External Pressures on the Remilitarization of Japan: From Pacifist State to Military Power

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Abstract

This thesis analyses how previously demilitarized states are pressured to remilitarize and tries to find a middle ground in the fragmented debate on this issue. The case study used to study this topic is Japan from the end of the Second World War until the present day. The two primary pressures through which the research is conducted are economic competition with the protector and the rise of new perceived threats. By reviewing both government sources and secondary literature it is apparent that external forces linked to economic competition and rising threats are consistently motivating remilitarization efforts. However, remilitarization is not one-dimensional. This paper observed both increased multilateral efforts and domestic military upgrading. These different facets interact with each other and provide a mixed-mode of remilitarization that does not neatly fit the existing polarized narratives.

Keywords: Remilitarization, Power Politics, Japan, External State Pressure

Introduction

"Covenants, without the sword, are but words and of no strength to secure a man at all (Hobbes 1651, 88)*."* Offensive and defensive military capabilities are commonly seen as quintessential qualities of statehood, however, this is not necessarily the case. Globally, there are approximately 30 internationally recognized states which do not have an official military or whose military mandate is limited by their own volition (Barbey 2015, 44-45).

The origin of the demilitarization of these states varies, in the most famous examples, Germany and Japan, the military structure was forcibly dismantled by foreign occupying forces. However, this is not the only avenue towards pacification. For example, Iceland and Costa Rica abolished their formal military without losing a conflict or coming under foreign occupation. In general, states with demilitarized structures continue their pacifist stance for long durations. Iceland has not maintained a standing army since its removal in 1869 and Costa Rica has shown no signs of militarization since its pacification in 1949 (Stearns 2013, 157-160).

Not all demilitarized states retain their pacifist characteristics so staunchly. Japan is currently the 8th largest military spender in the world and its constitution nicknamed the "Peace Constitution" has been facing a lot of criticism. Large sections of the Japanese public and the political establishment want to re-establish Japan as a "normal" state with full military sovereignty (Mader 2017, 1299).

This is a relevant process to study because the prevailing academic paradigm on state pacifism is that it is highly beneficial for the state in question. Military spending is an inefficient means of government allocation of funds. By instead redirecting these funds towards civil economic purposes which are more efficient at creating economic growth a

demilitarized state has a marked advantage. This is only exacerbated in a war economy in which a much larger portion of the economy is geared towards this relatively ineffective way of spending (Azam 2020, 8-9, Porto, Alden 2016, 24). Additionally, there are virtually no demilitarized states that are unprotected. The sovereignty of these states is guaranteed by other states or defense organizations. For example, New Zealand is responsible for the protection of Samoa. This means that these states shelter under the umbrella of external military expenses without having to provide the economic resources themselves (The Military Balance 2021, 25, Barbey 2015, 39-41.

Revealing the process and reasons behind remilitarization in the face of these advantages could give new insights into the machinations of states and the internal and external pressures on them. The research question used by this thesis to investigate the causal mechanisms between external pressures on demilitarized states and remilitarization is the following: *Why did Japan evolve its security policy from a pacifist state to a militarized state?*

Literature review

Academic discussion on remilitarization in general and the remilitarization of Japan, in particular, has been a contentious subject. An influential perspective is a neo-realist strain of thinking most famously propagated by Waltz. He states that states with economic great power capabilities will be compelled to develop military great power capabilities as well. Great power status forces states to take on more system-wide responsibilities. Other actors will expect the state in question to do so and it is a vital way to not lose ground to competitors. States can choose to delay this process and remain an “economic giant” and a “military dwarf” yet will eventually be faced with inevitable remilitarization. Waltz argues that this dynamic is behind the temporary pacification and current rearmament of Japan (Waltz 1993, 54-57).

Hughes adds to this discourse by stating that Japan is forced to increase its military posture due to increased geopolitical threats. Japan's status as a powerful force in the region causes it to come into conflict with other states which seek to increase their foothold, most notably China. To maintain its position Japan is then forced to increase its military capabilities (Hughes 2017, 5).

A related argument why economic prowess and military weakness are hard to combine is that other states will be less willing to use their own military power as external protection. The sovereignty of virtually all non-militarized states is guaranteed by an external power. In the case of Japan, this is the United States. If the economic power of the protected state becomes a threat to the protector they become hesitant to use their own resources to give the state under their protection an advantaged position. Often this will result in accusations of "free-riding behaviour" and pressure to take on more military responsibility (Envall 2019, 119-120, Barbey 2015, 39-41).

In contrast, a perspective that holds sway among liberalist academics is that remilitarization of economic great powers is not inevitable. Remilitarization can occur when there is a political culture and institutional framework for it. In other words, if there is a dominant pacifist institutional foundation within a state it is highly unlikely that it will choose to extensively enhance its military capabilities. A proponent of this approach, Berger, uses this theory in the context of Japan. He concludes that the pacifist culture and institutions of Japan have become so robust in the post-war period that full remilitarization would be near impossible. Only in the face of an impending existential threat would the Japanese state

consider this option and even then it would cause massive political upheaval (Berger 1993, 148-150).

Constructivist academics such as Sassada focus on the influence of changing norms on remilitarization in Japan. In this view, it is the increasingly nationalist and assertive sentiments that are shifting the policy and stances of the Japanese political establishment (Sasada 2006, 109-110). Katzenstein and Okawara use normative arguments to articulate the opposite. The Japanese normative profile is averse to change and mostly static. Since the Second World War, it has been consistently anti-military and pacifist. Therefore there are "normative constraints" which prevent radical changes in Japanese foreign policy and military posture (Katzenstein, Okawara 1993, 101).

The overarching gap within these varying viewpoints on Japanese remilitarization is twofold. Firstly, there is a lack of nuance. The discourse is either geared towards an unstoppable surge towards remilitarization or an aversion to change and continuance of the pacifist post-war Japanese heritage. In taking these positions at opposite sides of the spectrum, insufficient research is done on the possibility that the reality is somewhere in the middle. In general, scholars on this topic both overestimate the radical change and the lack of evolution in Japanese military and foreign policy (Hagström, Williamson 2009, 265-268).

