistic feeling, the authorities could manipulate the population to suit their interests. This power over people, or biopower as was mentioned in the theoretical chapter, can be a very powerful tool that can either be used in a positive or a negative way. In Japan's and Germany's examples, biopower was used in the most negative way possible – to wage war. This made France, Britain and other enemies of the former Third Reich cautious when Germany unified in 1990, and makes China and North Korea still wary today about Japan's actions to remilitarize. More broadly, all the East Asian nations that suffered from Japanese aggression during WWII are generally still cautious concerning Japanese nationalism.

As the USA also suffered from Japanese nationalism, one would have expected them to be cautious as well. Yet, because the USA and Japan have been allies since WWII, the USA does not feel it has much to fear from contemporary Japan. Let us now briefly look at the most important events in Japan-USA relations since the 1850s.

3.3 The Japan-USA Relationship

From the time of first official contact the Japanese government was suspicious of Western influences. Political interference from Portuguese missionaries was feared. The Japanese had witnessed how Western colonialism left China in ruins and how the Western Powers wanted to control, exploit and manipulate the world to their advantage. That is one of the main reasons why Japan remained isolated for more than 200 years (from around the 1630s until the 1850s). Finally it was forced to open up when Commodore Matthew Perry of the U.S. Navy (see picture on the following page) was sent by the US President to establish diplomatic and trade relations with Japan in 1853. The following year Japan consented to establish a treaty with the USA, and other great powers followed in the USA's footsteps by making treaties with Japan.

³⁰ The media managed to convince most of the Japanese public that Japan was winning the war until American bomber planes started to bomb Japan's major cities in 1944. By that time, the Japanese public was starting to realize that defeat was imminent.

The USA and Japan had originally signed a peace-treaty on March 31, 1854, but after the 1920s, the countries' relations worsened. Japan had become upset with the USA due to certain factors. One of these factors was the Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armament which came into effect in 1922. Japan was not satisfied with having a 5 : 5 : 3 ratio, where it would



Source: *Facts and Detail*
Figure 2 Perry's Black Ship

get the '3' part while the USA and Britain would get the larger part. Kenneth Henshall comments that: "...[this] upset many Japanese at home, who felt they should have equal naval status with America and Britain."³¹ Furthermore, W. G. Beasley mentions that: "...it was a blow to national pride."³² Japan did, however, consent to the treaty, on the understanding that the USA and Britain would not possess islands in the Pacific. The first London Naval Treaty in 1930, considered to be an extension of the earlier treaty, also placed Japan behind the USA and Britain in naval shipbuilding. Later, Japan abandoned the Second London Naval Treaty in January 1936 (the conference had started in December 1935). Thus, Japan was free to build its navy regardless of outside interference. Japan had already left the League of Nations, which it did in 1933.

Another factor that angered the Japanese was the USA's Immigration Act of 1924. This Immigration Act included the Asian Exclusion Act, which forbade Japanese citizens to immigrate to the USA. This was especially offensive to the Japanese since they had been respecting the quota established by the USA before. Beasley writes that this was: "...a grievance made all the harder to bear by the fact that in Asia Japanese often had the status of Europeans..."³³ Henshall also comments that: "This [Immigration Act] caused outrage among the Japanese people, and greatly weakened the arguments of those who advocated cooperation with the United States in the new world order set up under the Washington treaties."³⁴ Against this background it is understandable that the

³¹ Kenneth G. Henshall, *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*, 2nd. ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 109.

³² W. G. Beasley, *The Modern History of Japan* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), 243.

³³ *Ibid.*, 258.

³⁴ Qtd. in Henshall, *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*, 110.

Japanese population had become upset, because of the general affront to Japanese pride as well as the reality that many Japanese felt Japan was not big enough and wanted to migrate. It makes sense, consequently, that the Japanese started to concentrate their migration towards the East Asian mainland since they could no longer migrate to the USA. In the 1920s and 30s, due to the recession, many trade barriers were also set up in Western countries to protect domestic production and trade. Japan had previously been able to make profitable trade with the USA, Australia and Britain since workers were paid much lower salaries in Japan, so this was a considerable loss for Japan as well, and a further factor pushing Japan to concentrate more on East Asia.

Paul Norbury notes that: "...it has to be recognized that Japanese national pride, felt at many levels of government, business, and the civil service, had been dealt a blow by the perceived "rejection" of Japan as an equal partner by the West. Not surprisingly, Japan subsequently seized the chance to become master of Asia."³⁵ Japan had been seeking recognition from the West but felt it had been rejected. This led Japan to strive to be the leading nation of East Asia, with the goal of freeing it from Western colonialism, under the banner of The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, which was to promote cooperation in East Asia. However, as Chalmers Johnson comments, this did not turn out very well:

Japan's progressive development from the Twenty-one Demands on China in 1915 to the seizure of Manchuria in 1931 ultimately filled all Chinese nationalists with enmity against Japan, a sentiment bolstered by fury against Japan's parvenu imperialism and betrayal of her fellow Asians. When, in the 1930s, the Japanese militarists tried to revive an anti-Western Asian nationalism led by Japan, they were too late. In Chinese eyes Japan was no longer Asian; it was imperialist, pure and simple.³⁶

Hence, Japan did not receive much sympathy from its Asian brothers. By this time, the USA had become very alert to Japanese East Asian expansionism, especially after the above-mentioned 'Manchurian Incident' in 1931, and in the 1930s both countries realized war was possible. The West condemned the Japanese invasion of China, both when Japan expanded into Manchuria in 1931 and when Japan went on to launch its full-scale invasion of China in 1937. The USA threatened an embargo on Japan which it

³⁵ Paul Norbury, *Japan*, Culture Smart! (Portland: Graphic Arts Center Publishing, 2003), 29.

³⁶ Chalmers Johnson, "How China and Japan See Each Other," *Foreign Affairs* 50, no. 4 (1972): 715, <http://ebscohost.com>.

carried out in 1940. The embargo deprived Japan of vital war resources such as oil and metals, bearing in mind that about 80% of Japan's oil was imported from the USA. The USA had also frozen Japanese assets in America. The Allies' support of China and the USA's embargo were enough to impel Japan to attack Pearl Harbor in December 1941, to which the USA and Britain responded by declaring war on Japan.

For the first six months Japan gained successes in Southeast Asia and was able to conquer quite many islands in the Pacific and gain considerable territory. However, the tide was turned when Japan suffered a big defeat against the USA at the Battle of Midway. The USA and its allies managed to successfully enforce Japan's surrender in August 1945. Shortly thereafter Japan's constitution was rewritten by the occupation forces and came into effect in 1947. One of the most important changes was that the emperor was to become merely the symbol of the people, possessing no diplomatic powers, and that Japan should not be allowed to maintain any formal military capability. However, the USA realized that Japan could become an important ally in East Asia as well as serving the USA's own forces as an 'unsinkable aircraft carrier.' Therefore, the USA encouraged Japan to form its own limited self-defense forces. Japan found profit for its interests in allying with the USA, so an official security treaty was signed in 1951. Both states reconfirmed their commitment by signing the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security in 1960.

Since then, Japan and the USA have worked closely on monitoring security in East Asia and the Pacific. During the Cold War, both countries were important to each other. Japan was important to the USA in order to ensure safety in East Asia and the Pacific and to counter Soviet influence in that region of the world. The USA was important for Japan, to keep up Japan's defenses against the Soviets with one of the means of protection being the US strategic nuclear umbrella. The alliance also enabled Japan to focus more on its economic sector, making it quite a convenient arrangement for Japan. This was especially true during the Korean War of 1950-53, where Japan supplied the USA with war materials. In recent years, the USA has been putting more pressure on Japan to take care of its own defenses even though both partners stress the continuing importance of the alliance. These points will be discussed in more detail below in the chapter covering the Japan-USA Alliance.

3.4 The Japanese and German Constitutions

Ever since Japan's new constitution was adopted after WWII, much debate has taken place and many voices been raised both for its revision and for its maintenance, particularly with reference to Article 9 (see below). Japan currently maintains a formidable self-defense force, but as Kevin J. Cooney observes: "The problem for Japan, particularly in the post-Cold war era, is how to employ the SDF without violating the constitution."³⁷

Out of all the defeated nations of WWII, Japan is the only one that has a special clause stating it does not have the right to maintain a military or the right to wage war. Both Germany and Italy have clauses that allow them to defend themselves, and have of course since become equal members of the collective defense alliance NATO. In this context it is interesting to compare Japan's constitution with the German one. Both Japan and Germany were defeated in WWII and both states had their constitutions changed by the Allies. However, the articles concerning military security differed, as can be seen in more detail by comparing Article 9 of the Japanese constitution against Article 87a of the German one. Article 87a states the following: "(1) The Federation shall establish Armed Forces for purposes of defense."³⁸ When we compare it with Article 9, we can see considerable differences in the text of the latter:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.³⁹

Thus according to Article 9 Japan is not allowed to maintain any form of military. The fact is that Article 9 does not match with reality, as Japan already maintains the Japan Self-Defense Forces, a formidable army comprising "land, sea, and air forces as well as other war potential." According to S.P. Seth: "American pressure led to the

³⁷ Kevin J. Cooney, *Japan's Foreign Policy since 1945* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2006), 55.

³⁸ Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, Art. 87a, <http://www.iuscomp.org/gla/statutes/GG.htm#Preamble>.

³⁹ The Constitution of Japan, Art. 9, <http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Japan/English/english-Constitution.html>.

creation of a 'police reserve', later upgraded to Self Defense Forces (SDF) in 1954... Such 'creative' interpretation of Article 9 of the Japanese constitution created a dichotomous situation for Japan – of maintaining armed forces when the constitution expressly prohibited this.”⁴⁰ This raises the following question: Is it not time for Japan to adapt Article 9 to reality by having a similar clause to the one in the German constitution, which would state that Japan is allowed to maintain an army for self-defense?

Since WWII, Germany has changed its constitution, the Basic Law, many times while Japan has been much more conservative, making no changes at all. This seems ironic in the light of Article 9, which many consider need to be revised. It has to be taken into consideration, however, that the political system in Germany makes it easier to change the Basic Law than for Japan to change its constitution.

Both Germany's and Japan's constitutions have caused the countries difficulties in joining international peace keeping operations (PKO). While both countries' participation still has some limitations, as seen for instance in the current controversy over German troops' limited role in Afghanistan, Germany has taken the lead in changing its constitution as well as re-interpreting it for this purpose. Japan, on the other hand, has only re-interpreted Article 9 as allowing limited participation in PKO (no 'blue helmets' or 'combat' roles), while introducing laws to allow for somewhat more flexibility. Japan's participation in PKO has mostly involved mine sweeping and civilian services such as engineering. The Japanese personnel who participate in such missions are only allowed to have limited arms for self-defense. The PKO issue will be taken up again in sub-chapter 5.4 in the context of options for changing Article 9.

The German Basic Law, by contrast, allows combat troops to be deployed in foreign countries for institutional peace missions or coalition missions like NATO's role in Afghanistan. Germany is already the third largest troop contributor to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and German troops have taken part in combats in northern and northeastern Afghanistan, though they are not allowed to participate in combat operations in the south and east of the country. The Japanese case is more limited, since Japan is currently only allowed to be in a security alliance with the USA and is not allowed to place its troops on foreign soil or engage in offensive battles. Even

⁴⁰ S. P. Seth, "Japan's Constitutional Debate," *Economic and Political Weekly* 29, no. 16/17 (1994): 907, <http://www.jstor.org>.

though Japan has participated in UN PKO, the rules governing the type of personnel and their roles have been strict. This clearly shows that the rules governing the German Army are more flexible than the ones concerning Japan's Self-Defense Forces. It also helps explain this significance of the chosen theme of this thesis: "Is it in Japan's interest to change Article 9 of its constitution in order to have its own military for self-defense purposes...?"

While on the topic of Japan's and Germany's constitutions, it is worth noting an argument made by Michael Walzer. As was already mentioned, the Allied Powers had Germany's and Japan's constitutions amended after WWII to help them become more peaceful nations. That was not the only thing they did, for they also had Germany's Nazi regime and the Japanese Imperial rule replaced by democratic party systems. However, while Walzer feels this was legitimate in the case of Nazi Germany, he believes it was not so in Japan's case:

[The] realistic moral judgment... recognizes, without explicitly affirming, the evil of the Nazi regime, and it rightly places Nazism outside the (moral) world of bargaining and accommodation. We can understand the right of conquest and reconstruction only with such an example. The right does not arise in every war; *it did not arise, I think, in the war against Japan*. It exists only in cases where the criminality of the aggressor state threatens those deep values that political independence and territorial integrity merely stand for in the international order, and when the threat is no sense accidental or transitory but is inherent in the very nature of the regime.⁴¹

Walzer further claims that: "...the Japanese, [...] had never posed such a threat to peace and freedom as the Nazis had."⁴² Hence, in his view, the Allies' "right of conquest and reconstruction" did not apply to Japan, and therefore the Allies' enforced regime change and constitutional amendment was not legitimate. It is interesting then to consider that the Allies put a clause in the German Constitution to allow for military self-defense forces but did not do so in the case of Japan. In Walzer's view, it probably should have been the other way around. Thus, Walzer's argument supports Japan's right to amend Article 9. Let us now journey back into the past and have a look at Japanese and Chinese historical relations.

⁴¹ Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars : A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 4th. ed. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 113. (Italics: author's emphasis).

⁴² *Ibid.*, 263.

3.5 Japan and China

Throughout the centuries, these two countries have gone through many ups and downs in their relations. There has been much cultural exchange throughout the centuries, especially during the 6th. and 8th. centuries, when the Japanese adopted many things from the Chinese, including the Chinese writing system, architecture, religion and state administration among other cultural assets. These are some of the positive effects of the Sino-Japan relationship. However, the two nations' relations have not always been so positive, as was demonstrated during the period of 1894-1945. The thesis will now discuss some of the most damaging historical incidents in Chinese-Japanese relations.

The most serious armed incidents between Japan and China in the past century or so are the First Sino-Japanese war of 1894-5 and the second in 1937-1945. The first Sino-Japanese war left China as the loser, having to hand over Taiwan and some other islands along with the Liaodong Peninsula and monetary reparations. However, Japan was forced by three western powers, France, Germany and Russia, to return the Liaodong Peninsula to China which suited their own colonial ambitions. Paul Varley comments that this act of the European powers: "...incensed many Japanese and made them more aggressively nationalistic than before."⁴³

In 1915, Japan made claims against China which included recognition of the Shantung territory⁴⁴ which Japan had newly seized in its war against Germany during WWI. The treaty also included China giving Japan permission to place 'advisers' within the Chinese military, police and government. This would have provided Japan with much control over China, something on which China was unwilling to make concessions, though it found itself forced to sign a revised edition of the treaty. This of course further increased Chinese animosity toward Japan.

Even before war broke out again in 1937, tensions between China and Japan had been growing. In 1931, the so called 'Manchurian Incident' occurred. Not all facts are known about the event but it is considered that Japanese militarist blew up a Japanese railway near Mukden and tried to frame the Chinese. This allowed the Japanese to assert a just cause to expand territory in the Manchurian region. In this region, Japan created the state of Manchukuo with China's last emperor, Pu'i as the puppet ruler. The League of Nations did

⁴³ H. Paul Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 4th. ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 272.

⁴⁴ The territory was returned to China in 1922.

not recognize this state and so Japan left the League. All these incidents signalled how tensions between China and Japan were growing and made it unlikely that China would aid Japan in its campaign to expel the western powers and expand in East Asia.

In 1937 the Marco Polo Bridge Incident⁴⁵ occurred. This time, Japan found itself in full-scale war with China. Japan was expecting a swift victory but soon realized it was stuck in a quagmire. Thus, Japan's original peaceful intentions of cooperation through the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere had instead been turned into an abhorrent confrontation. This war caused much more damage and loss of life to China than the previous one.

After WWII, relations between Japan and China were normalized in 1972. However at that time Johnson observed that: "...the Chinese tend to regard Japan, for good historical reasons, with the utmost suspicion, remembering how quickly the old samurai of the nineteenth century armed themselves with Western weapons and turned these against China."⁴⁶ Even to this day the historical issue of Second Sino-Japanese War remains very contentious with deep scars remaining in the countries' relationship. More will be said about contemporary issues in the chapter on historical disputes.

