

Japan's Foreign Policy under the Abe Administration

-A Role Theory Analysis of Japan's Foreign Policy initiatives between
2006-2007 and 2012-2016-

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Abstract

The thesis shows the result of the research on foreign policy during the first and second Abe administration. It focuses on the relations with the US, China, India, Australia, the Philippines, the New Komei Party and the Japan Conference. Role theory, centered on its key concept of national role conceptions (NRC) is used as a theoretical framework. Using Japanese and foreign political leaders' statements, NRC analysis gives the opportunity to grasp the degree of consistency between those of Japan and those of the targeted countries and domestic political groups. Then, the results are interpreted to assess the possible changes in foreign policy originating from role inconsistency and conflicts. Four Japan's key NRCs of reliable security partner, country putting emphasis on multilateralism, non-military pacifist country and world/regional leader, are utilized as grid of analysis. This thesis argues that Prime Minister Abe's attempts to reinforce the assertiveness of Japan's foreign policy have yielded limited results. Still, this outcome has not significantly altered his initial strategies: the later decisions and actions of his government seek to build a more assertive foreign policy. He has proceeded with them by adjusting NRCs and accommodating role expectations.

Esta tesis es el resultado de la investigación realizada sobre la política exterior de las dos administraciones de Abe en el Japón, en especial, frente a las relaciones con Estados Unidos, China, India, Australia, Filipinas, el Nuevo Partido Komei y la Conferencia japonesa. La teoría de roles, y en especial, su concepto de las concepciones del rol nacional (NRC) -entendido como las expectativas intersubjetivas compartidas frente a los

roles apropiados del Estado en el mundo- es utilizada como marco teórico. A partir de las declaraciones de los políticos japoneses y extranjeros, el análisis de las NRC permite apreciar el grado de consistencia entre las expectativas del Japón y terceros países y los grupos políticos a nivel interno. Estos resultados son interpretados con el fin de identificar posibles cambios en la política exterior causados por la inconsistencia de los roles o por los conflictos existentes. El análisis se realiza tomando como referencia cuatro NCR claves en el Japón: la conveniencia de tener un aliado en seguridad confiable, la preferencia por el multilateralismo, una concepción pacífica no militarista del país y la pretensión de ser un líder regional o mundial. Esta tesis concluye que los esfuerzos del primer ministro Abe para reforzar la asertividad de la política exterior japonesa han tenido resultados limitados. Pese a ello, no se ha cambiado la estrategia. Las acciones y las decisiones posteriores adoptadas por su gobierno dejan en evidencia su intención de construir una política exterior más asertiva, no obstante, ha procedido a ajustar los NCR y las expectativas de los roles.

Keywords: Japan, Role theory, Abe's foreign policy, proactive pacifism, value-oriented diplomacy.

Palabras clave: Japón, teoría de roles, la política exterior de Abe, pacifismo proactivo, diplomacia orientada al valor

Abbreviations

ADIZ	Air Defense Identification Zone
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
APT	ASEAN Plus Three
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
EAS	East Asia Summit
EDCA	Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FTAAP	Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMTFE	International Military Tribunal for the Far East
JCP	Japan Communist Party
JSP	Japan Socialist Party
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MSDF	Maritime Self-Defense Forces

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NKP	New Komei Party
NRC	National Role Conception
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National Security Strategy
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organization of Economic Development and Cooperation
PKO	Peace Keeping Operations
SDF	Self-Defense Forces
SEA	Southeast Asia
TPP	Trans Pacific Partnership
TSD	Trilateral Strategic Dialogue
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WOT	War on Terror
WTO	World Trade Organizat