Secondly, while a lot has been written on the remilitarization of Japan there has been limited research on the actual foreign policy changes connected with the possible remilitarization. Research has been done on alterations in defense spending, military resources, and institutional structure but surprisingly, Japan's global actions based on these developments are still relatively under-researched (Hagström, Williamson 2009, 267).

Theoretical framework

To establish a balanced position between the two extremities within the discussion on Japanese Remilitarization theories from both sides of the spectrum will be combined in this paper. These opposing sides of the debate are those that believe that the Japanese pacifist culture and institutions prevent militarization on the one hand and those that believe that Japan will be forced to completely let go of its pacifist structure on the other hand. These theories will be employed to create and test hypotheses in relation to the two main drivers of the remilitarization process researched by this paper. These two drivers are the change in security threats and economic competition. Although domestic drivers also play a significant role in the possible change of Japan's foreign security policy and remilitarization, this paper places an emphasis on the international dimension of this issue.

The first reason for this is because this aspect is more universal. Understanding the external forces that affect Japan's remilitarization can help us understand the evolution of other similarly demilitarized states. In contrast, while the domestic drivers on militarization in Japan have some overlap with those in other states they are mostly specific to the country. (Stearns 2013, 20-21, Sugita 2013 89-91).

The second reason is that this paper takes a structural, neorealist approach to international affairs. This approach is best suited for this topic because it investigates state actions which seemingly go against the state's interests. Since being demilitarized is ostensibly a significant boon for the economy of a state, choosing to remilitarize is likely to be influenced by external factors (Azam 2020, 8-9, Porto, Alden 2016, 24). The neorealist narrative provides a possible

answer. In neorealist thinking the specific characteristics of a state are less important than international system factors. Instead, security strategy and foreign policy are shaped by structural forces and states are assumed to be “like units” with universal incentives such as survival. Therefore, the domestic context of the state in question is treated as a black box and the focus of the analysis is on the external and systematic influences (Mearsheimer 2007, 72). This is even more applicable to weaker military states. Such states are more susceptible to international pressures than stronger states. Because they do not have the capabilities to change the security framework and are more easily threatened in their survival they are constrained by global systemic elements. Additionally, weak states are almost always part of the sphere of influence of a great power. This severely restricts the foreign policy of a state, it has to comply with the overarching interests of the great power and cannot gain help from other great powers. Even if a weak state might have some agency in choosing a sphere of influence it is very hard to leave the sphere once committed. Therefore domestic drivers are less influential on security policy than in military great powers (Beach, Pedersen 2019, 84-85, Handel 2016, 171-172).

The key drivers are primarily based on the neo-realist school of thought on remilitarization which was outlined in the previous section. According to this view, security and economic competition are the primary ways in which the relationship of a specific state can change vis a vis its rivals and/or its allies, thus forcing a change in security policy. Different theories predict different actions when confronted with these circumstances, testing the predictions of these theories will form the core of this research. To prevent confirmation bias and portray both sides of the discussion on this topic, not all hypotheses will be in the neorealist framework. Hypotheses 1 and 2 with their focus on security cooperation and soft power are

based upon the liberal stance on Japanese remilitarization. Hypothesis 3 and 4 with their focus on self-perseverance and competition represent the neorealist side of the discourse.

Change in security threats

The first theory can be described as international contribution. Adherents to this theory state that when faced with rising security threats weak military states such as demilitarized states will increase institutional international security cooperation to tackle this challenge. This collaboration will either be conducted through regional security cooperation initiatives or globally through the United Nations (Sugawa 2000, Vaicekauskaitė 2017, 13). This can be linked with the viewpoints of Berger, Katzenstein, and Okawara which state that the pacifist institutions and culture of Japan are so deeply enshrined that they will seek international cooperation even when faced with rising security threats (Katzenstein, Okawara 1993, 101, Berger 1993, 148-150).

Hypothesis 1: A perceived increase in security threats will increase international Security cooperation in Japan

The second theory can be described as anchoring alliances, proponents of this narrative assert that when faced with rising threats demilitarized states will attempt to attach themselves more intimately with their external protector. This is similar to “international contribution” in so far that the demilitarized states rely on others for their survival in times of crisis. However, the external contribution is more bilateral and often more intrusive when conducted through an already existing protection framework (Sugawa 2000, Vaicekauskaitė 2017, 10-11).

Hypothesis 2: A perceived increase in security threats will result in more security attachments to the United States by Japan.

The final theory discussed in this research on the reaction of demilitarized states to rising security threats is the expansion of military capabilities. Instead of looking for outside help those with this viewpoint believe that demilitarized states will fear being abandoned or inadequately assisted by their sovereignty guarantor. The external protector might not be willing to sacrifice the resources necessary to tackle this rising threat or does not give the threat the same significance as the demilitarized state does. Therefore, the state in question will increase its military posture and capabilities to gain more security autonomy (Suguwa 2000, Goldman 2001, 45-46). This theory is related to the neorealist discourse of Waltz and Hughes. States cannot depend on other states for their survival because they can never be fully sure of their intentions and states are per definition self-interested. Additionally, Japan will face threats because of its economic power and dominant role in the region. As a result, Japan will inevitably have to expand its military capabilities (Waltz 1993, 54-57, Hughes 2017, 5).

Hypothesis 3: A perceived increase in security threats will result in an expansion of military capabilities in Japan.

Economic competition

The first theory on the effects of economic competition on the possible remilitarization of demilitarized states can be depicted as reducing freeriding. It asserts that when the demilitarized states enter economic competition with their protector, this will result in

accusations of free-riding behavior. The protector will feel disadvantaged because they are providing funds and resources to guarantee the sovereignty of the demilitarized state. This means that this state can invest those funds in more efficient ways. The protected state will see this as an unfair advantage when in economic competition and either demand more expansive military capabilities by the demilitarized state or reduce its own assistance forcing the state in question to fill in the gap (Lanoszka 2015, 3-5). This theory is in line with the arguments of Envall and Barbey. They argue that economic competition is not isolated and will inevitably change the security dynamic between two states as well. Creating friction between a demilitarized state and external states that provide its security (Envall 2019, 119-120, Barbey 2015, 39-41).