3.6 Japan and Korea

Japan and Korea have also gone through many ups and downs throughout the centuries. From around the 6th. century until the 8th. century, Koreans brought important aspects of mainland culture with them to Japan.⁴⁷ It is also considered that Buddhism entered Japan through Korea some time in the 6th. century. Despite these positive encounters between the two countries, blood has been shed between them and even though there has not been physical fighting between the countries for more than 60 years, Cheol Hee Park mentions that: "There is no denying that historical enmity [has] worked as a critical barrier for improving relations between the two countries."⁴⁸ This shows that it is a very similar issue to the one between Japan and China.

⁴⁵ An incident where, on the night of July 7th. 1937, Chinese troops started to fire on Japanese troops due to Japanese exercise maneuver without prior notice. In a few weeks, the incident escalated into a full scale battle, which is why it is considered to be the start of the second Sino-Japanese War.

⁴⁶ Johnson, "How China and Japan See Each Other," 714.

⁴⁷ Conrad Schirokauer, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993), 12.

⁴⁸ Cheol Hee Park, "Cooperation Coupled with Conflicts: Korea-Japan Relations in the Post-Cold War Era," *Asia-Pacific Review* 15, no. 2 (2008): 15, <http://ebscohost.com>.

In the early 20th. century, Japan saw it as vital to gain more territory and resources, partly to fuel its military machine which had been exhausted in battles with Russia during the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905. Korea contained important sources of metals for the Imperial Japanese Army. Japan also considered Korea a vital territory due to its proximity: any other power that controlled Korea could hit Japan directly in the heart. It was also a general aim of Japan's expansionism in East Asia to control Korea. These factors contributed to Japan's seizing official possession of Korea in 1910.

The Koreans, a proud nation of very old history and traditions, were naturally displeased with Japan's annexation. Nationalism in Korea was very strong at that time and Japan attempted to neutralize it by implementing cultural genocide. This included teaching Japanese in schools and banning certain Korean traits, such as Korean martial arts. The Japanese also used force against the Koreans with many Koreans arrested, injured and killed. Henshall mentions that: "The Korean army was disbanded, enforcing the need for Japanese 'protection'. Korean protests to the western world were ignored. So too were the 1,450 [cases of] armed suppressions of Korean riots by Japanese troops between 1908 and 1910."⁴⁹ All this cultivated even more nationalism, resistance and resentment among the Koreans. It is also worth noting that after the Great Kantō earthquake which devastated Tokyo in 1923, several thousand Koreans were killed by angry Japanese mobs due to the spread of false rumors that the Koreans were looting.

When Japan was defeated in 1945, Korea gained independence though it was split up at the 38th. parallel into North and South Korea. After that, North and South Korea were able to turn back to their traditions and language but the Japanese treatment left a painful scar in North Korean-Japanese relations. Evidently both North and South Koreans are still wary of Japan and its military policy, even though the historical issue has been more sensitive in the South. Japan and North Korea have also been trying to improve relations concerning the historical issue through the six-party talks (see chapter 4.2.6) as well as Japan providing aid to North Korea. Nevertheless, North Korea – like China – feels that Japan has not apologized enough for its war crimes and that the treatment of war atrocities is still too vague in some Japanese school history textbooks – an issue that will be discussed in the Japanese School History Textbooks section below.

⁴⁹ Qtd. in Henshall, *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*, 95.

3.6.1 Japan and South Korea

As was mentioned above, the historical issue is even more sensitive in South Korea than it is in the North. However, Japan and South Korea have operated along similar lines since World War II, that is, by adhering to democratic and liberalistic ideals. The countries have been virtual allies since they have both been allies of the USA, which has itself encouraged more cooperation between Japan and South Korea, especially during the 1960s. Thus even though Japan needs to be wary of South Korea's military spending there is much more need to fear North Korea.

Concerning the USA's efforts to improve relations between Japan and South Korea Park writes that: "Though the US still thinks it is in its interests for Korea and Japan to cooperate, the US has limited capability to stop or control the behaviors of the two when frictions emerge, especially on the historical issues. Nor can the US enforce cooperation between the two allies."⁵⁰ The historical issue is still causing trouble for Japanese-South Korean relations but it is in their hands to overcome these historical disputes in order to promote more cooperation and stability between the two nations. Japan and South Korea also need to settle their dispute over the Takeshima islands which both claim as their territory.

3.7 Contemporary Historical Disputes

The historical disputes still affecting Japanese diplomacy today mostly involve war crimes committed by the Japanese during the Second World War. This section will cover the contemporary debates concerning these important unresolved historical issues, which include the Nanking Massacre, prime ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, and the question of Japanese School History Textbooks. Another important dispute also remains between Japan and North Korea which is sometimes referred to as the 'abductees issue', relating to events which took place in the 1970s and 80s. This section will analyze how all these issues affect Japan's relationship with China and North Korea.

3.7.1 The Capture of Nanking

One of the most disputed historical issues that remains between Japan and China is the capture of Nanking in 1937, often referred to as the Nanking Massacre. The Chinese claim

⁵⁰ Park, "Cooperation Coupled with Conflicts: Korea-Japan Relations in the Post-Cold War Era," 17.

some 300,000 civilians were systematically killed, with thousands being raped and looting committed by the Japanese Imperial Army. The Japanese generally deny the number of casualties being so high, with some even denying that the massacre took place. The Tokyo War Tribunal estimated that some 200,000 soldiers and civilians had been killed.

Though it is impossible to know the actual facts, one can assume that the severity of the crimes was somewhat less than Chinese claims. For example, Takemoto Tadao and Ohara Yasuo ask the following question: “[Chang’s book, *The Rape of Nanking*,] says that over 300,000 citizens were killed and the [sic] most of the corpses were burnt by kerosene within six weeks. If it were so, dozens of incinerators as large as that of Auschwitz would have been necessary. Who has ever seen such things within and around the closed space of the walled castle [of Nanking]?”⁵¹ Even though the number of those killed might not have been as high as the Chinese claim, it is evident that atrocities took place and that tens of thousands of people were killed, including many civilians.

This dispute about how events took place causes some strain in contemporary Sino-Japanese relations. This is all the more so since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) uses the Nanking Massacre as a propaganda tool to unite the Chinese people and to direct their anger away from the CCP, as well as to keep a certain leverage over the Japanese. Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro point out that:

The Beijing authorities view anti-Japanese sentiment as something to orchestrate primarily for its [sic] own international purposes—to strengthen war guilt among Japanese and opposition to Japanese rearmament among the nations of the world. Meanwhile, China’s Communist Party shows no concern with any moral accounting for the atrocities that it perpetrated against its own people during the long years of mass imprisonment, labor camps, the politically induced famine of the early 1960s, or for that matter, the massacre of pro-democracy protesters at Tiananmen.⁵²

To strengthen this argument about the instrumental nature of the claims for Beijing’s purposes, Christopher R. Hughes notes that: “When the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was established in 1949, memories of the suffering that the population had experienced at the hands of the Imperial Army provided a reservoir of political capital

⁵¹ Tadao Takemoto and Yasuo Ohara, *The Alleged 'Nanking Massacre': Japan's Rebuttal to China's Forged Claims* (Tokyo: Meisei-sha, 2000), 4.

⁵² Qtd. in *Ibid.*, 135.

for the new elite to consolidate its legitimacy.”⁵³ And that: “When the newly installed CCP General Secretary, Jiang Zemin, celebrated an exhibition on China’s revolutionary history in 1990, he presented the Nanjing Massacre as a valuable example that could be used to stir up popular anger.”⁵⁴ Similarly, Beijing does not mention much about its attempted destruction of Tibetan culture and the murder of possibly tens of thousands of Tibetans during Tibetan uprisings.

Samuels points out that: “In the Chinese media, there is no mention of Japanese development assistance or investment, no recognition of sixty years of Japanese pacifism, and little acknowledgement of formal Japanese apologies for wartime aggression.”⁵⁵ In this way, the Chinese mostly stress the negative aspect of Sino-Japanese relations, while shunning the positive part. Hence, it is understandable that the Japanese are frustrated with the Chinese accusations and that the issue of the Nanking Massacre causes strain in Sino-Japanese relations.

Another reason why the Chinese have emphasised the historical issue is to remind the Japanese people of their violent and nationalistic history and thus help prevent Japan from once again becoming an aggressive, nationalistic military nation.⁵⁶ This aim seems more reasonable and legitimate than using the issue as a selfish propaganda tactic to promote the interests of the CCP. Either interpretation, however, underlines that the historical issue is unresolved, and while it remains so, it causes tension in the two countries’ relationship.

Even so, this point has not been causing as much trouble recently as it used to. Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao promised in 2006 during a visit in Japan that China would restrain the use it made of this historic issue.⁵⁷ As expressed by C. Fred Bergsten et al, “Chinese leaders realized that China’s public propaganda was creating mistrust in Japan and fueling sustained animosity from the Chinese people, which threatened to solidify hostile relations between the two over the long run.”⁵⁸ Beijing’s reduced exploitation of the historical issue is

⁵³ Christopher R. Hughes, “Japan in the Politics of Chinese Leadership Legitimacy: Recent Developments in Historical Perspective,” *Japan Forum* 20, no. 2 (2008): 247, <http://ebscohost.com>.

⁵⁴ Ibid.: 248.

⁵⁵ Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, 138.

⁵⁶ Hoshiyama, “New Japan-China Relations and the Corresponding Positioning of the United States—History, Values, Realism in a Changing World,” 72-73.

⁵⁷ Ibid.: 70.

⁵⁸ C. Fred Bergsten et al., *China’s Rise: Challenges and Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: Peter G. Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2008), 219.

helping to improve Sino-Japanese relations, but more efforts are required to come to an amicable settlement that is satisfying to both parties.

3.7.2 Prime Ministerial Visits to the Yasukuni Shrine

It is clear that Japan on one hand, and China and Korea on the other hand share very different historical paradigms, as some Japanese see their past generals as heroes, while most Chinese and Koreans view them as war criminals. This explains the significance of former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's yearly visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, or from 2001 until he retired in 2006.⁵⁹ His visits were a part of his campaign promise but proved very controversial, even among some Japanese. The Yasukuni Shrine is dedicated to Japan's war dead who are enshrined there, mostly people who sacrificed their lives during WWII, but includes class A war criminals. Hence, these visits cultivated much anger, frustration and protests in China, South Korea and other Asian countries that suffered from Japanese occupation in the past.

Phil Deans provides a good explanation of what Chinese and North Korean sentiment might be concerning these visits: "Opponents of Koizumi claimed his visits sanctioned a contentious and offensive revisionist historiography that seeks to deny Japanese aggression and reject the postwar consensus of Japanese war responsibility."⁶⁰ Thus, these visits negatively affected Japanese relations with its East Asian victims of WWII, with Sino-Japanese relations possibly suffering most – or as Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing put it, "[Yasukuni Shrine visits] undermined the political foundation of . . . China-Japan relations."⁶¹ At the same it has to be considered that just like the Nanking massacre, the Yasukuni Shrine visits are a card that Beijing likes to play as a way of diverting popular anger away from itself.

In 2009, 54 lawmakers, mostly from the LDP visited the shrine along with their current leader Sadakazu Tanigaki. He also visited the shrine on the 15th. of August 2010, commemorating 65 years since the end of WWII. Former Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama did not visit the Yasukuni Shrine when he was in office, current Prime Minister Naoto Kan does not intend to visit it either, and the DPJ does not seem likely to accept the idea of

⁵⁹ He also visited in 2007 when he was retired as a politician.

⁶⁰ Phil Deans, "The Yasukuni Shrine: Contested Politics," *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2007): 265, <http://ebscohost.com>.

⁶¹ Qtd. in Paul J. Smith, "China-Japan Relations and the Future Geopolitics of East Asia," *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 35, no. 4 (2009): 231, <http://ebscohost.com>.

future prime ministers under its administration visiting the shrine. This is one of several reasons why, so long as the DPJ remains in power, it should be expected to have a positive effect on Japanese relations with Korea and China. However, with or without prime ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, it remains a highly contentious issue and should a future prime minister or high ranking official decide to visit, it would most probably stir up similar protests to those witnessed in the past. These prime ministerial visits also demonstrate how sensitive Japan's relations with Korea and China are, and that it takes more than the passing of time to heal these historical scars.

3.7.3 Japanese School History Textbooks

Another controversy concerns the so called 'Japanese school history textbooks issue' which involves complaints that these textbooks have been revised in such a way that they do not display enough of Japan's war crimes during WWII. The Chinese and Koreans claim that by this means Japan is attempting to whitewash its history. The first such incident occurred in 1982 when the Japanese Ministry of Education approved a revised version of a history textbook. Arif Dirlik observes that: "The Chinese viewed the revisions as a betrayal of a common understanding of the past that had been established during the previous decade."⁶² At this time, however, the Chinese did not react as vehemently as they would later do. It was as if they were trying to figure out the correct response. However, as time passed, the Chinese took the matter more seriously, especially due to public demonstrations and news reports at home, eventually leading the Japanese government to recall these revisions.

The junior high school history textbook that came out in 2005 also caused massive demonstrations in China and South Korea, while the North Koreans would no doubt show their disapproval in demonstrations too, if they had the chance.⁶³ Bates Gill mentions that this caused 10,000 protesters to march through the streets of Beijing and throw stones at the Japanese embassy.⁶⁴ Fortunately, only an extremely small proportion of Japanese schools adopted this textbook, which helped calm down South Korean and Chinese protests.

⁶² Arif Dirlik, "'Past Experience, If Not Forgotten, Is a Guide to the Future'; or, What Is in a Text? The Politics of History in Chinese-Japanese Relations," *Boundary 2*, vol. 18, no. 3 (1991): 32, <http://ebshost.com>.

⁶³ Demonstrations are rare in North Korea as the public is generally ill-informed and the Pyongyang regime keeps a tight control over all demonstrations and has the habit of crushing any form of rebellion with military might.

⁶⁴ Bates Gill, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2007), 146.

However, China and South Korea remain very alert to any attempt by Japan to keep its skeletons in the closet and will not hesitate to publicize any further cases.

3.7.4 The Abductees Issue

The ‘abductees issue’ involves the abduction of at least 18 Japanese citizens by North Korean agents during the 1970s and 80s. Mystery long shrouded these incidents and North Korea had denied allegations concerning these abductions. However, in 2002 Koizumi visited Pyongyang to press for the release of these victims. This led North Korea to release five of the kidnapped citizens. In 2004, the North Korean government released another five victims and also two corpses which it claimed were from Japanese abducted citizens, one of them being the remains of Megumi Yokota. Yet in the end these developments did not improve North Korean-Japanese relations. Park mentions how negatively the abductees’ issue affected North Korean-Japanese relations:

In Japan, after Koizumi’s first visit to Pyongyang [in 2002], the abductees issue drew extremely negative attention against North Korea. Koizumi made a second visit to Pyongyang to bring survivors back to Japan in 2004. North Korea handed over the remains of Megumi Yokota who was announced to be dead in October 2004. However, DNA testing of the remains proved that they were fabricated. This stimulated strong anti-North Korean sentiment among the Japanese. North Korea was perceived as a [sic] unreliable rogue state.⁶⁵

North Korea had also demanded that some of the released victims should return back after visiting Japan. When the Japanese government refused to return the abductees, this angered Pyongyang. The Japanese are also very sceptical about North Korea’s claim that some of the victims had died due to natural disasters and that seven of the victim’s graves had been washed away by floods and storms.

The overall issue therefore remains unresolved and is one of the most contested disputes between Japan and North Korea. Its seriousness may be judged from the fact that in a “public opinion survey conducted by the Japanese Cabinet Office in October and November 2003, 90 percent of the respondents said their main concern was the abduction issue, while 66 percent said they were concerned about North Korea’s nuclear

⁶⁵ Park, “Cooperation Coupled with Conflicts: Korea-Japan Relations in the Post-Cold War Era,” 26.

arms program.”⁶⁶ It is uncertain whether this issue can ever be solved, since North Korea claims it has released all the victims while Japan declares there are still Japanese abductees in the DPRK. Attempts have been made by the Japanese to resolve the abductees issue through the six-party talks on Korean nuclear issues (see chapter 4.2.6) and in 2007 Japan refused to participate in fuel aid to North Korea until the abductees issue had been settled. North Korea, however, saw it as strange on Japan’s part to bring up the abductees issue within a process nominally aimed at denuclearization, and the USA also was inclined to override Japanese objections in this context.