Table of Content

Abstract	vii
Abbreviation	ix
Introduction	1
CHAPTER 1 LITERATURE REVIEW	7
1.1 Realist Approach	7
1.1.1 Power, Material Forces and National Interests	7
1.1.2 Neorealism: Distribution of Power in International Structures	8
1.1.3 The Yoshida Doctrine as Epitome of Realism and Neorealism Options	9
1.1.4 Internal and External Balancing	10
1.1.5 Balancing in a Transitional Period: US Decline and China's Rise	11
1.1.6 Japanese Variants Inside the Realist Paradigm	14
1.1.7 The Emergence of the 'Normalization' Argument	16
1.1.8 The Resilience of the Centrality of Japan-US Relations	17
1.1.9 Response to the China's Challenge: The Security Dilemma	18
1.1.10 Mercantilism and Security	20
1.1.11 Neoclassical Realism and Power Convertibility	20
1.2 Liberal Approach	22
1.2.1 The Importance of Non-State Actors	22
1.2.2 The Importance of the Domestic Actors	22
1.2.3 Integration through Compromise: Priority to Economy	24
1.2.4 Security as a Strategic Tool	26
	xi

1.2.5 Japan and the Rule of Law	28
1.3 Constructivist Approach	29
1.3.1 The Importance of Shared Understanding among States	29
1.3.2 The Possibility of Social Change: Continuity and Change in Japan's Foreign Policy	30
1.3.3 Acceleration of the Challenge to the Pacifist Mantra: A Debate on Values and Identity	33
1.4 The Insufficiency of the Traditional Explanations	35
1.4.1 The Limitations of the Realist Arguments	35
1.4.2 The Limitations of the Liberal Arguments	40
1.4.3 The Limitations of the Constructivist Arguments	42
1.5 Role Theory Approach in Research on Japan	44
1.5.1 Role Theory as an Interpretative Tool	44
1.5.2 Elgstrom's Research on Japan's Foreign Policy during the Cold War	46
1.5.3 Macleod's Research on the Aftermath of the Cold War	46
1.5.4 Hirata's Research on Role Contestation in Japan	48
1.5.5 Sakaki's Research Focusing on Ego-Part in Japan and Germany	50
1.5.6 Maull's Research on the Japan-US Relations	51
1.5.7 Maslow's Research on the Japan-China Relations	53
1.5.8 The Limit of Existing Role Theory Approach	54
CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	57
2.1 The Concept of NRC and Role-Set	57

2.2 The Intersubjective Character of NRCs	59
2.3 Ego-Part and Alter-Part	61
2.4 Roles as Interpretative Tools	62
2.5 Role Conflict	63
2.6 Degree of Role Formality and Priority	68
2.7 Role, Identity and Behavior	71
2.8 Role Enactment and Role Change	72
2.9 Role Location, Adaptation and Learning	74
2.10 The Concept of Alter-Casting	79
2.11 Role Demand	81
2.12 Audience and Role Contestation	84
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH QUESTION, HYPOTHESES AND METHODOLOGY	89
3.1 Objective of the Thesis	89
3.2 Theoretical Relevance	91
3.3 The Hypothesis of Continuity	95
3.4 Hypotheses of Changes	97
3.5 Qualitative Content Analysis: Focus on Leaders' Statements	102
3.6 Focus on both Ego-Part and Alter-Part	105
3.7 Use of Deductive Approach	106
3.8 The Coding Process	107
3.9 Identified Japan's Meta-Roles and the Components	108

3.10 Assessment of the Levels of Changes in Japan's Foreign Policy that Could Be Inferred from the Evolution of Japan's NRCs with Hermann's Classification Model	111
CHAPTER 4 ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE POSTWAR NRCS OF JAPAN	117
4.1 The Japanese Constitution and Legal Constraint and Role Change from Militarist Nation to Pacifist Nation	117
4.2 Role Expectation and Performance during the Cold War	123
4.2.1 The NRC of a Reliable Ally of the US	123
4.2.2 Mercantilist NRC and Role Contestation	125
4.3 The Turning Point of NRC Reconsideration after the Cold War	128
4.3.1 The Gulf War and the Challenge to the Established NRC	128
4.3.2 The Challenge to the Economic Diplomacy-Centered NRC	131
4.4 Bilateralism and Multilateralism Balance in Post-Cold War NRC	133
4.4.1 Strengthening Multilateral NRC through International Organizations and Continuity of Non-Militarist NRC	134
4.4.2 Evolution of the NRC Linked to the Japan-US Relations	136
4.5 The First Abe Administration and Value-Oriented Diplomacy	138
4.6 Proactive Pacifism as Part of the Pacifist NRC	140
4.7 Four Pillars of Abe's Security Policy as a Reliable and Faithful Ally	141
4.7.1 The Secret Information Protection Act and the National Security Council	142
4.7.2 National Security Strategy and the National Defense Program Guideline	142
4.7.3 Reinterpretation of Article 9	144
4.7.4 New Guideline and Security Laws	147