Hypothesis 4: Increased economic competition with the United States will result in a reduction of United States protection to Japan and an increase in Japanese military capabilities.

Methods

The research methods employed to investigate this topic will be qualitative and consist of process-tracing and within-case analysis. This research uses the separation of Beach and Pedersen of process-tracing into three different variants. These are theory building, theory testing, and explaining outcomes (Beach, Pedersen 2013, 12).

This research paper will primarily be oriented towards explaining an outcome, namely the remilitarization of demilitarized states. The secondary objective of this research paper is theory-testing to contribute to the development of the theoretical discussion surrounding this topic by testing the hypotheses connected to various theories. The causal mechanism that this

thesis seeks to clarify is the relation between external security and economic pressures and the changes in the security strategy of a demilitarized state.

The main avenue of analysis in this paper will be deductive research of a deviant, positive case in which remilitarization has been observed will be analyzed to create a sufficient explanation, which this paper takes as the incorporation of all relevant factors and a minimal level of equifinality (Beach, Pedersen 2013, 18-21). The Japanese case is considered deviant because the vast majority of demilitarized states do not experience remilitarization (Barbey 2015, 44-45).

In this deductive path, a hypothetical causal mechanism will be conceptualized, based on established mechanisms of militarization. Subsequently, this concept is operationalized by establishing expected observable manifestations connected with the different phases of the hypothetical process. These will be contrasted with empirical observations to establish whether each part of the mechanism was present and functioned according to expectations in this case. The results of these approaches will then be combined to again try to formulate a sufficient explanation (Beach, Pedersen 2013, 14-15).

This paper has opted for this methodology for a variety of reasons. A qualitative approach is better suited for this research because it seeks to analyze the causes of effects of its subject. The research starts with an observed outcome, remilitarizing of demilitarized states, and aims to penetrate the causes of this occurrence. Qualitative work is better suited for explaining such particular events than quantitative methods which are better used for identifying general trends (Mahoney, Goertz 2006, 231).

The within-case process tracing was chosen because it is ideal for investigating the causal mechanisms between the independent and the dependent variable. This corresponds fully with the aim of this research (Bennet, Checkel 2014, 3-4).

A deviant case was chosen because the orthodox discourse provides a positive picture of non-militarism, especially while under external protection. Therefore, it will be more relevant to investigate the causality of a counterreaction against demilitarization, than a continuance or move towards it (Seawright, Gerring 2008, 302).

Case Selection

The case chosen for this research is Japan between its total demilitarization by the Allied occupying forces, starting in 1945, and the present day. There are several arguments for the selection of this case. Firstly, almost all other non-militarized states are small states with a severe lack of resources. These states would probably not have the means to form a significant military, even if they desired to do so. Japan, on the other hand, is one of the world's premier economies and possesses capabilities that dwarf their more diminutive fellow demilitarized states. Japan is therefore capable of maintaining a fully operational military structure. Therefore Japan is a more influential case, increasing the value of investigating its causal processes vis a vis its demilitarized peers (Barbey 2015, 46, Seawright, Gerring 2008, 303).

Secondly, there is another state that has the economic capabilities to maintain a formidable army and is demilitarized. This state is Germany. The reason that Japan has been chosen as the case for this research and not Germany is that the pacifist foundations of the state are much less under pressure there than in Japan. The total demilitarization of Germany after the Second World War did not last long with the Bundeswehr being founded in 1955. Moreover, the Bundeswehr is the military organization with the 7th highest funding in the world and the German Army is the second largest European military after France when looking at the

personnel total (Da Silva, Tian, Marksteiner 2021). However, while there have been consistent attempts in recent years to amend the Japanese constitution and remove the pacifist articles no such efforts have occurred in Germany. In addition, the Japanese public is more positive of their military, more positive of military 'normalization', and sees security as a more important issue than their German counterparts (Mader 2017, 1299-1301).

Thirdly, the Japanese government has been keenly aware of the potential economic benefits of demilitarization. This can be observed in the Yoshida and Fukuda doctrines named after two influential post-war prime ministers. The Yoshida doctrine stated that Japan would ensure its national security through the protection of the United States and spend the resources spared in developing its economy. The Fukuda doctrine vowed that even though Japan had the resources to fully re-arm itself it would not choose to do so and swore never again to expand or dominate the region. These doctrines were widely regarded to be successful and influential (Sugita 2014, 123, Haddad 1980, 10-11).

Finally, the remilitarization of Japan is a controversial issue, both domestically and internationally. Further steps towards militarization would produce an immediate counter-reaction within the region. Especially among the states which suffered at the hands of the militarism of the Japanese empire. It is therefore vital to investigate the causal mechanism behind this phenomenon to better predict possible future political friction (Akram 2018).

The data used consist of a combination of primary and secondary sources. The methodology to study this case study will consist of literature research. The primary sources will mostly consist of government-issued information, these include budget reports, white papers, speeches, and various other documents which might give insight into the possible changes in Japanese security policy. Both the data within these documents and the government discourse and rhetoric will be used to test the hypotheses. The secondary sources are selected from

various sources and from writers with different backgrounds to limit bias. Sources are collected through a combination of databases such as the Brookings Institute, The Rand Corporation, and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institution and academic search engines such as google scholar and the Leiden Catalogue. Secondary sources will mostly be used to provide context or to mitigate the bias of government data.

Challenges

This research design, while deemed optimal for this thesis, nevertheless faces several challenges. Some of these are related to the main method of research employed, process tracing, and some are specifically connected to the case study analyzed.