3.8 Historical Conclusions

As can be seen from this review of historical issues, strong tensions remain between Japan and its two neighbours, China and North Korea. Whether these countries can completely solve these historical disputes in the near future is uncertain and quite unlikely. There is hope, however, of improvement with the current Japanese administration, the DPJ, which has been making efforts at reconciliation with China and North Korea over historical issues. Yet, as long as these disputes remain unresolved, there is inevitably distrust and danger involved that can spill over both internally, in hard-to-control manifestations of popular anger and nationalism, and externally to complicate the handling of possibly unrelated present-day challenges between the countries.

⁶⁶ Qtd. in Hong Nack Kim, “Japanese-North Korean Relations under the Koizumi Government,” in *North Korea: The Politics of Regime Survival*, ed. Young Whan Kihl and Hong Nack Kim (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2006), 174, <http://www.ebrary.com>.

4 THE CONTEMPORARY SITUATION

The most obvious military threats that Japan faces today are China's growing military strength (conventional and nuclear) and North Korea's nuclear threat, which will both be covered in this chapter. As Japan's alliance with the USA is also a major factor in Japan's security balance, there will be a section on the alliance. All these factors contribute to the way Japan sees its security and affect its choices regarding amendments to its constitution to allow for stronger and more flexible self-defense forces.

4.1 China's Rising Military

Despite China's proclaimed peaceful rise, it is still one of Japan's biggest military threats and concerns. In recent years, China has been technologically advancing and building up its military, the PLA,⁶⁷ year by year, turning it into a force to be reckoned with on a global scale. Most Japanese are not pleased with this evolution and view it as a threat. Tsukasa Takamine comments that: "From Japan's perspective, China's military development and assertive military actions in the 1990s and the 2000s are negative consequences of that country's rapid modernization over the last two decades. Economic growth and industrialization have greatly strengthened China's financial and industrial capacity to modernize its military force."⁶⁸ In this way, China has been using its increasingly powerful economy to strengthen its military.

China's military expenditure has been increasing considerably in the last two decades. Bill Emmott points out that: "No other big Asian country's military budget is currently growing anywhere near as fast as China's."⁶⁹ For several years, the annual percentage rise in expenditure has been in double digit numbers, or as Smith notes: "Within the past decade, China has increased its defense spending by an average of 14.2 percent

⁶⁷ PLA stands for the People's Liberation Army and refers to the army, navy, air force and strategic missile force of the PRC.

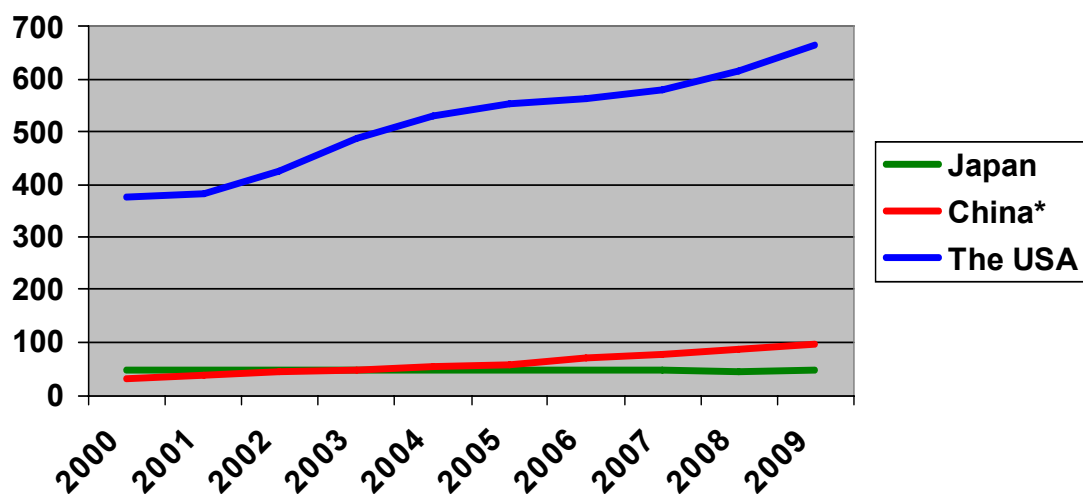
⁶⁸ Tsukasa Takamine, "A New Dynamism in Sino-Japanese Security Relations: Japan's Strategic Use of Foreign Aid," *Pacific Review* 18, no. 4 (2005): 440, <http://ebscohost.com>.

⁶⁹ Bill Emmott, *Rivals: How the Power Struggle between China, India and Japan Will Shape Our Next Decade* (London: Allen Lane, 2008), 217.

annually.”⁷⁰ Stockholm Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) estimates that China spent \$86,2 billion on its military in 2008 and \$98,8 billion in 2009.⁷¹ China announced in March that it plans to increase its military spending for the year 2010 by 7.5% percent, which is a decrease from the double digit increase it has had in previous years.

Even though China’s declared military budgets have been increasing, sceptics have queried whether the budget may not be even larger than China’s official claims due i.a. to differences from Western practice over what is included, and the issue of what currency conversion rate should be used. For example, while China asserts its official military budget for the year 2006 was 35.0 billion dollars, SIPRI estimates it was approximately 52.2 billion dollars.⁷² China may therefore be spending considerably more on its military than its official numbers show.

Below is a chart which compares the military expenditure of Japan, China, and the USA from the years 2000-2009. As can be seen, the USA’s defense spending far exceeds China. However, what is of more concern to Japan is that China’s spending



*The figures for China are for estimated total military expenditure, including estimates for items not included in the official defense budget.

Source: Stockholm Peace Research Institute

Figure 3 Military expenditure of Japan, China, and the USA in constant (2008) US million dollars

⁷⁰ Qtd. in Smith, “China-Japan Relations and the Future Geopolitics of East Asia,” 240.

⁷¹ SIPRI, “Military Expenditure of China,” <http://milexdata.sipri.org>.

⁷² Ibid.

surpasses that of Japan around 2004 and continues to do so with a steady rise, while Japan's spending remains relatively unchanged.

Beijing's own stated rationale for its military spending remains inadequate in the eyes of Tokyo and Washington. While Beijing claims its military expenditure reflects a natural desire to maintain a sufficient self-defense military and ensure China's interests in the region and abroad, including its growing trade links, its growth in capacity is viewed as a threat by Japan and the USA, which remain sceptical of China's intentions. It is inevitable that as long as China appears to have some hidden agenda in its military expenditure, Washington and Tokyo will remain more cautious. M. Taylor Fravel mentions that this might be risky: "...with growing concerns about [China's] military modernization, a lack of further transparency will only confirm worst-case assumptions about China's ambitions."⁷³ As a response to China's unclear military ambitions, Japan and the USA may increase their forces in East Asia, which would not be in China's own interest.

China's military expenditure is not seen by most analysts in Japan and the USA as meeting legitimate needs. Former commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, William Fallon comments that: "...I don't see a particular threat to China, so military capabilities expansion, [it] seems to be, ought to be commensurate with the growth and development of a country."⁷⁴ Alan Weisman also notes that "China... is buying up scrap iron in America for purposes that some World War II historians question with alarm."⁷⁵ Hence, China's military build-up is distressing concerned actors such as Japan.

While the question of how much military power China seeks remains inadequately answered, its growth causes concern for the USA, Japan and most other Asian neighbours. As China grows more powerfully it will be viewed as a greater threat by Japan. In order to deal with a more powerful China, Japan has to maintain a close security dialogue with the United States as well as maintain sufficient self-defense forces for its own protection. Whether China's military rise is for peaceful purposes or not, it increases the chances of an East Asian arms race and destabilizes the security of the region.

⁷³ M. Taylor Fravel, "China's Search for Military Power," *Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (2008): 138, <http://ebscohost.com>.

⁷⁴ Cooney, *Japan's Foreign Policy since 1945*, 156.

⁷⁵ Alan Weisman, *The World without Us* (London: Virgin, 2007), 133.

4.1.1 The PLA's Capability

With over 2.2 million active troops, China's force numbers are the largest in the world as far as numbers go. However, China's army size can be misleading since the US military is far superior in terms of technology and offensive capabilities. The USA's military expenditure is also more than six times that of China.⁷⁶ Besides, China has the longest land border in the world (around 22,000 km shared with 16 states) to defend and various domestic issues to take care of, in particular the Tibet and Xinjiang ethnic issues, as well as political unrest in its heartland often as a result of human rights violations or social distress. To take care of these domestic issues, Beijing uses conventional police forces as well as the People's Armed Police (PAP), a quasi-military force which also takes care of border security. This enables the PLA to focus more on external issues.

China can project considerable forces within a limited range from its land border but due to limited technological capabilities, has not had the power to project substantial conventional forces at long-range distances. Fravel points out that: "...China has only begun to acquire forces for maritime denial and regional force projection capabilities. Nevertheless, progress in these latter areas is likely to intensify the security dilemma in the region because they enable China to project power at greater distances than ever before since 1949."⁷⁷ For Japan, this is a growing concern since it makes the PLA more capable of launching attacks on the Japanese archipelago as well as projecting more forces to areas where Japanese interests lie, namely, the East China Sea, Sea of Japan and surrounding waters. Particularly sensitive points for Japan in this context are the disputed Senkaku Islands, Taiwan and the shipping lanes from the Middle East which provide Japan with almost 90% of its oil.

China has been increasing its military power by buying arms supplies from various countries, most notably Russia, though Russia has not been willing to sell China its most advanced military technologies. China has been pressing on Russia to sell this sensitive technology and has asserted that it will strive to develop these sophisticated war equipments by itself if Russia does not give in. But Russia has been selling Kilo-class submarines to China and Dan Blumenthal mentions that: "...while the rest of the world's navies, including the United States', have been reducing fleet numbers, China has deployed roughly 38 new

⁷⁶ SIPRI, "Military Expenditure of USA," <http://milexdata.sipri.org>.

⁷⁷ Fravel, "China's Search for Military Power," 130.

submarines in just over a decade.”⁷⁸ This already creates a real threat to Japan, in the above-mentioned context of Japan’s oil imports and other maritime interests.

As well as buying military equipments from abroad, China has been upgrading its military industries and developing its own war machines. Beijing was especially alarmed during the Gulf War when it discovered that the weapons it had exported to Iraq did not amount to much against the US-led coalition forces.⁷⁹ This may have contributed to China’s speeding up the advancement of its military in the 90s. China was again alerted during the Taiwan Strait Crisis in ‘95-96 when the USA sent two aircraft carrier battle groups to the region. China could not do much to counter the USA’s move with conventional weapons, which no doubt contributed to Beijing’s desire to speed up its military modernization. Tai Ming Cheung points out that: “New generations of fighter aircraft, missiles, submarines, warships and other sophisticated hardware are coming off production lines at a pace and quality unmatched over the previous 50 years of the defense industry’s existence.”⁸⁰ For the moment these developments continue.

Beijing has also been developing sophisticated, advanced weapons. One such example is the anti-satellite missile which was tested on an ageing Chinese satellite in 2007. The test was successful and demonstrated China’s power to challenge the USA’s hegemony in outer space. The PLA has also been ambitious in developing its ability to conduct cyber-attacks, which can pose a considerable threat bearing in mind that such an attack can potentially paralyze the enemies’ communication infrastructure, which is so vital to modern warfare.

Along with a formidable, growing conventional military, China maintains a considerable nuclear arsenal, with ballistic nuclear missiles capable of reaching Japan and the USA. The exact number and capability of China’s nuclear weapons remains unknown to the outside world, although as of January 2010 it was reported to have around 240 operational nuclear warheads.⁸¹ This arsenal may be small compared to those of the USA and Russia but it can potentially wreak great havoc upon whomever it is targeted against.

Beijing has claimed that its nuclear arsenal’s main purpose is to function as a deterrent so that other nuclear states will refrain from using their WMD against China. In 1995,

⁷⁸ Dan Blumenthal, “Red Alert,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 179 (2010): 1, <http://ebscohost.com>.

⁷⁹ Qtd. in Bates Gill and Taeho Kim, *China’s Arms Acquisitions from Abroad: A Quest for ‘Superb and Secret Weapons’*, SIPRI Research Report No. 11 (New York: Oxford UP, 1995), 105.

⁸⁰ Tai Ming Cheung, “Dragon on the Horizon: China’s Defense Industrial Renaissance,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 1 (2009): 30, <http://ebscohost.com>.

⁸¹ Kile, Shannon N., Vitaly Fedchenko, Bharath Gopalaswamy, and Hans M. Kristensen, “Chapter 8. World Nuclear Forces,” in *SIPRI Yearbook 2010*, <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2010/08>.

China made the statement that it “undertakes not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances” and that it “undertakes not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones at any time or under any circumstances.”⁸² This “no-first-use” assurance has yet to be matched by any Western nuclear power and may seem like an assurance to Japan. However, to Japanese and American strategists its significance remains controversial, especially in the light of recent Chinese nuclear force developments that could provide a more than purely defensive capability. More will be said about China’s potential use of its WMD in the section on the “Taiwan Issue.”

4.1.2 China vs. Japan and the USA

Given the scenario that China were to fight a conventional war against the USA and Japan, it would be almost impossible for it to win. Although China’s military has been advancing and growing, and is expected to do so in the years to come, the USA’s military spending and technological lead far exceeds the Chinese level and will likely do so for at least the next two decades. So the prospects of China’s conventional military forces surpassing those of the USA are minimal. Yet China has the ability to threaten the USA in other ways, for example, with nuclear missiles, its recently developed anti-aircraft carrier missiles and anti-satellite weapons. The USA may be capable of defending itself and Japan against some such missile attacks by utilizing missile defense systems, while it would probably not be able to prevent a full-scale nuclear missile assault from China.

If a Sino-US military conflict should break out, Japan would – to greater or lesser extend – be bound to get dragged in. As the USA’s ally, Japan has security obligations to come to the USA’s aid, and the USA currently maintains vital military bases on Japanese soil which could become a target as well as being used in defense. It is unlikely that China would sit back and do nothing while US troops and war machines were being shipped from these bases on a mission against China. If a conflict between the USA and China broke out, it is more likely that Beijing would attempt to

⁸² Hunter, Alan, and Liu Cheng. “China and the New International Security Agenda.” In *Globalization and Environmental Challenges: Reconceptualizing Security in the 21st Century*, Hexagon Series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace, 1, Volume 3, edited by Hans Günter Brauch, Úrsula Oswald Spring, Czesław Mesjasz, John Grin, Pál Dunay, Navnita Chadha Behera, Béchir Chourou, Patricia Kameri-Mbote and P. H. Liotta (New York: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2008), 849, <http://www.springer.com>.

counterattack against these bases. Hence, Japanese involvement would be inevitable. This is the reason why the threat analysis in this chapter also covers possible USA-China conflicts.

The situation is complicated for the USA and Japan as it is difficult to discern how these allies should respond to China's rising military. An American defense report, *Chinese Military Power*, that was published in 2003 states that: "Overreaction could lead the United States to adopt policies and undertake actions that become a self-fulfilling prophecy, provoking an otherwise avoidable antagonistic relationship that will not serve long-term U.S. interests. Underreaction, on the other hand, might allow China to someday catch unawares the United States or its friends and allies in Asia."⁸³ In other words, it is difficult to find the right balance. It is likely that China would react in a similar "arms race" manner, should the USA and/or Japan increase their military in East Asia. An amendment to Article 9 might also trigger China into becoming more alert and aggressive. So all actors need to be careful not to further stimulate the arms race and rather try to slow it down. Still, the truth of the situation is that there is a prevalent realist scenario in East Asia, where China is in an arms race against the USA, and Japan is constantly liable to be dragged into the race.

The USA currently maintains around 100.000 troops in East Asia and Oceania and is by far the most technologically advanced military state in the world, so at least for the moment, the USA remains the military hegemon of East Asia. This however might change as China is growing more powerful and it is possible that the USA will decrease its commitments in East Asia. The USA is of course aware of this and has reason to avoid such a decrease if this could threaten its hegemony in the region and/or if it would allow China – the only real alternative candidate as hegemon – to take over the US role. Robert Stutter comments that: "...some specialists say China's primary long-term regional goal is to push the United States out of Asia and assert regional dominance."⁸⁴ While this may be true, the USA would likely try to remain as the hegemon at least until Japan grew powerful enough to stand up against China. Knowing that Japan could at least balance China, the USA could then be more at ease in decreasing its commitments in East Asia. This point is strongly related to whether Japan decides to change its constitution, since Article 9 in its current form would not allow

⁸³ Brown, Harold, Joseph W. Prueher, and Adam Segal. *Chinese Military Power* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2003), 1, <http://www.ebrary.com>.