4.8 Regionalism, Historical Issues and Japan's Role	149
4.8.1 Abe's Role as a Free Trade Promoter	149
4.8.2 Historical Role Demand and Abe's Role Enactment	153
CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS OF JAPANESE AND FOREIGN POLITICAL LEADERS	
(1 ST AND 2 ND META-ROLES)	159
1 Japan as a Reliable Security Partner	160
1.1 Japan's Role to the US	160
1.2 Japan's Role toward Other Like-Minded Countries and China	165
1.3 US Expectation of Japan	172
1.4 Australia's Expectation of Japan	178
1.5 India's Expectation of Japan	183
1.6 China's Expectation of Japan	189
1.7 The Philippines' Expectation of Japan	192
1.8 The NKP's Expectation of the Abe Administration	197
1.8.1 The NKP's Expectation of the Relations with China	200
1.9 The Japan Conference's Expectation of the Abe Administration	202
2 Japan as a Country that Puts Emphasis on Multilateralism References	206
2.1 Japan's Role about Multilateral Security Cooperation	206
2.2 International Contribution other than the SDF	209
2.3 Support of Free Trade through Market Liberalization and Multilateral Cooperation	211
2.4 US Expectation of Japan about International Contribution	215
2.4.1 US Expectation of Japan about the Economic Policy	216

2.5 Australia's Expectation of Japan about Multilateral Security Cooperation	218
2.5.1 Australia and India's Expectation of Japan about the Economic Policy	219
2.6 China's Expectation of Japan	222
2.7 The Philippines's Expectation of Japan about Multilateral Security Cooperation and Change of the Attitude toward the TPP	225
2.8 The NKP's Expectation of the Abe Administration about the Economic Policy	227
2.8.1 The NKP's Expectation of the Abe Administration about Human Security	228
CHAPTER 6 ANALYSIS OF JAPANESE AND FOREIGN POLITICAL LEADERS	
(3 RD AND 4 TH META-ROLES)	233
3 Japan as a Pacifist Country Based on Non-Militarism	233
3.1 Japan's Non-Militarist Role	233
3.1.1 Japan's Role in Denuclearization	237
3.1.2 Japan's Role in Historical Issues	239
3.2 US Expectation of Japan	241
3.3 Australia's Expectation of Japan	246
3.4 India's Expectation of Japan	248
3.5 China's Expectation of Japan	250
3.6 The Philippines' Expectation of Japan	254
3.7 The NKP's Expectation of the Abe Administration	255
3.7.1 The NKP's Expectation of the Abe Administration about Denuclearization	257
3.8 The Japan Conference's Expectation of the Abe Administration	258

3.8.1 The Japan Conference's Expectation of the Abe Administration about the View on the Second World War	262
3.8.2 The Japan Conference's Expectation of the Abe Administration about the Yasukuni Shrine	263
4 Japan as a World/Regional Leader	266
4.1 Japan's Role as a Leader in G7	267
4.2 Japan's Role as a Leader in the UN	267
4.3 Japan's Role as a Leader in APEC and the TPP	269
4.4 US Expectation of Japan	271
4.5 Australia, India and the Philippines' Expectation of Japan	273
4.6 China's Expectation of Japan	273
Conclusion	275
References	297

Introduction

Japan's foreign policy is an important factor in the East and Southeast Asia (SEA) region in terms of security, economy and history. Alongside with China and the United States (the US) Japan is an important actor whose moves have a potentially high impact in the region. Moreover, as the largest liberal democratic country in the region, its influence extends further with European, Indian and Australasian allies. The overall goal of the study is to explore the evolution of Japanese foreign policy during the period of the two cabinets led by prime minister Abe Shinzo: September 2006 - August 2007 and December 2012 - December 2016 by using role theory as a theoretical framework.