Firstly, process tracing is vulnerable to missing key data. This is a possibility for all research methods but hampers process tracing more than many others. The reason is that scholars that engage in process tracing research seek to follow hypothesized causal processes consisting of different steps by analyzing empirical evidence. Or as Beach and Pedersen put it: “Examine the fingerprints that the process should have left in the empirical record” (Beach, Pedersen 2014, 42). If even one of these steps is missing due to the absence of key data the whole causal chain and with that, the research could come crashing down. In addition, qualitative research, in general, can not solve this problem the way quantitative research can. Qualitative data is less standardized and can originate from far more varied sources. Therefore, Qualitative researchers cannot use averages to compensate for missing data (Gonzalez-Ocantos, LaPorte 2021, 1408-1409).

To mitigate this threat as much as possible this research will contextualize the data and causal steps. By evaluating the actors involved in the data and their interests this thesis will attempt to determine which data is missing and how actors might have skewed available data (Jacobs 2014, 42, Gonzalez-Ocantos, LaPorte 2021, 1417).

Secondly, process tracing faces the risk of confirmation bias. Because this method looks at a small sample and the hypotheses tested are quite specific and can therefore appear arbitrary the research could fall into the trap of confirmation bias. In such cases, the author selects hypotheses and data that fit a preferred narrative instead of conducting an unbiased investigation. This thesis will try to address this issue by closely linking the specific theories used for hypothesis generation to the more general theoretical framework to justify its selection. Alternative explanations will also be discussed to minimize the creation of a biased narrative and foster the possibility for discussion (Ulriksen, Dadalauri 2016, 231-232).

Multilateral security safeguard

The first hypothesis that will be analyzed states that, a perceived increase in security threats will increase international Security cooperation in Japan. Japan has had a long and intense relationship with multilateral international initiatives since its demilitarization after the Second World War. Because of its complex imperial legacy and foreign policy restrictions, multilateral initiatives took a more prominent role in the Japanese security strategy than in most other states. The primary institution for Japanese international security cooperation has been the United Nations (UN) (Lim, Vreeland 2013, 29-30).

The Japanese quickly realized the importance of multilateral initiatives for their foreign policy and security strategy and immediately after regaining its full independence from the

United States in 1952 started a campaign to become a member of the newly founded UN. This succeeded in 1956 and was seen as a pivotal moment in Japan's reintegration into the international community (Toshiya 2007, 217-219). In 1957 foreign minister Kishi announced that UN centrism was going to be one of the cornerstones of Japanese security policy. This meant that the only way for Japan to legitimately act in the field of global security was through the UN. Further understating the importance of the organization for the Japanese security strategy (Lim, Vreeland, 2013, 35). Aside from idealistic pacifist considerations and a desire to return to the international community, the turn to the UN was also a reaction to the rise of new perceived threats to Japan. This is apparent in the first Japanese diplomatic bluebook published after the Second World War in 1957. In this report security cooperation through the UN is described as a way to eliminate elements that threaten the peace of Asia. Moreover, liberal democratic states should unite but also maintain acceptable relationships with communist states through the UN or there would be a serious possibility of a new world war, concludes the blue book (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1957).

The threat that this report refers to was the rise of communist power in Asia during the 1950s. A series of events in short succession formed a communist collection of forces in the near vicinity of Japan. Firstly, the Chinese communists won the Chinese Civil War in 1949. Secondly, the stabilization of North Korea as a communist state after the Korean war ended in 1953. Thirdly, the victory of the communist resistance in the First Indochina War and the establishment of a communist North-Vietnamese State. Lastly, the increased influence of the Soviet Union in the region. In addition to the ideological conflict between the liberal capitalist Japanese and their now communist neighbors Japan also had a troubled recent past with all of these states and feared revenge (Emmers, Teo 2015, 189-190). International

security cooperation was a way to reduce the risk of violent confrontation with these rising threats.

The primary institution within the UN for security affairs is the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It is the only body within the organization that can authorize the use of force and the only one that can impose sanctions. It is therefore vital for a state that focuses its security strategy on the United Nations to be a part of the UNSC (Lim, Vreeland 2013, 38). As a result, Japan has lobbied to be one of the ten non-permanent members of the UNSC at every possible election since its admittance to the UN. It holds the shared global record for the number of times the country was represented in the UNSC with 11, along with Brazil (Lim, Vreeland 2013, 40-41, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2021, 3). While Japan has become a "semi-permanent" member of the UNSC representing Asia in the body for 22 of the 63 years they have been a member of the UN there is a longstanding push for a permanent position.

This process started at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s in a circumspect manner. Japanese diplomats started a concerted effort for the revision of the charter of the UNSC without explicitly lobbying for a permanent seat for Japan. Japan argued for the increase of permanent members of the UNSC to create a fairer division of the seats in which Europe was overrepresented and Asia underrepresented in their opinion. They also sought to diminish the veto power of the permanent members and increase the capabilities of the non-permanent members. The underlying message was that if the number of seats for Asia was expanded, Japan was to be the state to occupy the seat (Drifte 2000, 18-19). The catalysts for this campaign were several incidents involving China.

Firstly, China successfully tested its first hydrogen bomb in 1967. This was a major upset to Japan which had recently experienced the devastating power of nuclear weaponry and now had a regional rival with a nuclear option (Parch 1972, 126-127). Secondly, the increasing influence of China in the United Nations after the Nixon shocks threatened to displace Japan as the pre-eminent Asian UN state. The Nixon shocks were a series of radical political and economic actions undertaken by President Nixon of the United States in 1971. These included the normalization of relationships between the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) and the United States and the admittance of the PRC to the UN and the UNSC. These steps were undertaken without coordination with the Japanese, which were now suddenly faced with a Chinese veto in the body that was the focal point of its international security policy, the UNSC. To reduce the impact of these events the Japanese tried to elevate their position by either becoming a permanent member or increasing the power of non-permanent members of the UNSC (Parch 1972, 130-133, Drifte 2000, 23-25).