⁸⁴ Robert Stutter, "China's Regional Strategy and America," in *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*, ed. David Shambaugh (New Jersey: University of California Press, 2006), 292.

Japan to assume a large security role in East Asia, either for its own defense or as a leader of other pro-Western states.

While there may be a somewhat cold war feeling between the USA and China, what are the possibilities of an actual Sino-USA conflict occurring? Gill observes that the so called “China hawks” estimate that a future conflict between the USA and China is almost unavoidable. He notes that: “Basing their claim in history and a realpolitik understanding of world affairs, some argue that a rising and revisionist China, eager to establish a more prominent place in regional and international affairs, will ultimately confront the established power of the United States, leading to conflict.”⁸⁵ The possibility of conflict should never be ruled out, even though this might be considered a rather pessimistic view.

For the present time a direct conflict between the USA and China remains unlikely. It would be too damaging to both countries’ economies. A lesser military clash would probably come in the form of an accident, such as when a Chinese fighter plane crashed into an American P-3 reconnaissance aircraft in 2001, or risky encounters such as when a Chinese attack submarine was discovered in Japanese waters in 2004 or when another submarine unexpectedly emerged close to a U.S. aircraft carrier in 2006. Such a minor conflict might then escalate. The scenario of a serious and intentional conflict is most likely to occur in relation to the Taiwan issue which will now be analyzed.

4.1.3 The Taiwan Issue

China wishes to bring Taiwan under its sovereign control and sees Taiwan as an internal issue which should not be interfered with by outsiders. The USA has maintained strong diplomatic and economic ties with Taiwan as well as remaining Taiwan’s largest weapons supplier. Beijing regularly protests over such weapons sales and is very much against Taiwanese officials visiting the USA and vice versa. While the USA does not recognize Taiwan’s independence, it does not accept China seizing Taiwan with military force either. The USA has pledged military assistance to Taiwan in case of war, a position that is unlikely to change.

The Taiwan issue is what has been causing the most trouble in Chinese-American international relations and provides the most likely scenario of military conflict between

⁸⁵ Gill, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy*, 17.

the two powerful states. Since the end of WWII it has also provided the most likely scenario under which Japan might find itself engaged with China in a military contest. It is thus a matter of concern for Japan too that some 700 missiles are targeted at Taiwan, which senior Japanese intelligence experts are convinced could reach Tokyo if they were redirected.⁸⁶ For example, under the scenario earlier discussed China would be likely to launch some of those missiles against US bases in Japan.

Even if the prospects of China defeating the USA and Japan in a conventional warfare over Taiwan are small, China has shown the determination to stand up against the USA in this particular issue, regardless of the likelihood that both sides will lose. This stems from the fact that Beijing believes it has a higher “pain threshold” when it comes to the issue of Taiwan, meaning that as it has a greater basic national interest in Taiwan than the USA, it would be ready to make much greater sacrifices than the US to secure this goal.

The situation was most risky during the Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1995-96, during which China held military exercises and fired missiles into the Taiwan Strait. The USA responded by sending two aircraft carrier battle groups to the region, thus demonstrating its security commitments to Taiwan. It is very important for the USA to protect Taiwan in order to maintain stability in East Asia and to assure Japan and its other allies in East Asia that it remains faithful to its security commitments.

The USA might also be reluctant to give up Taiwan as that might lead China to turn its weapons in another direction and expand elsewhere, as was the case with Hitler after Czechoslovakia was handed to him on a silver platter as a way of appeasement. All this means that if China decides to use force against Taiwan, the USA would most probably respond and Japan as its ally, would be likely do so too. China has objected to this prospect, however, claiming that the US-Japan alliance was formed during the Cold War as a defensive bilateral agreement and should therefore not be activated over what China perceives as a domestic issue, that is, Taiwan.

It must be noted here that Japan itself has regarded Taiwan “as the friendliest political entity toward Japan in Asia, if not in the world”⁸⁷ and that in 2005, “Japan went so far as to join the United States in declaring Taiwan a ‘common strategic objective,’ which prompted an angry reaction from Beijing.”⁸⁸ After such statements it is difficult to

⁸⁶ Qtd. in Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, 140.

⁸⁷ Qtd. in Smith, “China-Japan Relations and the Future Geopolitics of East Asia,” 237.

⁸⁸ Qtd. in *Ibid.*: 238.

imagine that Japan would watch and do nothing while China forcefully took over Taiwan. By doing so, moreover, China would also extend and increase its control of territory into the East Asian Sea, where oil tankers from the Middle East pass through, carrying vital energy supplies to Japan.

The Taiwan issue is very sensitive for Beijing and it is hard to assess just how far Beijing is willing to go in order to secure Taiwan as a part of a larger China. Some startling comments from high ranking PLA officers have caused concern and raised questions about the danger involved in the Taiwan issue. One such statement is considered to have come from General Xiong Guangkai, though unconfirmed, in a conversation with an American ex-ambassador Chas Freeman. The conversation took place in 1995 when the Taiwan Strait Crisis was taking place. It is supposed to have gone along the following lines: “You [the United States] do not have the strategic leverage that you had in the 1950s when you threatened nuclear strikes on us [China]. You were able to do that because we could not hit back. But if you hit us now, we can hit back. So you will not make those threats. In the end you care more about Los Angeles than you do about Taipei.”⁸⁹ This was considered to be a nuclear threat even though it could also have been a rogue statement from this particular official. In 2005, however, another dramatic statement came from General Major Zhu Chenghu who stated at a press conference that: “If the Americans draw their missiles and position-guided ammunition on to the target zone on China’s territory, I think we will have to respond with nuclear weapons.”⁹⁰

These are indeed frightening statements and leave one speculating about whether Beijing would actually be ready to use nuclear weapons as a first strike against those it considered as its enemies. In relation to the Taiwan issue, Cooney asserts that: “China seems confident and willing to play a game of potential nuclear brinkmanship with the United States. This attitude is of concern, not only to the United States, but also to her main ally in the region, Japan.”⁹¹ Whether China would realize these nuclear threats when it came to real conflict remains very difficult to evaluate. However, nuclear threats should never be taken lightly.

⁸⁹ Qtd. in Andrew Scobell, “Is There a Civil-Military Gap in China’s Peaceful Rise?,” *Parameters: US Army War College* 39, no. 2 (2009): 10, <http://ebscohost.com>.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Cooney, *Japan’s Foreign Policy since 1945*, 158.

It must be taken into consideration that the two statements quoted above only came from military officials, who did not claim to represent the official view of the CCP. Nevertheless, such nuclear threats support Japan's and the USA's argument for continuing their cooperation on developing an anti-ballistic missile defense system, and tend to strengthen the argument for Japan to amend Article 9 to allow for collective self-defense. It remains rather odd that high ranking Chinese military officials should express themselves so openly and in contrast with what the Chinese government claims it is promoting, namely China's peaceful rise. Arguably it could be just a tactic by Beijing to deter the USA and Japan from coming to Taiwan's aid; a threat it would not actually carry out, since the consequences would be too grave for itself.

4.1.4 The Senkaku/Diaoyutai Dispute

As was mentioned in the theory chapter in the context of Japan's realist position, Japan and China have been disputing sovereignty over the uninhabited Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands for about four decades, and the debate continues. Currently, Japan maintains administration over the islands even though they have not been officially recognized as under any particular country's sovereignty.

These islands are small and do not have much to offer except that the seabed around the islands has potential for gas and oil extraction. China is already extracting gas from the Chunxiao field (see figure 4 alongside) which is 3 miles West from the median line claimed by the Japanese according to the EEZ. The Japanese fear that the Chinese are tapping resources that extend into their EEZ and that is also part of the dispute. China has already demonstrated its military commitment to the zone. For example, in 2005 China sent five warships to the Chunxiao gas field.



Source: Japan Probe
Figure 4 Senkaku Islands

However, it seems that China and Japan are making more fuss about the matter than its intrinsic importance would indicate. Both states are unwilling to back down on the issue partly because it would be interpreted as a sign of weakness that the other side

could possibly exploit in future to push for further concessions. China has actually been using this dispute to gain various other concessions from Japan. However, if the reserves in the local oil and gas fields are close to their maximum predicted level, then it would be understandable that these heavy oil consuming nations⁹² would be eager to secure such a valued resource.

Currently, there is not much military risk involved in the dispute over these islands, even though there lurks the danger that accidental or intentional firing incidents might break out in the vicinity, for example between Chinese and Japanese naval or aerial forces guarding or monitoring the area. In a worst case scenario, such a conflict could escalate and lead to full scale military battle. Even though Japan and China reached a settlement in June 2008 concerning joint exploration of the area's resources, the agreement was never implemented and the dispute over the Islands' sovereignty continues to cause strain in the two countries' relations as well as creating an operational danger zone. There are some prospects, however, that the situation might improve as former Prime Minister Hatoyama and Chinese Premier Wen agreed on the 31st of May 2010 to activate the 2008 agreement. Only time will tell when and whether that will happen.

As the territory is not worth fighting for in a long-term full-scale war, one would expect that China and Japan would make rational choices in order to maintain peace. However, speaking of Sino-Japanese relations, Ryosei Kokubun warns that:

...we humans do not always act logically: At times, one accidental incident touches off nationalistic attitudes in both countries, and critical situations may occur especially if there is a lack of communication between the two governments or other unfortunate circumstances develop. It is dangerous to subconsciously think optimistically that such a confrontation could never occur or to act out of force of habit.⁹³

This is especially true concerning the Senkaku/Diaoyutai dispute, where Chinese and Japanese nationalistic feelings inevitably play a large role.

⁹² China is the second and Japan is the third greatest oil consuming nation in the world.

⁹³ Ryosei Kokubun, "Changing Japanese Strategic Thinking toward Asia," in *Japanese Strategic Thought toward Asia*, ed. Gilbert Rozman, Kazuhiko Togo, and Joseph Ferguson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 156. <http://www.ebrary.com>.

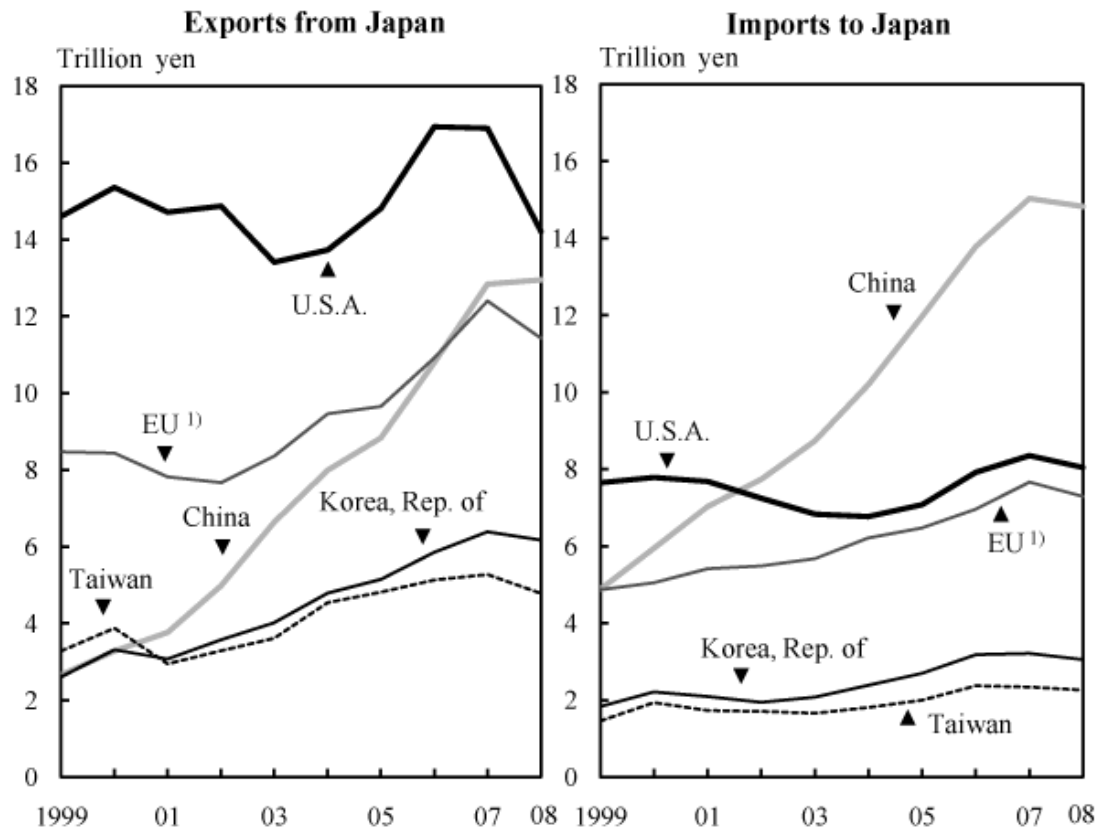
4.1.5 Positive Elements in Sino-Japanese Relations

Even though Japanese-Chinese relations are strained in some ways, several factors contribute to an ongoing state of peace between the two nations. As was mentioned in the historical chapter, relations between China and Japan worsened during Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. However, Abe Shinzo visited China in October 2006 and a year later, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited Japan. This considerably improved relations between the two Asian giants. The DPJ government is also trying to promote friendly ties with China.

The Chinese and Japanese economies are so closely tied together that a military conflict between the two would mean too much sacrifice. Peace is good for profit, and China and Japan want to keep it that way. Smith comments that: "Complex interdependence theory would suggest that as Japan and China experience more trade, and cross-investment and cooperation on contemporary problems (e.g., environmental degradation), war and conflict will become increasingly less likely."⁹⁴ Figure 5 on the following page indicates the growing level of importance in trade between China and Japan. As can be seen, Japan's exports to China have been increasing dramatically as well as Chinese exports to Japan. The Statistical Handbook of Japan also reports that: "...imports from mainland China have expanded so dramatically in recent years that China replaced the U.S.A. in 2002 as the largest exporter to Japan; imports from China in 2008 was 14.8 trillion yen. In 2007, China replaced the U.S.A. as Japan's biggest trading partner with its combined value of imports and exports..."⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Smith, "China-Japan Relations and the Future Geopolitics of East Asia," 248-49.

⁹⁵ Statistics Bureau (of Japan), "Chapter 11: Trade, International Balance of Payments, and International Cooperation," in *Statistical Handbook of Japan* (2009), <http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/handbook/c11cont.htm>.



1) EU member countries were: 15 countries, before May 2004; 25, from May 2004 to Dec. 2006; 27, from Jan. 2007 onward.
Source: Ministry of Finance.

Source: *Statistical Handbook of Japan*

Figure 5 Trend in Japan's Trade by Country/Region

Tourism between the two countries also flourishes, with around 3.3 million Japanese visiting China in 2009⁹⁶ and around 1 million Chinese visiting Japan in the same year, and Chinese numbers expected to rise further.⁹⁷ These economic factors should serve as a major deterrent for Japan and China against entering a serious military conflict.

Japan also provides considerable support for China in terms of official development aid (ODA). Hoshiyama comments that: "...China has enjoyed economic benefits in the form of a cumulative total of more than three trillion yen in ODA, more than three trillion yen in government-funded loans from the Export-Import Bank of Japan, and

⁹⁶ Japan Tourism Marketing Co. "Statistics of Japanese Tourists Travelling Abroad." <http://www.tourism.jp/english/statistics/outbound.php>.

⁹⁷ ———. "Statistics of Visitors to Japan from Overseas." <http://www.tourism.jp/english/statistics/inbound.php>.

enormous amicable cooperation from Japanese companies.”⁹⁸ Japan has been the biggest provider of ODA to China, which has helped improve diplomatic relations between the two nations, even though it seems not to have had much effect on the Chinese public’s opinion toward Japan, which remains rather negative.

Many within Japan are starting to question the rationale of aid to China, which has already grown so much economically and is providing ODA itself to African countries. It is also argued that providing ODA to China enables it to spend more on its military build-up, making it more of a threat to Japan. The opposite argument that by continuing to provide China with ODA Japan can improve diplomatic relations between the two nations and make war less likely, rendering the military balance between the nations less relevant. It may be added that the value – to Japan itself as well as China – of all the peaceful interactions covered in this sub-section would be arguments for maintaining the *status quo* on Article 9 of Japan’s constitution.