Role theory originates from the studies of Holsti (1970) who was the first scholar to apply social-psychological and sociological theories about the role(s) of individuals in society to states' behavior. The idea of Holsti was that it is possible to undertake a systematic review to know how cognitive and ideational factors can change policy preferences. It can be done through the analysis of foreign policy statements by heads of state, high level officials, and government documents. What Holsti coined national role conception (NRC) forms the perspective of external environment and options for decision-makers to choose. Language and actions signal expectations (including prescriptions) of the other actors and the NRC can be expected to cover them (Holsti 1970: 245-246). The thesis analyzes the evolution of Japan's NRC. It focuses on what is called in role theory terms the ego-part, i.e. the domestic situation, and the key Japan's alter-parts, namely, the US and China. It also considers in a less detailed manner other alter-parts such as India, Australia and the Philippines.

Until the end of the Cold War Japan's foreign policy was based on principles and actions that reflected the stability of the actors' perception relative to key roles and their components (forming together what role theory calls meta-role). Little inconsistencies and conflicts were emerging at home among the different constituencies that compose Japanese societies and abroad among the key alter-parts (the US, China, SEA countries, India, Australia and the Philippines). Japan's NRCs were almost taken as guaranteed and fundamentally recognized as uncontroversial. Japan presented itself as a 'pacifist state', refraining from foreign military conflicts and devoting itself to economic activity and to the defense of a world order centered on multilateralism symbolized by the United Nations (the UN). However, the end of the Cold War had already marked the gradual end of the period of relative passivity of Japan's foreign policy-related initiatives and the beginning of more assertiveness in regional and world affairs.

There are plausible reasons 25 years later to believe that Japan's assertiveness may gain further momentum in the years to come. For Abe, it is normal that Japan plays more active roles not merely in the global economy, but also in the political arena, including security (Abe 2006). Should Abe's ideas be implemented they would indicate a substantial role shift from the past reluctant approaches in international security toward Japan's self-perception of being a country playing a pivotal role in the region and beyond.

Abe perceives the environment surrounding Japan is becoming severe. At the core of the changes in Japan's NRC that Abe envisions, an emphasis on the defense of democratic values and free trade can be found, resulting in the strengthening of security cooperation with like-minded countries, particularly the US. While preserving the key tenets of the

traditional non-military pacifism, he intends to proceed to what has been called since the 1990s the ‘normalization’ of Japan as a political actor. It means that Japan has to build military capabilities that can be used in collaboration with its allies to protect Japan territory but also peace and stability in the Asian region. In order to do so, Abe has to overcome the constraints that have been embedded in the pacifist constitution that stringently limits Japan’s military activities. What can be observed so far concerning Abe’s initiatives in this regard is the constant concern to make Japan’s NRCs evolve in ways that respond to the expectations of ego-part and different alter-parts.

This research is indeed all the more needed because opinion is divided among all political actors, scholars and critics about the assessment of Abe’s foreign policy initiatives. Some say his foreign policy is offensive and nationalistic, while others say it does not depart from traditional Japan’s foreign policy and indicates concern to restrain. In fact, the reality of the change brought about by Abe is difficult to evaluate at this stage. Thus, the necessity to explore the evolution of Japan’s foreign policy at a systemic level is important. Should key aspects of the traditional NRCs during the postwar period be reconsidered these role changes could subsequently impact on ego-part and alter-parts with the possibility of inducing changes in direction of Japan’s foreign policy.

Chapter 1 focuses on an in-depth exploration and analysis of the major concepts and their interrelationships, and it lays out the overall conceptual framework of the research through a literature survey of the main theoretical approaches. This discussion helps understand interrelationships among these concepts for grasping of the mechanisms of changes in NRCs and their consequences.

Chapter 2 is concerned with a general description of role theory with Japanese foreign policy examples. It outlines the trends, significance and consequences role theory has on Japan's foreign policy. Then, it analyzes a specific case, namely of the Japan-US relations, in order to highlight the significance of the study.

Chapter 3 discusses objectives, research questions, hypotheses and significance of the thesis. the research methodology and data collection for this thesis. It explains the coding process, the sorting out and analysis of the relevant information contained in the Japanese and foreign statements. It also explains the selection of the relevant material that is utilized to complement the statements.