A reaction to a rise in the perceived threat of China is once again a key driver behind the most recent campaign of Japan to become a permanent member of the UNSC. In the late '80s and the early '90s, Japan started declaring publicly that it sought to gain a permanent seat in the UNSC for the first time. Japanese diplomats are consistently pushing the envelope for UNSC reform and Japanese admittance with nearly all member states of the UN. This change in approach coincided with the start of the astronomical rise of China (Moni 2007, 119-120). Following the economic reforms started in 1978, the Chinese economy started to hit its stride in the late 80s and early 90s consistently reaching growth numbers of over 10% annually. At the same time, the Japanese booming postwar economy collapsed in 1991-1992. This presented a great challenge to Japan which for the first time had to deal with a Chinese economy of roughly equal size. Both states feared that the region could not support two equal

major powers and that this dynamic would result in violent conflict (Bush 2009, 2, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1993). Furthermore, a couple of confrontations between Japan and China such as the 1996 Chinese gunboat diplomacy and the 1993-1994 North Korean Nuclear crisis caused a deterioration of Sino-Japanese relations (Easly 2017, 71). The pressure for Japan to gain hold of the UNSC permanent member power to veto or authorize force was therefore increased tremendously.

The most recent rise of threats also saw Japan branching out to other multilateral security initiatives. The first of which is the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The ARF is a framework used for security coordination in the East Asian Region. Its participants are the South East Asian member states of ASEAN, as well as important stakeholders in the region such as the U.S, China, and Japan. It was launched in 1994 in the aftermath of the North Korean Nuclear crisis to increase cooperation over complex security questions and decrease tensions in the region. Japan has played a leading role in this framework since its inception and sees it as a way to maintain a security equilibrium in the volatile geopolitical Asian context (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021, ASEAN Regional Forum, 2021). The second of these additional security initiatives is the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). The Quad is a strategic cooperation dialogue between India, Japan, Australia, and the United States to "defend an open and free Indo-Pacific. It was originally founded in 2007 but diminished shortly after. In 2017, the Quad was revitalized and is now responsible for intimate security cooperation and joint military exercises. The underlying motives of the Quad are to balance against Chinese expansion in the region. This can be seen in the Quad's support of Mekong Basin States in their resistance against Chinese river dominance and the support of regional states in their heated conflicts with China over the South China Sea. Chinese officials have

called the Quad, Asian NATO, and have issued diplomatic complaints to all member states (Envall 2019, 2-4).

To conclude, this hypothesis stated that a perceived increase in security threats will increase international Security cooperation in Japan. In the postwar period, it can be consistently observed that when confronted with a perceived rise in regional security threats the Japanese turn towards intensified international security cooperation as a remedy. The primary institutions in this effort are the UN and specifically the UNSC, yet in later years alternative regional security initiatives have also been developed.

United States security relationship

The second hypothesis discussed in this paper is a perceived increase in security threats will result in more security attachments to the United States by Japan. The security relationship with the United States has been a pivotal part of the Japanese post-Second World War security strategy. The foundation for the security dynamic between these two states was established in the treaty of San Fransisco and the Security Treaty between the United States of Japan which were signed on the same day in 1951. Together they marked the end of the occupation of Japan by the United States and cemented an intimate security connection between the two (Easley 2017, 69).

The following security cooperation based on the treaties was an unequal one. The United States was granted bases on Japanese soil, could veto bases from third states on Japanese territory, and even had the right to intervene in “large scale internal riots and disturbances”. In return, the United States guaranteed the sovereignty of Japan and provided military assistance to the newly founded Japanese Self Defence Forces (JSDF) (Mathur 2004, 505-506). The

related security philosophy of Japan was called the Yoshida doctrine. This doctrine had three parts. Firstly, Japan relies for its security on the Western bloc and the United States in particular. Secondly, Japan maintains a minimal capability for self-defense. Thirdly, Japan invests the resources saved by the first two components in its economy (Sugita 2014, 123).

One of the main reasons that Japan attached its security so firmly to the Western Liberal Democratic states even though it had just been occupied by the United States and had fought a devastating war against them recently was the threat of its communist neighbors. After the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 the United States changed its perception of Japan as a vanquished foe to an ally and a counterbalance against the rise of communism in the region. As previously mentioned, the Japanese similarly felt extremely threatened by this political shift and now had the willing support of a superpower with a shared enemy. The intimate cooperation between the two states was therefore a natural result of regional developments (Kapur 2018, 11-13). This motivation is seen in the speech of Japanese Prime Minister Yoshida at the signing of the San Francisco treaty. He stated that: *Being unarmed as we are, we must, in order to ward off the danger of war, seek help from a country that can and will help us. That is why we shall conclude a security pact with the United States under which American troops will be retained in Japan temporarily until the danger is past."* (Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations 2021).

The next instance of a sudden rise in perceived threats by the Japanese did not see such a logical coalescing of interests. During the Nixon shocks and the acquisition of nuclear weaponry by China at the beginning of the 1970s, the United States was an important reason for the perceived threat increase in Japan. The Nixon shocks economic actions were directly aimed at Japan. In response to the rising costs of the Vietnam war and the increased economic

competition with Japan drastic measures were taken to improve the United States trade position (Packard 2010, 95). This event will be discussed in more detail in hypothesis 4. Moreover, by reversing their China policy without coordinating with the Japanese, the United States showed that their security policy strategy deemed undermining the Soviet Union through exploiting the Soviet-Sino rift more important than their relationship with Japan. As a result, the United States' post-war role as a protector was undermined. Therefore Japan did not respond to this perceived rise in threats with increased bilateral security cooperation with the United States, but instead with unilateral military capability improvement, which will be discussed in hypothesis 3 (Komine 2016, 98-99). Former United States ambassador to Tokyo, Johnsson, described the Japanese reaction as thus: "*The United States shoved its most important ally in Asia to the back burner … After this "Nixon Shokku" as the Japanese called it, there has never again been the same trust and confidence between our governments* (Yoshii, 2008, 14)*."*