4.1.6 China’s Efforts to Legitimize a Growing Military

While China may be posing an increasing threat to Japan with its growing military strength, Beijing has clearly stated that its rise is peaceful and that the growing military is for defense purposes and securing domestic stability only. In 2004, both President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao stated that China’s intentions were peaceful. Notwithstanding missile tests into the Taiwan Strait in 1995-96, China has not in general shown very aggressive behavior over the more than thirty years since its war against Vietnam in 1979, in which China withdrew with losses about a month after the war had started. That is, in the space of a generation China has not launched a major invasion of another country and does not show any sign that it is likely to do so, with the exception of Taiwan.

China does have some legitimate reasons for strengthening its military. It is understandable that as China was heavily exploited by Western colonial powers and Japan in the 19th and second half of the 20th century, it would want to maintain a credible army that could prevent such exploitation from ever happening again. As concerns contemporary issues – as already noted – China has a large border to protect and many problematic countries along those borders.

⁹⁸ Hoshiyama, "New Japan-China Relations and the Corresponding Positioning of the United States—History, Values, Realism in a Changing World." 73, <http://ebscohost.com>.

One neighbour is Russia, which has one of the most powerful militaries in the world. China did experience some border fighting with the Soviet Union in 1969, even though today there are no border disputes remaining. Russia provides large amounts of arms and energy to China, and it is unlikely that Russia would be selling China all these military equipments if it expected them to be used against itself. Besides, Russia and China are both members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a security organization whose role is to promote friendly ties between member states, including demilitarization and confidence building measures along their mutual borders. Hence, a conflict between Russia and China is unlikely, even though China may feel the need to prepare for a worst-case scenario.

China has also been engaged in border disputes with India and unlike Russia, these continue unresolved up to this day. China and India had military clashes over the border in 1962. Currently, the two countries are in dispute about the Aksai Chin area and the Tawang District. India is also a rising power, with a growing economy and equipped with nuclear weapons. Like China, India has also been increasing its military expenditure, mostly to prepare itself against Pakistan, but also to extend its power projection over the Indian Ocean region and to balance China in the wider Asian theatre. Blumenthal comments that: "India has put forth a "two-front war strategy" explicitly preparing for conflict and naval competition with China."⁹⁹ Therefore, it could be argued that these two most populated countries in the world are already in some kind of an arms race. It would then seem like a natural move for China to continue to balance itself against India. At the same time, China is India's largest trading partner and with their economic ties it is unlikely that these two states would engage in a full-scale war.

One of the main reasons why China would want to strengthen its military is to balance against the USA. The USA is however unlikely to attack China and would already have done so if that was its intention. As things stand it would not engage with China without a strong provocation. Using a realist viewpoint, however, it is understandable that China would want to prepare for such an attack even if the risks are low. The realist approach legitimizes China's reasons for maintaining a strong military: and as has been demonstrated in all international affairs analyses, China is a very realist country which gives first place to preserving its national interests.

⁹⁹ Blumenthal, "Red Alert," 1.

4.2 North Korea

With its incalculable authoritarian regime, North Korea has proved itself to be a greater immediate threat to Japan than China. The current regime could be considered a wild card; its internal workings are a mystery and its moves are unpredictable. North Korea is also possibly the single most isolated nation in the world. As was mentioned in the sub-chapter about alternative theories, the North Korean government is not easily swayed by international organizations and pressures and is not likely to be deterred by sanctions and other conventional means of punishment. The country in principle has a Communist regime but in practice a one-man ruler, Kim Jong-il. He is the political and spiritual leader of the nation even though his father, Kim Il-sung is considered the “Eternal President” of North Korea, under a philosophy that has roots in Confucianism and stresses loyalty to one’s ruler.

Instead of focusing on structural reforms to improve the country’s poor economy, the North Korean government spends most of its funds on the military, which are estimated up to quarter of its GDP¹⁰⁰ – probably a higher percentage than is spent on defense by any other country in the world. North Korea’s poor economy causes great hardships for the Korean people, mostly in the form of famines which cost around 3 million North Koreans their lives in the middle 90s. Since it spends so much on its military, North Korea is very much dependent upon foreign aid for food supplies. The North Korean regime has regularly been accused of human rights violations. Pyongyang’s callousness towards its people indicates that it might be willing to gamble with their lives en masse, for example in case of a nuclear war. The regime has also been accused with good reason of supporting terrorists and resorting to criminal activities such as counterfeiting.

No one knows when this regime will come to an end. Many had predicted it would end in the 90s or early 21st. century, but so far it survives. China is considered to play a large role in propping up the regime, not because of any warm feelings but to avert a collapse that would send millions of hungry refugees into China itself. There is the danger that if the regime senses it is coming to an end, it might launch a desperate last-resort invasion against the Republic of Korea (ROK). That time may not be far off, considering the tense contemporary relations between Seoul and Pyongyang. A

¹⁰⁰ U.S. Department of State, “Background Note: North Korea,” U.S.
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2792.htm>.

sequence of provocative actions and statements leading to a new low in North-South relations during 2009-2010 has been attributed not just to a harder-line government in Seoul, but to the possible illness of Kim Jong-il which could imply a succession struggle and last effort to ‘crown’ his legacy.

The last time South and North Korea engaged in full-scale war was during the Korean War in 1950-53. This is the last conventional war that North Korea fought, in which it sought to conquer South Korea and re-unify the Korean Peninsula. This war was fought with aid from the Soviet Union and military support from China, against South Korea, which was supported by the UN coalition forces led by the US. The attempt to conquer the South failed and the *status quo* of a divided peninsula has remained ever since, albeit based on a ceasefire and *de facto* demarcation rather than any final peace settlement. South and North Korea share the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) at the 38th Parallel (see figure 6 on the right) as their *de facto* border, which serves as a buffer zone between the two nations. The DMZ is



Source: South Dakota Public Broadcasting
Figure 6 The 38th. Parallel

heavily mined so as to serve as a deterrent to war and also to escapees from the North.

Both North and South Korea continue to claim sovereignty over the whole peninsula. However, it is more likely that North Korea will be the one to attempt to unify the nations through war, to finish the task it started 60 years ago. At least, its powerful military would indicate that it still has the ambition to do so. Yet it has hitherto refrained from invading the South again, most probably due to the USA's deterring forces. As Donald S. Zagoria points out: "It would be suicidal for the North to opt for war."¹⁰¹ Suicidal or not, war should not be ruled out, least of all when tensions are so strong between North and South Korea. Whether Pyongyang decides to invade in the near future remains unknown, while its military ambitions affect not only its neighbours in the South, but also Japan, the USA, and the region of East Asia.

¹⁰¹ Donald S. Zagoria, "East Asian Security Challenges," *American Foreign Policy Interests* 29, no. 1 (2007): 21. <http://ebscohost.com>.

4.2.1 North Korea as a Threat to Japan

Should a war break out on the Korean Peninsula, it would have dramatic effects on Japan's security. In case of a war, the US would back up the South Korean army, and Japan as South Korea's virtual ally would be obliged to support the war in some way or another. As has been mentioned earlier, Japan's current constitution forbids it to place troops on foreign soil. However, the North Korean threat gives Japan a strong incentive to amend its constitution to allow the SDF to engage in land battles in a foreign country. In this particular case, it would be to permit the SDF's ground forces to fight North Korea along with the USA and South Korea, as a 'forward defense' for Japan itself.

While Japan would not be in particular danger of being occupied by North Korea, one of the threats it could face would be North Korean submarines sinking Japanese vessels or oil liners in the Sea of Japan or elsewhere. Japan has had some clashes with North Korea on sea and Japan has condemned its Northern neighbour for sending spy vessels into its waters. One such incident occurred in 1990, when an abandoned DPRK spy vessel was discovered on the Matsubara Beach. Another incident occurred in 1999 when the Japanese Coast Guard (JCG) discovered two suspicious "Japanese fishing vessels." It turns out those were spy vessels that escaped at high speeds when the JCG ordered them to halt. However, the most serious incident occurred in 2001 when a DPRK spy vessel engaged in a naval combat with the JCG, with the latter destroying the vessel, killing 19 North Koreans. This is the most serious clash between North Korea and Japan since WWII.

Samuels comments that: "For historical and ideological reasons, relations between Japan and North Korea are among the most contentious and mutually distrustful of any in the world today."¹⁰² Japan's official view is that North Korea is the main threat it faces; and accordingly, the Pyongyang regime is also Japan's strongest reason for changing its constitution and increasing its military forces. The finding of an enquiry, published in May 2010, about North Korea's sinking of South Korea's warship Cheonan was former Prime Minister Hatoyama's main stated reason for breaking his election promise and keeping the unpopular Futenma US air base in Okinawa, which was supposed to have been relocated. This shows how effective the North Korean threat is in driving and shaping Japanese defense policy.

¹⁰² Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, 148.

South Korea and the US presence there may serve as a buffer zone between North Korea and Japan, albeit former South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun said that South Korea might remain neutral in case of a conflict.¹⁰³ The most convenient method for North Korea to invade Japan would be to pass through its southern neighbour which is highly unlikely to happen under current circumstances. Hence, Pyongyang's nuclear weapons are much greater threat to Japan than its conventional forces.

4.2.2 The Korean People's Army (KPA)

One of North Korea's main policies is called *Songun*, or "Military First," which provides the theoretical base for putting so much effort into its military. However, *Songun* also reflects the fact that the KPA is very important for the Kim regime's survival; without the military's support the regime would indubitably fall. Kim keeps his generals loyal and happy by providing them with special privileges, mostly in the form of monetary payments.¹⁰⁴ Some of them also obey him out of fear. The KPA in turn plays a large role in protecting the leader, Kim. Kongdan Oh and Ralph C. Hassig mention that: "According to North Korean logic, protecting the leader is a priority because the security of North Korea and the strength of the army as an institution are an extension of the will of the leader."¹⁰⁵ This legitimizes Kim's authority over the military.

Since Pyongyang is typically secretive about its military procedures and spending not all facts are known about the KPA. Annual military expenditure is estimated around \$6 billion, which is a lot of money considering North Korea's fragile economy. The KPA is the fourth largest military in the world in terms of manpower. It is comprised of around 1.1-1.2 million active troops, with the addition of several million reserve and paramilitary troops. No country has a higher percentage of its population serving in the army, either, and almost all North Koreans receive some form of military training.

Oh and Hassig suggest that the Pyongyang regime may be trying to make the entire population ready to take up arms: "A nation of 22 million soldiers would indeed take on

¹⁰³ Chang, Gordon. *Nuclear Showdown: North Korea Takes on the World*. (Westminster: Random House, 2006), 153, <http://www.ebrary.com>.

¹⁰⁴ This is why the Kim regime sees capital as being of vital concern to maintain itself. It also explains why the regime was so concerned when the USA froze \$25 million in a Macau based bank, which brought North Korea to the negotiating table in the six-party talks in 2007 (see below).

¹⁰⁵ Kongdan Oh and Ralph C. Hassig, *North Korea through the Looking Glass* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 114.

a threatening aspect. This is presumably part of Kim Jong-il's intention, as he elaborates on his father's Four Military Lines of 1962 (arm the entire population, fortify the entire country, make soldiers politically reliable, and modernize the KPA)."¹⁰⁶ This is especially threatening considering that the Pyongyang regime is trying to make the leader, Kim Jong-il, look like some kind of a father of the nation. Hence, there is the possibility that the nation could be mobilized en masse for a visionary and destructive cause such as was the case with Hitler's Nazi Germany.

The KPA constitutes a relatively powerful conventional force that can be roughly divided into five categories: The Army Ground Force, the Navy, the Air Force, the Artillery Guidance Bureau, and the Special Operation Force. The KPA is reported to be declining at present due to various factors, thought to include malnutrition of soldiers, fuel shortages, and the breakdown of equipment due to age and insufficient maintenance. Therefore, even though the KPA is formidable when it comes to size, it is patently evident that it would not be able to defeat the combined forces of the USA, South Korea, and Japan. It could, however, wreak great damage on South Korea and its capital, Seoul. Let us now have a closer look at North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

4.2.3 North Korea's Nuclear and Missile Threat

North Korea is and has been trying to develop nuclear weapons, possibly for several decades. There may be multiple reasons for doing this. The Pyongyang regime wants to ensure its survival and deter a preemptive US strike (learning i.a. from the example of Iraq); it may want to use nuclear weapons as a bargaining chip in order to achieve favorable outcomes in international deals; or in a worst-case scenario, use them as operational weapons and/or sell nuclear assets and knowhow (including suitable missiles) to terrorists or other states.¹⁰⁷ Whatever reason it may have, its nuclear program is a serious threat to South Korea, Japan, and possibly the USA, and destabilizes the security balance of East Asia.

In 1994 Pyongyang entered into a deal to abandon its nuclear weapons program in exchange for aid from the USA including support for civil nuclear energy production. However, in 2003 North Korea withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and

¹⁰⁶ ———, "The North Korean Military as a Security Threat," *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (2003): 12.

¹⁰⁷ North Korea has sometimes ironically been referred to as the world's nuclear Kmart and is reported to have possibly sold nuclear material and knowhow to countries such as Syria.

resumed its nuclear development program since it did not feel the USA had kept to its promises. Similarly, the USA had felt that North Korea had cheated on the agreement and had been secretly developing nuclear weapons, which was the US's claimed reason for stopping the aid and imposing sanctions on it.

Selig S. Harrison comments that it was a mistake to judge the progress of North Korea's nuclear program at that time under a worst-case scenario, since the Bush administration had already made that mistake with Iraq.¹⁰⁸ However, it is widely accepted today that North Korea has already conducted two successful nuclear tests, one in October 2006 and one in May 2009. As of 2010 it may possess up to ten nuclear weapons.¹⁰⁹ Hence, on the basis of nuclear weapon possession alone, it could have been more legitimate to intervene in North Korea than Iraq.

Not only does North Korea possess nuclear weapons but is also capable of firing long-range missiles. Despite international protests Pyongyang has conducted several missile tests, some of them into the Sea of Japan. The first such missile test took place at the end of May 1993 with the firing of a *NoDong-1* missile. The second missile test took place in 1998, where a *Taepodong-1* missile was launched over Japan and ended up West of Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean.

Although it is unknown whether North Korea can launch its nuclear weapons using long-range ballistic missiles, it is likely that it could already have, or could be very close to having, the ability to do so. Yossef Bodansky claimed in 2007 that it had the ability to launch nuclear weapons with medium range *NoDong* ballistic missiles.¹¹⁰ It might also be able to carry nuclear warheads on its *RoDong-1* and 2 missiles which can reach all of Japan. Inaccurate though the *RoDongs* may be, the power of a nuclear payload can make up for that.

Pyongyang's longest range missile is *Taepodong-2*, which is reported to be able to reach around 4,000 km (a modified version could reach up to 5,500 km). North Korea is suspected of having test fired such missiles both in July 2006 and April 2009. Prior to the 2009 launch, North Korea had reported that it was an attempt to put a satellite around the earth's orbit. However, it turned out that both those missile tests failed. While the 2006 test missile blew up shortly after its launch, the 2009 test missile

¹⁰⁸ Selig S. Harrison, "Did North Korea Cheat?," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 1 (2005): 110.

<http://www.jstor.org>.

¹⁰⁹ Graham Allison, "Nuclear Disorder," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 1 (2010). <http://ebscohost.com>.

¹¹⁰ Yossef Bodansky, "North Korea's Strategic Coup," *Defense & Foreign Strategic Policy* 35, no. 2 (2007): 16. <http://proquest.com>.

reached much further, travelling up to 3.845 km from launch site, but delivered no satellite into space.¹¹¹ The prospect of WMD payloads being launched with these ballistic missiles poses a serious threat to Japan.

Japan has a good reason to fear Pyongyang, as it has made some specific threats towards Japan. One of those threats came in 1999: “If the United States attacks us... the US forces occupying South Korea and those stationed in Japan... will never be safe.”¹¹² Another threat was made in 2001, when Pyongyang stated that if a war broke out: “All US bases surrounding the Korean peninsula, like those in Guam and Okinawa, as well as in South Korea will be blown up in the sky.”¹¹³ In June 2009, North Korea threatened “merciless offensive” with its nuclear weapons if provoked. This threat came after its late May 2009 nuclear test and was probably meant to deter sanctions and other punishments for its misbehavior. Then in July 2010, Pyongyang threatened to use nuclear weapons in a “retaliatory sacred war” over South Korean and American joint military exercises in the Sea of Japan. Despite making many threats, Pyongyang has actually never realized any of them, and might thereby give the impression that its posturing could be ignored. However, when nuclear weapons are involved it is simply not possible to take any threat lightly.