In the most recent period of perceived high threat levels in Japan, there is a return to intimate bilateral security cooperation between the United States and Japan. In a response to the increasing challenge posed by China's advance, the two states have started a concerted effort in an attempt to contain this threat. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States did not need China as a pressure tool against the Soviets anymore. Therefore both states now had shared goals and bilateral security cooperation could intensify again (Garret, Glaser 1997, 383-384). An example that shows the revitalization of bilateral security cooperation is the 1996 Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security, Alliance for the 21st Century

The Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security, Alliance for the 21st Century was a treaty meant as a revision of the Japan-U.S. security framework after the end of the Cold War. The

treaty stresses the importance of bilateral defense cooperation and places the focus on regional stabilization in East Asia. The United States increased its military personnel in Japan, upgraded its arsenal, and started to perform naval exercises with the Japanese navy for the first time (Ministry of Defense 1996). The motivation for these actions as per the treaty was that "*instability and uncertainty persist in the region. Tensions continue on the Korean Peninsula. There are still heavy concentrations of military force, including nuclear arsenals. Unresolved territorial disputes, potential regional conflicts, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery all constitute sources of instability.* (Ministry of Defense 1996)*"* These were implicit references to the perceived threat of China and were regarded as such by the Chinese. A senior Chinese official reacted to the treaty with: "*There is a security consensus between the U.S. and Japan that the new major security concern is uncertainty about China … How can we believe that your policy is not containment?* (Garret, Glaser, 388-390)*"*

To conclude, this hypothesis claims that a perceived increase in security threats will result in more security attachments to the United States by Japan. There is a strong indication that this is partially true. Both in the 50s and the 90s, Japan increased its security attachments to the United States when confronting a rise in perceived regional threats. In the 1970s however, this was not the case. A rise in perceived threat led to less bilateral security cooperation. The reason for this is that the security goals of these two states were not aligned in this period. Therefore, it can be observed that Japan will increase its security attachments to the United States on the condition that there are common interests.

Japanese military expansion

The third hypothesis considered in this thesis is as follows, a perceived increase in security threats will result in an expansion of military capabilities in Japan. After addressing multilateral and bilateral security strategies in the previous parts it is now time to observe unilateral Japanese security strategy. Japan has experienced a process of gradual expansion of military capabilities since its formal independence in 1951 (Hagström, Williamson 2009, 242-243). Over the course of this evolution, there is a combination of two forces that were the primary drivers. These are perceived security threats and United States pressure. Foreign pressure to change Japan's policies or *Gaiatsu* as the Japanese call it has been a defining factor in U.S.-Japan post-war relations and especially in the field of Japanese military expansion (Nadeau 2018).

This became apparent shortly after the occupation of Japan by the United States. As mentioned in hypothesis 2, the U.S. reversed its stance towards Japan from enemy to ally in the light of the rise of communism in Asia. This resulted in a policy reversal in Japanese demilitarization as well. Immediately after the war ended in 1945 the Allied occupations demobilized all Japanese military personnel, military-industrial facilities were destroyed, and the creation of arms was prohibited. Only a couple of years later in 1951, a semi-militaristic Japanese police reserve force was established and in 1954 the Japanese armed forces were reinstated with the creation of the Japanese Self Defense Forces (Easley 2017, 65-66). These steps towards remilitarization were taken against the backdrop of overwhelming domestic opposition. In general, the Japanese public deeply mistrusted the military after the war and supported the new pacifist institutional framework. However, *gaiatsu* proved to be more powerful than domestic opposition or culture (Maizland, Cheng 2018). During this period the

military expenditure of Japan shot up to 8.067 billion dollars in the first year of full independence, 1952. All military budgets in this chapter are in 2019 dollars to correct for inflation (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2020).

The next period of increased militarization was heavily influenced by foreign pressure as well. In 1969 the Nixon doctrine was launched, this American security strategy declared that the United States would no longer carry the weight of defending all free nations in the world. Allies such as Japan would need to shoulder a more sizable part of the responsibility. President Nixon personally contacted Prime Minister Sato to pressure the Japanese to "develop a significant military capability" and "assume a greater responsibility for East Asian security". This fact combined with the feelings of abandonment after the Nixon shocks and the rise of the perceived threat of China during this period resulted in Japanese military expansion (Komine 2016, 95-7).

This resulted in a change in Japanese military strategy. The philosophy that had dominated since the demilitarization was called *senshu boei.* This means "necessary self-defense" and permitted the JSDF to maintain the minimal capabilities to guard Japanese territory in the instance of an unprovoked assault. The new philosophy was *sogo anzen hosho* or "comprehensive security". The mandate of the JSDF was extended to the protection of economic assets and the JSDF was now authorized to launch a preemptive defense in the case of an imminent attack of Japan and could contribute to regional security operations. In addition, the military spending of Japan also rose continuously, breaking the ceremonial barrier of 1% of GDP spending in 1983 (Easley 2017, 68-70, Hook 2016, 103). The document which formalized this evolution in Japanese military strategy was the 1978 Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation. The shift in mandate is observable in

statements such as, the Japanese military responsibilities will be extended *"in the case of situations in the Far East outside of Japan which will have an important influence on the security of Japan."* and *" Recognizing that a situation in areas surrounding Japan may develop into an armed attack against Japan, the two Governments will be mindful of the close interrelationship of the two requirements: preparations for the defense of Japan and responses to or preparations for situations in areas surrounding Japan* (Ministry of Defense 1978, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1978)*."* Which shows the change towards regional security capabilities and a preemptive defense mandate respectively. This militarization is also visible in the military expenditure of Japan. Between 1952 and 1968 the budget only rose from 8.067 billion to 14.110 billion dollars. In contrast, the military budget increased from 15.326 billion dollars in 1969 to 27.607 billion dollars in 1980 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2020.)

The confrontations with China in the early 1990s and the shifting geopolitical landscape after the end of the Cold War and the economic boom of China caused Japan to grow its military capabilities once more. The situations in which the JSDF was allowed to operate were increased to cover. The JSDF could now provide combat assistance and rescue missions during "emergencies" in areas near Japan. This was a significant diversion from the 1978 Japan-U.S. defense guidelines according to which Japan could only be a part of such operations in the case of an imminent attack on Japanese territory. Because of the vague wording of emergencies, this meant that Japan could conduct these operations as they saw fit. Moreover, the JSDF was authorized to organize evacuation missions for Japanese citizens anywhere on the globe (Soeya 2011, 72-73). By now Japan was one of the most prolific military spenders globally, only topped by the United States and at the end of the 1990s by China. This was also the period in which constitutional revision was first discussed. In 1999 a

committee with the Japanese diet was organized to review the possibility of altering the Japanese Peace Constitution towards a “normal” constitution that allowed for full remilitarization (Boonen, Herber 2020, 9-10). The 1997 Japan-U.S. Defense Guidelines show the transformation in military strategy since 1978. Phrases such as, “*The two Governments will take appropriate measures, to include preventing further deterioration of situations, in response to situations in areas surrounding Japan.*” This removes the caveat that there needs to be a direct threat to Japan which was present in 1978. As well as, “*Situations in areas surrounding Japan will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security. The concept, situations in areas surrounding Japan, is not geographic but situational.* `` This statement undermined the supposed narrow regional scope of the JSDF mandate and virtually expanded it globally (Ministry of Defense 1997).

That Japan would expand its military operations beyond the regional sphere became apparent quickly after the finalization of this treaty. An important aspect of this process was the 9/11 attacks of 2001. Global terrorism increasingly became seen as a significant threat and was not bound by borders or regions. This was also the case in Japan which had recently experienced a major terrorist attack in 1995 with the sarin gas attacks in Tokyo. To combat this globalizing threat, the JSDF also globalized. In 2001 the Japanese navy supported U.S. operations in Afghanistan from the Indian gulf. In 2003 in an even more radical step, the Japanese diet ratified the dispatch of over 1000 JSDF personnel to an active combat zone in Iraq. These situations posed no immediate threat to Japan, could hardly be said to be in the region and showcased the spread of operation area of the JSDF (Kersten 2011, 6-8).

This process was continued and formalized in the following years. The Japanese military strategy philosophy was altered to fit this change of context. From the comprehensive

self-defense of the 1970s to collective self-defense. The key characteristic of collective self-defense was that the JSDF could come to the aid of allied states if they contributed to the security of Japan. From only seeing Japan as a vital strategic interest Japan's security strategy had slowly evolved to seeing every allied state as a strategic interest (Liff 2015, 84-87). The latest and third version of the Japan-U.S. Defense Guidelines were published in 2015 to integrate this new reality in the formal security framework. The collective security philosophy is apparent in this new agreement as seen in the following passage. *"The Self-Defense Forces will conduct appropriate operations involving the use of force to respond to situations where an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result, threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to overturn fundamentally its people's right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, to ensure Japan's survival, and to protect its people* (Ministry of Defense 2015)*."* Once again this shift in the mandate of the JSDF was reflected in Japan's military expenditure. Even though the collapse of the bubble economy caused a major economic crisis in Japan, the military budget increased significantly. From 39.008 billion dollars in 1989 to 47.267 billion dollars in 2002 after the strategic changes following the 9/11 attacks (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2020).

To summarize, the hypothesis analyzed in this chapter was, a perceived increase in security threats will result in an expansion of military capabilities in Japan. When assessing the different periods of Japanese military expansion there is a clear trend of convergence with periods of heightened perceived threats. Japan explicitly adapted its military strategy to fit specific threats such as the globalization of the JSDF during the rise of global terrorism. Moreover, these adaptations were accompanied by significant rises in military expenditure. In

addition, foreign pressure from the United States played a large role in the militarization of Japan especially in the earlier stages of this process.

Economic pressures on remilitarization

The fourth hypothesis discussed in this paper is, increased economic competition with the United States will result in a reduction of United States protection to Japan and an increase in Japanese military capabilities. According to the viewpoint of realists such as Waltz and Envall, this is a natural development in each states' quest for relative gains. Economic considerations have played an influential role in the security relationship between the United States and Japan and have shaped them to a large degree (Hook, Gilson, Hughes, Dobson 2011, 108-109). The main avenue of competition between the United States and Japan in the period studied is a fear in the United States to be overtaken by Japan. During years of rapid Japanese economic growth, the United States has consistently taken retaliatory actions and pushed for Japanese military expansion (Samuels, 2017).

While economic considerations played a role in the remilitarization period immediately after the Second World War they did not result from economic competition between the United States and Japan. The Japanese economy was ravaged by the end of the war as a result of the devastation caused by it and the total focus of its economy to fuel its military operations. As a result, the Japanese economy posed very little threat to the United States which exited the war with its economy invigorated (Forsberg 2000, 30). In fact, the United States tried hard to revitalize the Japanese economy to create a new market for its goods and a more capable ally in the fight against communism (Forsberg 2000, 31-33). The economic motivation behind the United States' push to increase Japanese military expansion was mostly cost-sharing and reduction in the Korean War. By using bases in Japan and Japanese infrastructure operations

could be conducted much more efficiently. In addition, by using the Japanese for support roles the United States would have to shoulder less of the burden of the conflict (Forsberg 2000, 34).

However, this optimistic view in the United States of Japanese economic revival started to shift quickly. In the first decades after the Second World War, Japan experienced an incredible economic boom, often referred to as the Japanese economic miracle. By the early 1960s, Japan had become the third economy in the world preceded only by the Soviet Union and the United States. Japanese companies were outcompeting American ones in many vital sectors. Moreover, in the mid-1960s the United States experienced a growing trade deficit with Japan (Bergsten 1982, 1059). Therefore, the Japanese economic rise had become a threat to the United States' economic stability in the eyes of many United States policymakers. The first accusations of "free-riding" behavior and unfair advantages originate from this period (Bergsten 1982, 1059-1060).