Gordon Chang also takes these statements seriously, concluding that: “North Korea’s rationale for attacking Japan has been clearly stated over time: it is America’s “advance base” against the DPRK.”¹¹⁴ This indicates that in case of a full-scale conflict, North Korea would indeed attack American bases located on Japanese soil if it had the capability to do so. If Pyongyang launched nuclear missiles against American bases situated in Japan, it would cause tremendous collateral damage to Japan itself. Thus, even if North Korea does not target Japanese cities specifically, Japan would still be in danger due to the location of those bases.

This point also underlines that North Korea views Japan as a threat on the basis that it is the USA’s ally, and the Pyongyang regime perceives the USA’s global and regional military posture as the main threat to its own existence. Hence, North Korea might

¹¹¹ North Korea’s claim that it was a satellite launch may likely have been a bluff, used as an excuse for testing long-range missiles while trying to keep the population docile. The Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), North Korea’s state news agency, reported that a satellite had been successfully launched into space while neither the USA nor Russia could detect the arrival of any new satellites into orbit.

¹¹² Qtd. in Oh and Hassig, “The North Korean Military as a Security Threat,” 6.

¹¹³ Qtd. in Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Chang, *Nuclear Showdown: North Korea Takes on the World*, 153.

consider it could improve the odds against itself by targeting Japanese military bases and installations alongside US ones. Furthermore, North Korea and Japan have exchanged threats, especially during crisis such as when Pyongyang has conducted missile and nuclear tests.

For these and other reasons, out of all its Asian neighbours, North Korea is most likely to target Japan with its nuclear weapons. North Korea wishes for reunification with the South so it is unlikely it would devastate that part of its own peninsula along with the people sharing its own language and culture. Former South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun stated that: “The North is developing nuclear weapons in order to prevent other countries from threatening the North. It is very hard to think that the North’s nuclear weapons are made to attack others first.”¹¹⁵ North Korea might seem to have confirmed this by publicly proclaiming a no-first use policy. However, given North Korea’s aggressive history it is difficult to predict where things would lead to in case of an escalating conflict. Should North Korea see it as a last resort in a losing war, it might decide to launch nuclear weapons. Besides, Kim Jong-il was reported to have said in a conversation with his father Kim Il-sung that if he lost in a war he would destroy the world.¹¹⁶

Tony Mitchell, a Seoul-based business consultant, made the ironic comment that: “Of course, both South and North Korea would smile if a nuclear weapon went off in Japan by accident.”¹¹⁷ Pyongyang would not be likely to make a first strike against Seoul. Chang supports this, reasoning that: “Targeting Tokyo would make sense for Kim because Beijing’s leaders, for geopolitical and cultural reasons, would be less likely to take sides against him for an attack on Japan than one on South Korea,”¹¹⁸ and that it would be North Korea’s strategy to take Japan as its hostage in case of a conflict.¹¹⁹ Nuclear weapons would make that easiest for North Korea but it could also threaten Japan with other devastating weapons such as biological and chemical weapons which could be launched equally through ballistic missiles.

¹¹⁵ Bodansky, “North Korea’s Strategic Coup,” 16.

¹¹⁶ Bradley K. Martin, “5 Things You Need to Know About Kim Jong Il’s Brain,” Globalpost, May 26, 2010, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/worldview/100525/kim-jong-il>.

¹¹⁷ Chang, *Nuclear Showdown: North Korea Takes on the World*, 137.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 153.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 154.

Under such scenarios, North Korea could threaten Japan with WMD other than those launched by missiles. For example North Korea might attempt to deliver its nuclear weapons by loading small vessels with them, such as the spy vessels that have gotten past the JCG before, then setting them off in densely populated city harbours. Or it could try to smuggle small WMD into metropolitan cities and then detonate them. Pyongyang might then use these as threats to blackmail Japan into accepting its demands. As a general counter to such concerns, Japan may be thought to enjoy considerable immunity while remaining under the USA's nuclear umbrella since North Korea is deterred by US nuclear retaliation. But Japan needs to be prepared for a worst-case scenario since it is impossible to predict future contingencies.

4.2.4 Japan's Reactions

Understandably, Japan has protested against each of North Korea's nuclear and missile tests. As the nuclear threat is the most important factor to Japan's security, it affects Japan's security discourse, or as Kevin J. Cooney and Alex Scarbrough point out:

Japan's attitude is shaped by North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons, which could be used against Japan or American bases in Japan, and anger over North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens. In July 2006, Japan articulated this attitude by raising the possibility of a preemptive strike on North Korea— potentially violating the Japanese constitution, which prohibits the state from declaring war.¹²⁰

This brings us back to the constitutional point and the core question for this thesis, namely whether Japan should change its constitution or not. If North Korea does indeed have nuclear missiles targeted against Japanese soil, it would strengthen the argument for amending Article 9 to allow for increased flexibility for the SDF, up to and including the option of a preemptive strike to prevent a North Korean missile attack from occurring.

There have also been discussions about Japan developing its own nuclear weapons, though it is unlikely to do so while it remains under the USA's nuclear umbrella – and there are of course very special and serious sensitivities on the issue among its own population. For Japan to develop its own nuclear weapons would also mean going

¹²⁰ Kevin J. Cooney and Alex Scarbrough, "Japan and South Korea: Can These Two Nations Work Together?," *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 35, no. 3 (2008): 180, <http://ebscohost.com>.

against Japan's Atomic Energy Basic Law¹²¹ and the Three Non-Nuclear Principles (*Hikaku san gensoku*) that state that: *Japan shall neither possess nor manufacture nuclear weapons, nor shall it permit their introduction into Japanese territory.*¹²²

To return to missile issue, North Korea's *Taepodong-1* missile test in 1998 was the first such event that could be said to have stirred up a dramatic Japanese reaction. Park notes that: "This was the first physical military threat toward Japan since the end of World War II. Feeling threatened, Japan introduced a series of defensive measures against North Korea. The Japanese cabinet decided to participate in the Missile Defense program. Furthermore, Japan decided to launch an independent military satellite to survey the North Korean situation."¹²³ Launching a military satellite into outer space in 1998 meant violating a law from 1969 whereby Japan renounced the use of space for war, though this law had been amended in 2008 to allow military use of space. After the 1998 missile test, Japan became even more wary of North Korea and "[i]n 1999, reports surfaced that Japan's Air SDF had conducted secret studies on launching air raids against missile bases in North Korea."¹²⁴ This of course, would have been in violation of Japan's constitution as well.

Japan's reactions to the *Taepodong-2* missile test in 2009 were also strong. Former Prime Minister Taro Aso commented on this missile test in the following way: "The fact that North Korea went ahead with the launch despite repeated warnings from around the world, especially the United States, South Korea and Japan, was an extremely provocative act and one that Japan cannot let go unchallenged."¹²⁵ The Japanese authorities threatened they might shoot down the missile if it posed a threat to Japanese territory. Pyongyang responded that it would consider it as an act of war on Japan's behalf if it shot down its missile. However, Japan cannot abandon such options because once these missiles are launched against it, the only way to defend against them is through active missile defense systems.

¹²¹ A law passed in 1955 which outlines Japan's peaceful nuclear utilization.

¹²² These principles were first introduced by Prime Minister Eisaku Satō in 1967 and represent Japanese sentiment and Japan's policy towards nuclear weapons, even though these principles have not been adopted as laws.

¹²³ Park, "Cooperation Coupled with Conflicts: Korea-Japan Relations in the Post-Cold War Era," 24.

¹²⁴ Qtd. in Sandra R. Leavitt, "The Lack of Security Cooperation between Southeast Asia and Japan: Yen Yes, Pax Nippon No," *Asian Survey* 45, no. 2 (2005): 232. <http://www.jstor.org>.

¹²⁵ Reuters, "World Reaction to North Korea Rocket Launch," Apr 5, 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE5340OJ20090405?sp=true>.

4.2.5 Six-party Talks

Japan, along with the USA, China, South Korea, and Russia, has been trying to peacefully solve North Korea's nuclear issue through the multilateral process called the six-party talks. The first meeting took place in 2003 and was partly a continuation of previous talks between the DPRK, ROK, Japan and the USA on subject. At the beginning, these talks were looking promising until North Korea conducted its first nuclear test in October 2006. The USA and China chose nonetheless to continue them until 2007. Then following the UN condemnation of North Korea's missile test in April 2009, Pyongyang announced it would withdraw from the six-party talks permanently. As was mentioned before, Japan was all along unwilling to join in a deal providing fuel for North Korea while the abductees issue remains unsettled.

Another problem with the six-party talks process is that it only deals with nuclear weapons, leaving North Korea's biological and chemical weapons issues unresolved. In any case, as North Korea no longer considers itself a part of the six-party talks, the current situation could be seen as rather bleak.

If and whether North Korea returns to the six-party talks remains to be seen, although if it happens it will most likely be under heavy Chinese pressure. It can thus be said that China is the ultimate leader of these talks since it has the greatest political influence over North Korea, which is frustrating to Japan as it would like to have more control over North Korea itself. Let us now briefly look at relations between Tokyo and Pyongyang.

4.2.6 North Korean-Japanese Relations

In contrast to the thriving trade relations and tourism between Japan and China, nothing similar can be said for North Korea and Japan. Sadly, there are not many positive elements at all in these two countries' relations. Trade between the two countries is insignificant for Japan and Pyongyang has strict control and limitations on tourism. The Koizumi visits to North Korea in 2002 and 2004 were supposed to improve relations between the countries but instead increased animosity due to the abductees issue. Japan has supported the DPRK with development aid funds from time to time, but has reduced and sometimes cut off funding in response to various North Korean offences, i.e. the abductees issue, aggression towards South Korea, intruding spy vessels, and nuclear and missile tests.

Perhaps in future Kim Jong-il's regime will undergo a change or be overthrown followed by the establishment of democracy and a possible reunification with South Korea. This could lead a unified democratic Korea to become more peaceful and accepting of its neighbour Japan becoming a normal nation in terms of security. South Korea tradition of democracy moderates its external as well as internal policies and even though there sometimes remain diplomatic tensions between Japan and South Korea, the likelihood of war between the two nations is very small. Hence, democracy could play an important role in promoting peace between Japan and North Korea. On the other hand, it is clear that while Kim Jong-il's regime remains in power and with increasing tensions between North and South Korea, Japan has a strong motive to consider amending its constitution to give itself more options for coping with this security challenge.

4.3 The Japan-USA Alliance

The early development of this alliance has already been briefly covered at the end of the historical chapter on Japan-USA relations. This chapter will focus on contemporary developments in Japan-USA strategic relations. First there will be a short discussion about the need to redefine the alliance after the end of the Cold War. This will be followed by an investigation of why it is normally seen as being in Japan's and the USA's interest to maintain the alliance in its current form. Then some contrary arguments will be explored as to why it could be in Japan's and the USA's interest to change the present alliance arrangements.

4.3.1 Redefining the Alliance

With the fall of the Soviet Union in early 1990s came the need to redefine the Japan-USA alliance, which during the Cold War had been defined as a security treaty with the main purpose of countering Soviet influence in East Asia and a possible Soviet invasion of Japan. The Soviet threat was by far the greatest that both Japan and the USA had faced in the history of East Asia. Hence, when the Soviet Union collapsed, the alliance's *raison d'être* – not unlike that of NATO in Europe – was called into question. To keep it relevant, Japan and the USA had to redefine the alliance in terms of some new common threat perception. At the time in question, both the North Korean threat and the Taiwan issue fulfilled that role to some extent. The new threat picture was further strengthened in 1995-96 when China

conducted its missile tests into the Taiwan Strait. This act of aggression contributed to former President Bill Clinton's and former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's signing a security declaration between the two nations in April 1996.

Japan and the USA still see North Korea and China as their main threats in East Asia and these are the main reasons for the continued existence of the alliance. The main changes since 1996 lie in the degree to which China has risen and North Korea's acquisition of nuclear weapons. Hence, the rationale of the alliance is in principle even stronger now than it has been at any point since the end of the Cold War. The role of the alliance has meanwhile shifted from being limited to military security in East Asia to a more global and broader agenda. For example, Japan has been supporting the USA i.a. by providing \$13 billion for the Gulf War in 1990-91, participating in peace missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, providing funds for the reconstruction of these countries, and refueling US warships in the Indian Ocean. The USA also wishes to have Japan on its side in non-military aspects of the war on terror.

After the reported sinking of South Korea's warship Cheonan by North Korean action in March 2010, the USA and Japan have been keeping a closer watch on North Korea. The strategic basis for the alliance is therefore strong for the time being, though it is challenging to predict how the relationship will develop in the years to come. For example, will the USA see it as being in its interest to maintain an expensive military presence in Japan, will Japanese interests and US interests over the nature of that presence be reconcilable, and will Japan always support the USA's war on terror and the USA's 'hegemonic' ambitions on the wider global scene?

4.3.2 Motives for the Alliance

Most of the reasons why Japan and the USA would want to maintain the alliance have already been covered in this thesis. As for the USA's motives for the continued existence of the alliance, these include its desire to balance itself against China and prevent a Chinese regional hegemony in East Asia; the need to keep a strong military presence in Japan as a backup for any Taiwan crisis and/or a possible North Korean invasion of its neighbour in the South; and the plans to maintain a theater missile defense system in Japan to counter intercontinental missiles, possibly from North Korea or China. Washington also wishes to work with Japan on WMD non-proliferation in the region, especially in the obvious case of North Korea. It may also be in the USA's

interest to maintain a strong security relationship with Japan and a continued military presence there in order to prevent Japan itself from trying to become the regional hegemon once again. Other East Asian nations that suffered from Japanese imperialism feel the same way.

In the event of the USA's abandoning Japan, it is more likely that Japan would be drawn into a more open power struggle against China and South Korea, and possibly a unified Korea in the future. In East Asia's realist environment, this situation would not be in the USA's interests. The USA would not want Japan to develop nuclear weapons of its own either, which it would be more strongly tempted to do if it no longer enjoyed the USA's nuclear umbrella. That would further disrupt East Asia's power balance and motivate other nations of the region to seek nuclear capabilities of their own.

Japan and China are also the USA's largest trading partners with South Korea ranking high as well. Should there be a war between those East Asian nations it would have disastrous consequences for the US economy. The USA has already engaged in two wars in the Pacific before to heavy national cost – not to mention the Korean and Vietnam wars on land – so it is understandable that the USA would want to ensure that it would not be caught up in a third war in the region. But the alternative scenario of an isolated Japan having to make a 'separate peace' with Beijing and come under China's domination is hardly more palatable for Washington.

For all this it is evident that when considering national interests, the alliance is more important to Japan than it is to the USA. For Japan the alliance concerns the national security of Japan itself, i.e. the assurance of not being defeated in a potential East Asian conflict. Being friends with the strongest kid in school can protect you against bullies and this is the status Japan enjoys with the USA. The alliance with the USA is also Japan's only real military alliance even though it has agreed to security cooperation with states like Australia. It strengthens Japan's defenses to have some tens of thousands of American troops and high-tech US weapons in Japan, as it enables the US to react immediately in case of local attack. However, as discussed above, for the time being it is unlikely that any state would attempt to attack Japan with a conventional force and the more likely scenario would involve spill-over of conflict from elsewhere.

What matters more for Japan is to be under the USA's nuclear umbrella. It would also be significant for Japan's security to develop a working missile defense system – if feasible – in collaboration with the USA, since both North Korea and China have the

capability of launching missiles on the Japanese archipelago. Even though such a missile defense system would be unlikely to have the capability of defending Japan against a multiple missile attack from China, it might possibly be able to counter a missile or two coming from North Korea. This is also in line with the USA's general rationale for missile defense in post-Cold War conditions which is to counter single missiles coming from rogue states.

It makes little difference how large Japan's and the USA's conventional armies are in the scenario of a nuclear assault, as they would not be able to prevent the enormous damage occurring from a nuclear strike. Furthermore, being under the USA's nuclear umbrella deters potential attackers from striking Japan with conventional forces for fear of retaliation. This line of argument, however, also raises the question: if the USA's nuclear umbrella is judged as the most important factor for Japan, is there really a great need to maintain high numbers of US bases, troops, and military equipment on Japanese soil?

4.3.3 Removing Troops From Japan

The USA's main reason for withdrawing its troops from Japan would be to reduce its own defense budget. The costs of keeping US military bases and troops in Japan are significant, although Japan shares some of that cost. As of December 2009 the USA had 35,688 troops stationed in Japan.¹²⁶ As was mentioned before, the presence of these US troops and major weapon systems can be helpful in order to assist in other parts of this region. For example, maintaining troops in Okinawa could prove vital in case of a Chinese invasion of Taiwan; just as it would be important to maintain backup forces on the Japanese mainland in case of North Korean invasion into South Korea. However, in both these cases those same US troops might as well be located in the Northern Philippines and South Korea itself, respectively. If Taiwan unifies peacefully with China it will not be necessary for the USA to maintain such large forces in Okinawa anymore except as a defense for Japan against a unified China.

The US now relies more on flexible, rapidly deployable attack forces rather than having large military bases around the world. This was the USA's claimed reason for closing down its military base in Iceland in 2006, despite the Icelandic

¹²⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, "Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Area and by Country (309a)," <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/history/hst0912.pdf>.

government's opposition to the removal. The effectiveness of long-term, remote US bases has been questioned since the early 2000s: "...some in the Pentagon are unconvinced that large forward bases remain the most effective means to win the "war on terror" or to police stability along trade routes."¹²⁷ The USA has both been reducing and relocating its bases worldwide, so it might be considered a natural move to reduce its bases in Japan as well.

The US also has the possibility to dispatch flexible military forces from South Korea or Guam, its own territory in the Pacific, in defense of Japan. In fact, Zdzislaw Lachowski points out that Guam is designed to serve a greater security role in the Asia-Pacific region in future:¹²⁸ it "...will function as a base in the Pacific Command ('an unsinkable aircraft carrier') and be used to overcome the 'tyranny of distance'."¹²⁹ Hence, one day Guam might possibly replace Japan as the 'unsinkable aircraft carrier' of the Pacific region.

One reason for judging that the alliance benefits Japan more than the USA lies in Japan's current interpretation of Article 9, whereby it is only allowed to defend itself against an attacker but not allowed to defend its allies. Hence, even if the USA were to be attacked by another country, say a nuclear missile from North Korea, Japan would not be allowed to come to the USA's aid. On the other hand, the USA would always have to come to Japan's aid in accordance with current agreements. However, Hughes points out that: "...if Japan is seen to be totally passive despite possessing in increasing capacity to intercept missiles targeted at the US, this might prove fatal to alliance cooperation."¹³⁰ In reality, therefore, it is likely that Japan would also respond to an attack against the USA even if this meant reinterpreting or circumventing its constitution. This point needs to be considered when and if the Japanese constitution is amended.

Another constitutional point is that Japan would not be able to support the USA in a land war on foreign soil, such as the Korean Peninsula. Hughes writes that:

¹²⁷ Qtd. in Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, 191.

¹²⁸ Zdzislaw Lachowski, *Foreign Military Bases in Eurasia*, SIPRI Policy Paper No. 18 (Bromma: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2007), 41.

¹²⁹ Ibid., note 143.

¹³⁰ Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Remilitarisation* (Abingdon: Routledge for The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009), 117.

The potential vulnerability of the alliance first became clear during the North Korean nuclear crisis of 1994-95, when the US asked Japan for active support in the event of a conflict on the Korean Peninsula, including rear-area logistical support. Japanese policymakers were unable to respond effectively, revealing the alliance's lack of military operability, prompting a crisis of political confidence in the bilateral relationship with the US, and raising the prospect of Japan's abandonment by the US as an unreliable ally.¹³¹

Since this occurrence, the USA and Japan have worked more closely on how to react jointly in case of crisis. As Nick Bisley mentions: "Agreement has been reached to... link key elements of the Self-Defense Force (SDF) and the US military in joint operations."¹³² However, as the North Korean nuclear incident shows, unanticipated phenomena can arise at any time that risk damaging the alliance if the USA and Japan differ dramatically in their reactions, and if each partner fails to live up to each others' expectations.

Because the USA has spent so much in defense of Japan many Americans complain that Japan has been allowed to enjoy a free ride too long, or since the end of WWII, and are dissatisfied with their taxpayers' money being spent on defending such a rich foreign country. In a survey from 2004, "40 percent of U.S. elites expressed opposition to the long-term stationing of U.S. forces in Japan."¹³³ While Japan has looked upon the alliance from a realist, cost/benefit point of view and enjoyed the free ride, it is understandable that Washington feels dissatisfied with Japan's unwillingness to take more care of its own defense needs. By removing its troops from Japan, the USA would be clearly pressuring Japan to increase its defense budget and assume a greater security role for itself and the region.

4.3.4 Decreasing USA Military Dependency

For Japan the most important argument in favour of decreasing its military dependency on the USA is to become more self-reliant. As early as 1963, former Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida commented that: "Japan, an independent nation that has reached the highest level in

¹³¹ Ibid., 32.

¹³² Nick Bisley, "Securing the "Anchor of Regional Stability"? The Transformation of the US-Japan Alliance and East Asian Security," *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International & Strategic Affairs* 30, no. 1 (2008): 78. <http://muse.jhu.edu>.

¹³³ Qtd. in Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, 192.

its economy, technology, and education, will always be in a state of weakness if it continues to depend upon another nation for its self-defense.”¹³⁴ Indeed, it could be considered only natural that Japan, a rich country, should take care of its own defenses.

As reported by Christopher W. Hughes and Akiko Fukushima, “Japanese Gaullist opinion has argued that Japan should assume a more normal security role by removing constitutional prohibitions, increasing its national military capacity, and eventually abrogating the security treaty with the United States, because this is the only way for Japan to break its security dependence on an external power and function as a truly independent sovereign state.”¹³⁵ For reasons discussed above and especially after the experience of the 2000s, the USA would also welcome Japan taking on a larger security role in East Asia and Japan would therefore not face strong reaction from the US in case of increasing its self-defense military.

Realists would further argue that Japan needs to be ready in case of unilateral US abandonment and prepare itself for more responsibility being thrust upon it by the USA. While the US may not be likely to completely abandon Japan in the years to come, US hawks like William Safire have made such remarks as: “If you are not with us in stopping nuclear spread here and now — we’re out of the Far East... we can use the savings from troops drawn down to build a space shield, thereby protecting America from the next decade’s nuclear bandits.”¹³⁶ The US is a realist country and hence acts in accordance with its own interests. If it ever sees more benefit to be had from disengaging from Japan than from staying, it is likely to take that action.

Japan also needs to be prepared for changes in international relations, such as a more friendly relationship between the USA, China, and North Korea. While the threat of abandonment is high on Tokyo’s security agenda, however, the danger of entrapment by a more powerful partner is probably what has been causing Tokyo a greater headache in recent years as it has increasingly been pressured to support the USA’s global efforts, sometimes against Japan’s own interests. The fear has grown that Japan might be dragged into further wars where it has no particular stakes, simply because it is allied

¹³⁴ Qtd. in Ibid., 7.

¹³⁵ Qtd. in Christopher W. Hughes and Akiko Fukushima, “U.S.-Japan Security Relations: Toward Bilateralism Plus?,” in *Beyond Bilateralism: U.S.-Japan Relations in the New Asia-Pacific*, ed. Ellis S. Krauss (Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 2003), 70. <http://www.ebrary.com>.

¹³⁶ Qtd. in Leon V. Sigal, *Disarming Strangers : Nuclear Diplomacy with North Korea* (New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1999), 118, <http://www.ebrary.com>.

with the USA. Arguably, Japan could become 'entrapped' in the alliance in another sense by becoming so dependent on US defenses that it would be impossible for the US to leave Japan without opening up Japan to serious threats from its neighbours. This is another scenario Japan would want to avoid at all costs.

A possible 'middle way' for Japan to behave proactively would mean relying more on its own defense resources for its own direct safety, while remaining in a collective defense alliance with the USA. Japan could thus become a more normal nation, like Britain and France for example, who are joined with the USA in a military alliance while maintaining strong defense forces of their own. In this case, Japan might engage in a stronger dialogue with multilateral security organizations like NATO, while reducing its bilateral dialogue with the USA.

Even though the USA and Japan share a similar threat perception in East Asia, each of the two countries' threat paradigm is slightly different. For example, Bisley mentions that Tokyo may feel that the Korean Peninsula should be entirely nuclear free, while the US might be willing to live with a nuclear equipped North Korea as long as it did not proliferate its nuclear technology.¹³⁷ Another example is Myanmar, against which the USA wants to take harder action while Japan's approach has been more gentle. Iran is another example where, again, the USA would like to see more international sanctions applied while Japan still buys large quantities of oil from Iran. Such differences can negatively affect the alliance, all the more since its scope is supposed to be so much broader than before.

To sum up: Japan profits from the USA's nuclear umbrella, but runs the constant risk that in case of serious future friction in the countries' relations, it might be left without this umbrella as a sitting duck with no meaningful deterrence. If all Japan had was a conventional army and no US alliance/nuclear umbrella, WMD, or a missile defense system, it would be easy for North Korea and China to attack Japan without having to face serious military retaliation. This provides the key argument for Japan to persist with developing nuclear missile defense systems, while continuing to adhere to its peaceful nuclear ambitions. There would not be a particular need to address this issue in the constitution since Japan already adopted laws allowing it to develop missile defenses. The most ideal scenario would be for the East Asian region to be a nuclear

¹³⁷ Bisley, "Securing the "Anchor of Regional Stability"? The Transformation of the US-Japan Alliance and East Asian Security," 89.

free zone but that is unlikely to happen in the coming decades and for that reason Japan must prepare itself.

In the end, it is clear that it is the Japanese themselves who will have to take the main responsibility to defend their homeland if it comes to conflict with either North Korea, China, or both. History can provide many examples of states being invaded, despite being in an alliance, sometimes as a consequence of slow, little, or no response by their ally/allies. For the moment the US is still the world's sole superpower but it is declining i.a. due to its commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the financial crisis. China on the other hand seems to be on its way to becoming a superpower. If developments continue in this manner, China might be able to catch up with the United States in several decades. Even 20 years from now, it is questionable how long the US could endure in a possible protracted war between China and Japan. Thus, the longer-term perspective underlines the need for Japan to take more responsibility for its own defenses. The sooner it achieves that end, the better it is for its national security. One step in that process is to amend the constitution so as to more clearly define the SDF's role.

5 CHANGING JAPAN'S CONSTITUTION

The thesis has been leading us to the key point we have now reached: namely, whether Japan's constitution should be altered or not. The constitution of a state is the foundation that governs a nation's society and incorporates the basic values that its people try to live by. Therefore, people attach strong emotions to it. The step to amend Japan's constitution is far from being an easy task, but leaving it unchanged also looks increasingly difficult. The thesis will now briefly review and compile arguments for and against changing Japan's constitution. Arguments on why the constitution should remain as in the *status quo* will be provided first, followed by arguments for changing Article 9. These points will be summed up in a graphic SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. Options for how precisely the constitution could and should be altered will be explored. Then the reality of the contemporary situation will be examined, that is, political and public views towards this issue, and whether change is to be expected in the years to come. Finally the conclusion of the thesis will be presented.

5.1 Arguments Against Altering Article 9

Some of the reasons why it would not be in Japan's interest to alter its constitution have already been presented so far. These include opposition from North Korea and China, and pacifism among the Japanese public. The factors of both international and domestic oppositions weigh the heaviest in the arguments against modifying Article 9. Let us have a look at international opposition and what consequences constitutional revision could have on Japan's foreign relations.

5.1.1 International Opposition

While the USA would welcome a revision of Article 9, China and North Korea would view it as a security threat and an indication that Japan might be on the cusp of significant remilitarisation. As was mentioned in the historical chapter, these nations suffered under Japanese imperialism and well remember the war atrocities that Japan committed. A remilitarised Japan would therefore be most unwelcome to them. This also applies to other East Asian countries that endured Japanese aggression during WWII. It would not be in

Japan's interest, economically and politically, to stir up unfavorable reactions from these countries. It is probable that many of these East Asian nations would oppose Japan taking on a larger security role in that region, even if it was for the peaceful purpose of PKO participation. Hence, the amendment of Article 9 needs to be handled delicately by keeping a close dialogue with all states that feel concerned by the matter.

5.1.2 Domestic Opposition

As was mentioned in the historical chapter, since WWII the Japanese have remained a pacifist nation. Hence, if it came to a national referendum it would be uncertain whether the majority of the population would accept Article 9's amendment. In recent years' opinion polls more than 50% of the population has been against revision of Article 9. Japanese culture has a tendency to be conservative and great efforts have been required to make changes throughout the ages. It took a major revolution, the Meiji Restoration, to make changes to the old feudal system in the late 19th. century; it took defeat in WWII to calm down Japanese war-like nationalism; and it might take something equally dramatic to change the constitution.

Public opposition to the SDF's participation in tougher PKO can also be expected as the Japanese would be unhappy to lose more of their soldiers than they have been used to in the last six decades, especially if it were in wars they did not consider their own, such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

5.1.3 US Abandonment

With increased responsibility for its own defenses, Japan is more likely to see a decrease in military support from the USA, or in a worst case scenario complete military abandonment. In particular, a formal amendment to Article 9 to allow for stronger Japanese defense at home and abroad might be interpreted by the USA as Japan giving it green light to decrease its own forces in East Asia, as Japan would appear both ready and equipped to take on a larger security role in the region.

This of course would be a financially unfavorable arrangement for Japan since it would put much more pressure on defense budgets while the USA would enjoy decreased defense costs. Much would hinge on whether the ultimate US nuclear guarantee for Japan was seen to remain intact; whether or not a basic missile shield could be installed over the same period; and what reinforcement capacities the USA would retain within striking distance of Japanese territory. An open question is whether

the USA would expect a lower level of Japanese assistance in other regions in return, or would expect Tokyo to step up its efforts in that regard as well.

5.2 Arguments for Amending Article 9

There are fundamental reasons why Japan should change Article 9. So far, the main arguments of the thesis have been that Japan should change its constitution in order to allow for more self-defense against North Korea and China, and decrease its security dependence on the USA. The thesis will now take a look at the issue of self-defense's legitimacy from a generally accepted point of view. Then the arguments of Japan's greater participation in PKO and becoming a better ally will be provided.

5.2.1 The Right of Self-Defense

Today and for the past 60 years Japan has been in violation of its own constitution. Article 9 clearly states that no form of military shall be maintained, not even for self-defense, even though the right for self-defense is a basic human right. Article 51 of the UN Charter explicitly states that: "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security."¹³⁸ David B. Kopel, Paul Gallan, and Joanne D. Eisen also point out that: "...the survey of the jurists and the world's legal systems shows that the right of self-defense has always been an essential part of international law, and has always been a principle of all major legal systems."¹³⁹ Hence, it could only be considered natural that all constitutions, including Japan's, should allow for self-defense, while at the same time clearly aiming to prevent aggressive war-like behaviour. The concept of 'self-defense' also needs to be clearly defined so as to avoid misunderstandings or the possibility of being manipulated, since self-defense has often been used as an excuse to wage aggressive wars.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ United Nations Charter, "Chapter VII: Action with respect to the threats of peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression," Art. 51.

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml>.

¹³⁹ David B. Kopel, Paul Gallan, and Joanne D. Eisen, "The Human Right of Self-Defense. (Cover Story)," *BYU Journal of Public Law* 22, no. 1 (2008): 130. <http://davekopel.org/2a/LawRev/The-Human-Right-of-Self-Defense.pdf>.

¹⁴⁰ This is a very current issue since the USA's invasions of Afghanistan and the Iraq were justified with a variant of the 'extended self-defense' rationale, which many international lawyers now consider to have been wrong in technical terms as well as in light of its consequences.

5.2.2 Greater Participation In PKO

Altering Article 9 would create more flexibility for the SDF to participate in PKO missions. This would make it unnecessary for the Japanese government to bypass the constitution with laws which allow for limited participation. The SDF could then participate in tougher UN peace keeping missions, e.g. take on a larger security role in East Asia and participate in offensive operations in Afghanistan. This in turn would decrease the burden of the USA and other participating nations.