The American reaction to reverse this trend came in 1969 with the Nixon doctrine and the Nixon shocks. Frustrated with the strenuous costs of the Vietnam War and the economic flourishing of allies under its protection, the Nixon administration announced that it would no longer shoulder all the security burden. Larger allies, primarily Japan were pressured to take on more military responsibilities. In addition, a series of drastic economic measures were taken to improve the trade balance and protect the internal market against Japanese goods. These included the floating of the dollar to devalue the currency, a steep increase in import tariffs, and extensive trade restrictions on Japanese products (Komine 2016, 93). These measures succeeded regarding Japan. The trade deficit was reduced significantly and as mentioned previously, Japan launched an extensive remilitarization project after this event

(Bergsten 1982, 160). The motivations behind these moves were confirmed by the Secretary of Defense during this period in his proposal of a formal shift in security strategy to President Nixon in 1970. He stated that the goal was for *"A larger share of free world security burden to be taken by those free world nations which have enjoyed major U.S. support since World War II, rapid economic growth, and a relatively low defense contribution* (Office of the Historian 2021)*."*

The success of these measures was short-lived. In a few years, the trade deficit was higher than ever before. In the United States, there was increasing anxiety that Japan would supersede them as the world's foremost economic power. To try to curb this rise the United States pressured Japan into the 1985 Plaza accords and launched a new strategy to redefine its security and economic approach to Japan (Gilpin 2003, 321). Japan was more and more seen as a strategic rival of the United States. Both the security and economic aims of the changing American approach to Japan were to remove them from their supposed favored detached position. The plaza accord was an important step in this process. In this 1985 agreement in which the United States dollar was artificially depreciated against the Japanese Yen to reduce the trade deficit and Japanese markets were forcefully opened more to United States products (Gilpin 2011, 322-323).

This frustration with Japan's economic success translated very directly to security affairs. During the First Gulf War in 1991, the American-led coalition launched a campaign to remove Iraqi troops from Kuwait. Japan contributed funds but did not put any boots on the ground or provide any direct rear-area assistance. This approach was criticized as "checkbook diplomacy" and was seen by the United States as another example of the profiteering of Japan from American efforts. Immediately Japanese officials were pressured to broaden the

capabilities of the JSDF to take a more active role in future conflicts (Easley 2017, 70). For example, Secretary of State Baker made these comments in a meeting with high-ranking Japanese officials. *"You are beginning to fully appreciate your national capabilities -- and your responsibilities -- around the globe. Your 'checkbook diplomacy,' like our 'dollar diplomacy' of an earlier era, is clearly too narrow."... "As one of the primary beneficiaries of the open world trading system, Japan should lead, not follow, in the effort to preserve and strengthen that system* (Friedman 1991)." As a result of this pressure, the Diet passed a series of laws in 1992 that authorized the use of JSDF forces abroad, and in the same year, the first troops were deployed in a UN mission in Cambodia (Easley 2017, 71-72).

To conclude the hypothesis discussed in this part was, increased economic competition with the United States will result in a reduction of United States protection to Japan and an increase in Japanese military capabilities. In several periods it can be observed that the direct motivation for United States pressure on Japanese military expansion is economic competition. But not all periods of remilitarization are similarly influenced by economic competition. Both the immediate remilitarization era after the Second World War and the Most recent militarization are more driven by military-strategic considerations than economic pressures.

Conclusion

This paper aimed to shed light on the external pressures which force demilitarized states to remilitarize. This was done through the research question *Why did Japan evolve its security policy from a pacifist state to a militarized state?* Additionally, this research intended to fill a gap in the existing literature. This gap is the lack of nuance between the two positions in the debate on Japanese remilitarization with those that observe a total aversion to change and those that see a total shift towards remilitarization. As well as inadequate attention given to the actual Japanese foreign policy actions in this debate. When observing the results of process tracing in the case of the four hypotheses discussed in this research, it can be concluded that the foreign pressures of a rise of perceived security threats and economic competition are key causes behind the remilitarization of Japan.

Firstly, consistently a rise of perceived security threats has been a main motivator behind Japanese multilateral security cooperation. The United Nations and regional security initiatives have functioned as risk-mitigating tools for Japan in its foreign policy since its demilitarization after the Second World War. Every period of a rise in security threats is accompanied by a rise in Japanese multilateral security commitment. Secondly, a perceived increase in security threats has resulted in closer security cooperation between the United States and Japan throughout most of the period studied. Japanese policymakers have routinely stated that external security threats have been the prime reason behind security cooperation with the United States. The exception was in the 1970s when the threat perceptions of the two states were not aligned. This shows even more that the Japanese security strategy is contingent on external factors. Thirdly, a perceived increase in security threats has resulted in an expansion of military capabilities in Japan. As with multilateral

security cooperation, there has been a complete overlap between periods of heightened threat and Japanese military upgrading. Moreover, the upgrading of the Japanese military has been designed according to the specific security threats that were present in that era. Fourthly, an important factor in the remilitarization of Japan has been external pressure from the United States. This can be seen in the American pressure due to geopolitical considerations such as directly after the Second World War but also very much due to economic considerations. The United States has repeatedly forced Japan to take on more military responsibilities during times when they felt economically threatened by the Japanese. Reducing presumed "free-riding" behavior has been paramount in the current military revitalization of Japan.

There is also a lot of interplay between the different aspects of external pressures. Remilitization is not fuelled by a single factor but by a complex web of different forces. The factors connected with the aversion to change side of the debate such as bilateral security cooperation cannot be seen separate from those of the total change side of the discussion such as Japanese military expansion. A cohesive analysis of Japanese remilitarization therefore must include both aspects and provide a holistic study on this issue.

This paper only addressed a fraction of the total of the system of causality which leads to the remilitarization of demilitarized states. This is why further research is needed to analyze other parts of this topic to see if the causal mechanisms studied in this thesis remain consistent in regard to other data. Possible areas of future study which are likely to yield valuable insights include the relationship between external and internal pressures on remilitarization in the case of Japan and the use of external pressure hypotheses on Germany's remilitarization. Remilitarization is a contentious subject that is more relevant than ever in a world in which peace is increasingly seen as the norm in many regions and thinking on security is rapidly

changing. The study of this subject can provide much on the pressures which move states in the international system and the role of security in international politics.

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