As was mentioned before, many East Asian nations would oppose Japan's increased PKO participation in that region. At the same time it would be a chance for Japan to prove its peaceful motives and show its past victims that it really has changed. More than 65 years have passed since the end of WWII and perhaps Japan deserves this opportunity. If signs of any former Japanese aggression were to recur, it would be justified and should be possible to reimpose more limitations on the SDF.

However, reoccurrence of former aggression is very unlikely to take place. Japan is now a democracy and the emperor serves as the symbol of the people with *de facto* no governmental powers. Japan has not indicated that it is likely to repeat its past aggressiveness and has remained a pacifist state since the end of WWII. Besides, it is in no position – strategic or financial – to return to the way of violence even if it wished for it. If for some unfathomable reason Japan became offensive again, China, North and South Korea and even Russia are far too powerful for Japan to reinvade them, as well as Japan being contained by the USA.

5.2.3 Becoming a Better Ally

Amending Article 9 could enable the SDF to become more functional and allow Japan to become a more reliable ally. For this to happen, Article 9 would have to allow Japan to participate in collective self-defense operations. That is, the SDF would need to be able to come to the aid of Japan's ally, the USA; if the US continent or its East Asian bases and Pacific territories were being fundamentally threatened in one way or another. This could mean intercepting ICBM on their way to US territory, and/or providing logistical and hard military support to the US military, including possible use of the JCG outside Japanese sovereignty. There would indeed be a great need for this in case of North Korean invasion of South Korea or Chinese aggression against Taiwan.

In the world today, most states are free to choose their own security arrangements, such as entering and leaving security alliances. Therefore, it could be considered natural – and would be an exact parallel to the treatment of Germany and Italy after WWII – if the Article stated that the SDF should be allowed to participate in defensive multilateral security alliances such as NATO.

This suggestion would no doubt be opposed by many East Asian nations that would feel threatened by such an arrangement, in particular China and North Korea. It is doubtful that these two states would accept this kind of security change and it would be difficult to convince them otherwise. However, with the passing of time they would likely grow used to it, as *de facto* this could be considered adapting the Japanese constitution to reality. Under present circumstances Japan would be likely anyway to come to the USA's aid in case of Chinese or North Korean aggression: but an open alliance would establish clearer conditions, increase predictability, and should logically also reduce the proportion of direct intervention by the USA in Asian affairs. Finally, neighbours should probably prefer it to the alternative of Japan acquiring nuclear weapons on its own.

The SWOT analysis below summarizes the arguments for and against amending Article 9. As can be seen from the figure, both arguments weigh heavy, which is the reason why this topic has been so debated.

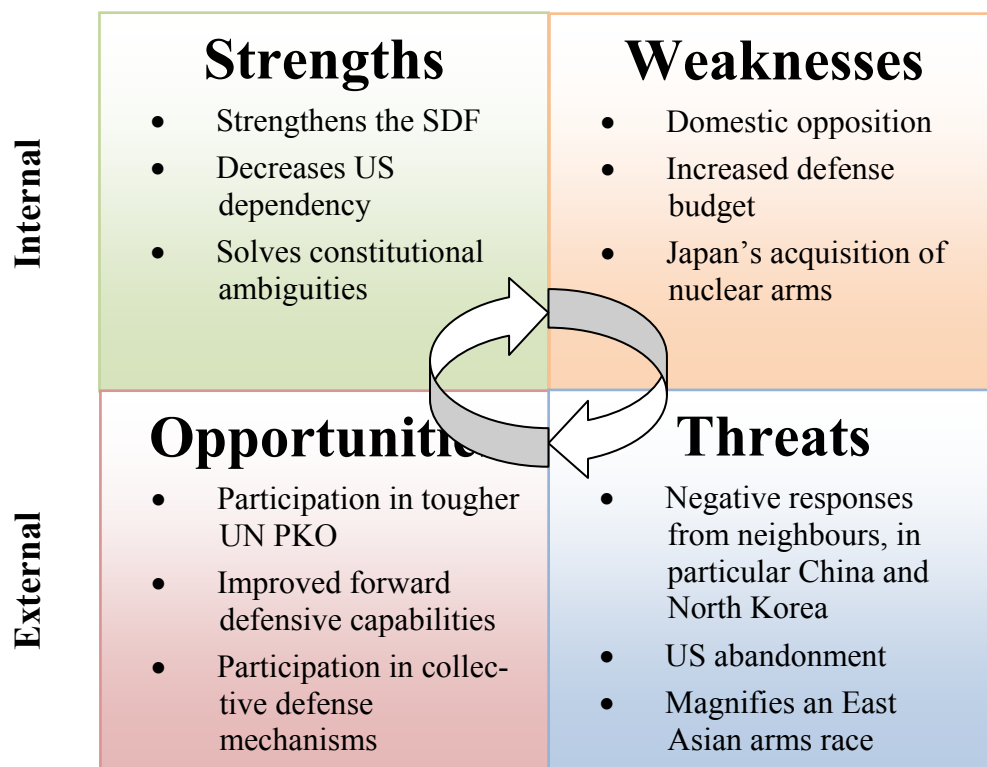


Figure 7

SWOT Analysis of Altering Article 9

5.3 Constitutional Amendment: Specific Options

The proposition that Japan should change Article 9 is in fact not one but a whole spectrum of proposals, given the many implications of that article that have been surveyed above and the many forms that an amendment could take. One feasible option for Japan would be to change only the parts of Article 9 that do not match with current reality. These are two sentences: i) *the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes*, and ii) *In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained*. The first sentence could be changed into: *Japan shall not use military force except in defense of its own and its ally's/allies' territory*. Thus, Japan's right for self-defense would be clarified.

The latter sentence, which forbids maintaining “*land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential*,” could be removed altogether as it does not match with reality and therefore serves no real purpose. This sentence may look good in pacifist principle and could be a model for all countries: but in reality, it undermines the constitution's credibility to have a clause that is not *de facto* being respected. The realist scenario that prevails indicates that there is a long road ahead before Japan or any of its neighbours could truly afford to disarm.

For Japan's increased participation in PKO to become a reality, it would be better if Article 9 stated something along the lines of: *Japan's Self-Defense Forces will be allowed to fully participate in UN sanctioned peace keeping operations and humanitarian intervention when the need is considered urgent*.¹⁴¹ Many other nations' constitutions have further definitions of what constitutes a satisfactory UN mandate in international law, as well as adding further safeguards like the need for troops on

¹⁴¹ The requirement for any specific form of direct UN mandate could be considered flawed, as the five permanent UNSC (United Nations Security Council) – Great Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States – have a over mandating any new mission. In many cases, these states share different interests and are likely to veto any resolution they do not see as being in their own interest. Yet, it is clear that there will be future cases where a real need and justification exists for a PKO that one or more of the permanent UNSC members is inclined to veto in its own interests. Thus, in some instances it might be necessary to take action without a direct or immediate UNSC mandate, for example a humanitarian intervention to prevent genocide. This was the case with Kosovo in 1999, where Russia had threatened to veto any security resolution that included the use of force. Japan would have to decide whether it, as a nation, wanted to preserve leeway to join in suitable actions of a similar type – and if so, whether it should specify any alternative type of mandate or legal conditions (for instance many European states regard an OSCE mandate as adequate).

combat missions to be volunteers or the requirement for some kind of parliamentary approval, and these examples could be drawn on for more elaborate provisions if wished.

In order for Japan to function as a reliable ally and securing its own interests, the SDF would require permission to step on foreign soil. This would have to be done exclusively for defensive purposes and would have to be carefully managed in both legal and operational terms. One option would be for the USA to keep Japanese forces under its tutelage and depending on the case, some of the SDF could be deployed alongside US forces and remain under US command. This might apply for former Japanese occupied territories and would assure the host nations that former Japanese aggression would not repeat itself. For the moment it seems unlikely that Japan would have to place large amount of troops on foreign soil and this would probably arise only in extreme contingencies.

The problem for Japan in taking on this extended role¹⁴² is that it could get dragged into a war that mostly served the USA's interests, not its own. Still, a state can only be called a true ally when it is willing to serve its ally/allies in a mutual manner. At this stage, it could be considered natural that the Japan-USA alliance should be reciprocal.

As has been mentioned, the USA has been encouraging Japan to remilitarize and take more responsibility for its defenses. The USA would welcome the opportunity to decrease its own forces in Japan and East Asia. In 1994, it even requested support from Japan in case of North Korean aggressiveness and possible US invasion of the North. Today the USA would be even more open to a reciprocal alliance, since it has been bearing a great burden of military security in Iraq and Afghanistan, North Korea has developed nuclear weapons and better missiles, and China is growing stronger.

For Tokyo to carry through such a package of constitutional change without counter-productive effects, it would be important for it to assure Beijing and Pyongyang that its intentions were not hostile and purely for defensive purposes. One of the core assurances is that the SDF would only be used in self-defense for Japan and its ally/allies and in no way be used as an aggressive war tool. One option of strengthening this assurance would be to limit the SDF's offensive capabilities, such as not possessing aircraft carriers or ICBMs. Thus, Japan could aim to achieve a security status similar to

¹⁴² The USA's role would essentially remain the same. The only difference is that Japan would be able to reassure the USA that it would provide military support in defensive operations outside Japanese territory, which would be most welcome by the USA.

other normal powers, e.g. Canada: maintain sufficient self-defense military forces, including elements sufficiently mobile to supply high-quality peacekeeping, without the threat of waging a full-scale offensive war.

Japan could also pledge itself to remain in the NPT indefinitely. For the world, East Asia, and Japan itself, it would be best to remain in the NPT. Japan already serves as an example as one of the world's most advanced nations which does not possess nuclear weapons but owns an extensive civil nuclear industry (under proper safeguards), and thus the technical capability of developing them quickly. The strongest reason for Japan to acquire such weapons would be the same as for all other acknowledged nuclear powers; as a deterrent. However, from a peaceful standpoint it would be more legitimate for Japan to continue its development of anti-ballistic missile defense system, which would serve only as a defensive tool. While expensive, this option would be most suitable for Japan as it would enable it to possibly counter nuclear missiles without having to seek deterrence through nuclear strike forces of its own.

5.4 Where Is the Article Heading?

As can be expected, in actuality Japan's political parties have adopted different views on this issue, with right wing politicians typically advocating a revision and the socialist ones promoting the *status quo*. The ruling DPJ (as of 2010) acknowledges a need to revise the constitution, though it has traditionally been sceptical about doing so since it adheres to pacifist policies. The greater openness of the DPJ position in recent years makes it more likely that a revision will be attempted now by this party than it was a few years ago. Japan's current Prime Minister and leader of the DPJ, Naoto Kan, has stated that he wishes the SDF to take on a more important role on the international scene which indicates a pro-revisionist attitude on his part. In the July 2010 upper house elections,¹⁴³ however, the DPJ lost many of its seats, costing it its majority in the upper house. This blow might be an indication that the power of the parliament might be swinging in favour of the LDP and its coalition, which gained several seats, and is now pressing for general elections to be held in autumn 2010.

¹⁴³ Japan's parliament, the Diet, consists of an upper house and a lower house, with the latter being more powerful, for example, in terms of passing laws.

The majority of the former ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) would like to see Japan take on a greater role in international security and many within the party have advocated a revision of Article 9. Former Prime Minister and LDP leader Shinzo Abe made the revision of the Article his election platform in 2007. Hence, a revision is even more likely to be seen if the LDP comes back to power. The New Komeito party which has been in coalition with the LDP takes a less radical stance and wishes to keep the Article. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) wants to preserve the *status quo* on Article 9 and in fact would like to see full implementation of the Article, which would mean the demobilization of the SDF.

However, getting a majority of politicians to consent to changing the Article is easier than getting support from the general public. The government has been attempting to guide public opinion in a more pro-revisionist direction by informing the Japanese people of possible security dangers. The Japanese are likely to be more open to constitutional reform as they become more enlightened about Japan's security dilemmas. A rising China and the North Korean nuclear threat are thus contributing to a more pro-revisionist opinion.

The government has also been taking a harder stance against those who promote antiwar propaganda. This can be seen i.a. by its detention of three civilians in 2004 who were handing out peace propaganda flyers, and then the capture of a Buddhist monk who was found guilty in November 2009 for similar acts.¹⁴⁴ Despite these governmental actions, the growth of external threats, and the increasing ambiguity of relations with Washington, it is difficult to assess when the majority of the Japanese population might be ready to accept Article 9's amendment. As things stand, the majority of politicians may be willing to amend the constitution but do not act upon it for fear of becoming unpopular among the public, which would likely lead to less votes for their parties. Hence, mostly due to public opposition it is unlikely that the constitution will be amended any time soon. However, in a few years time that may change as the public is becoming more aware of Japan's security circumstances.

In sum, it is difficult to predict if and when the constitution will be amended. The answer depends largely on public consensus and political developments. Amendment is more likely to occur if parliamentary power swings in favor of the

¹⁴⁴ David McNeill, "Secrets and Lies: Ampo, Japan's Role in the Iraq War and the Constitution," The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-David-McNeill/3305>.

pro-revisionist LDP, and *vice versa* if anti-revisionists gain power. However, even if the LDP should gain majority rule again, revision would be challenging since for amendment to take place, it takes two-thirds majority in both houses of the Diet and a national referendum with the majority of the public ratifying the amendment. As of August 2010, the Constitution has remained unchanged since it was adopted in 1947. Hence, it is unlikely on balance that the constitution will be amended in the years to come: but this is an issue that will continue to be addressed in the short term, very likely leading to revision in the long term.

6 CONCLUSION

The beginning of this thesis took us through the theory of realism and how it affects states' security paradigms in different regions. Realism would argue that it is in Japan's interest to alter its constitution to allow for an official military in order to secure Japan's regional and global interests. Other solutions based, for example, on stronger institutional cooperation do not appear to be available in East Asia's present stage of evolution.

The next part of the thesis covered the historical background that is crucial to understanding Japan's current standpoint. Japan's historical relations with the USA were reviewed and the animosity between Japan and its two neighbours, China and North Korea, was explored. This chapter also contained a comparison of Germany's and Japan's constitutions and queried the rationale for the major differences between their defense provisions. It highlighted the main historical issues that remain unresolved today and how these issues affect contemporary relations between Japan, China and North Korea. It is clear that hostility still remains between Japan and these two countries, which affects the security of the region and increases Japan's need to maintain a sufficient self-defense force.

The contemporary part of the thesis covered China and North Korea as a military threat to Japan. Though positive trade relations exist between Japan and China, this chapter demonstrated that both China and North Korea pose serious challenges for Japan and that one obvious way for Japan to cope with these threats is by amending its constitution to allow for official military self-defense forces. This chapter also analyzed the Japan-USA alliance: the changes it is going through, and the nature of Japan's and the USA's interests in either maintaining the *status quo* or further reducing their commitments. While it is clear that the alliance is there to stay, it might undergo changes in the future, which would probably include a decrease in US forces stationed in Japan. The USA has, at all events, for some time been encouraging Japan to take more care of its own defenses and to take on a larger security role in East Asia.

Against this background it is still a very delicate matter to assess whether, and in what way, Article 9 should be altered. As has been mentioned, doing so would be likely

to provoke negative reactions from China and North Korea, as well as a negative public response. However, Amending Article 9 would make the existing SDF's role more transparent and better defined, and consequently the SDF could respond more efficiently to possible crises. It would mean that Japan could widen the range of functions both at home and abroad, with corresponding training and equipment, for its defense forces, making it more capable of defending itself against China and/or North Korea and *de facto* decreasing its military dependency on the USA. With time and mutual efforts to promote friendly ties, China and North Korea would be likely to eventually accept Japan as a normal nation. The Japanese public would also be likely to get used to it.

Hence, the overall conclusion of this thesis is that it is in Japan's interest to carefully alter Article 9 of its constitution to allow for an official self-defense military, but that any Japanese government should be prudent in the way it proceeds in order to reduce negative consequences, especially in the shorter term. Japan needs to be careful with the exact phrasing of any revision of Article 9, taking into account its past aggressiveness, and may wish to include specific self-limitations in regard e.g. to nuclear forces or the legal conditions for armed intervention abroad. At the same time it will need to promote understanding, minimize hostile reactions and keep channels free for debate by maintaining a close dialogue with its main neighbours, China, North and South Korea, as well as the United States.

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