Chapter 4 covers the genesis and institutional setting of the traditional NRC in the pre-Abe period, i.e. during and after the Cold war. It also aims to provide background information that help understand Abe's initiatives.

Chapter 5 and 6 analyze Abe's statements during 2006-2007 and 2012-2016 and those of foreign leaders in the US, China, Australia, India and the Philippines during 2012-2016 that are related to the selected meta-roles. It also covers the issue of the positioning of Abe in Japanese society in respect to those meta-roles and assesses the level and extent of the reaction of the main actors. Role theory emphasizes consensus among the different domestic actors on the core set of foreign policy role conceptions. However, it can happen that government and some domestic actors' do not share the same viewpoint. This makes it necessary to study Japan's internal ego-part in this study. Subsequently, the statements are assessed to know whether potential evolution of the NRC and influence can originate from the above-mentioned countries and domestic actors.

Conclusion consists of two groups to answer key questions. The first group makes a global assessment of the influence of role expectations on Japan's foreign policy and the second group assesses the evolution of NRCs in the contexts examined beforehand.

CHAPTER 1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Through a literature review of the main theoretical approaches in International Relations, namely realism, liberalism and constructivism this chapter focuses on an in-depth exploration and analysis of the major concepts and their interrelationships. It focuses on the different studies undertaken on Japan's foreign policy in utilizing those approaches. It exposes their contribution while also explaining their shortcomings to fully understand Japan's foreign policy and introducing role theory. Role theory cannot fully replace the other theories but it can provide useful complementary tools to concretely assess potential changes in foreign policy.

1.1 Realist Approach

1.1.1 Power, Material Forces and National Interests

In a realist paradigm states act according to their own economic and military interest. They fight in a kind of Hobbesian zero-sum competition where the rules of the game are power and influence that may give them the strength to survive (Hemmings 2010). There is no globally encompassing law enforcement authority providing international conflict resolution mechanisms and serving to enforce agreements. So, to guarantee their survival, states attempt to manage an inherently unstable state of balance of power among themselves.

This viewpoint in which states are in a Hobbesian world where each state strongly defends its own interests has penetrated Japanese foreign policy. Japanese leaders have always

thought that Japan faces constant external threat that can come from anywhere (Le Prestre 1997).

Realists do not neglect completely non-state actors as long as they serve national interests. However, they do not occupy a central position. International organizations are merely tools serving to boost national interests and influence. In international settings, the rational is maximizing gain and minimizing loss (Noguchi 2006). The issue of security, called 'high politics' has priority over economic, social and ecological issues, called 'low politics' because the inherent anarchical situation puts the survival of the state at stake at any time. Fundamentally, realists assume that the national interests of the state do not change. Military power is a basic attribute of all states in international settings. If needed it can be used to defend them (Hook et al 2011).

1.1.2 Neorealism: Distribution of Power in International Structures

In the case of neorealism Waltz (1979) explains that states give more attention to the structure of the international system. They are undifferentiated and unitarist actor operating in a decentralized and competitive anarchical international system. As for the realists, the position in the international system and the distribution of relative material power capabilities are the fundamental determinants of foreign policy (Catalinac 2007: 67). The distribution of power in international structures is important in the bipolar or multi-polar state systems in which states operate and make decisions. For neorealists, the concern for balance of power is the key determinant of states' behavior. They constantly assess their position in the specific international environment in which they operate in

order to maximize their interest (Kay 2006). Applied to Japan's foreign policy the neorealist approach would mainly focus on Japan's position in a world where the US is the dominant power and stresses Japan's constant concern to keep the power balance stable in order to cope with perceived threats in the international system.

1.1.3 The Yoshida Doctrine as Epitome of Realism and Neorealism

Options

Realism and neorealism provide a comprehensive explanation of the origin of Japanese defense and national security policies in the postwar period, especially in the Cold War. Japan emerged as an 'economic giant' from the defeat of the Second World War but chose to remain a 'political dwarf', delegating 'high politics' to the US and concentrating on 'low politics' (Dobson 2003). This stance was coined the 'Yoshida Doctrine', in the name of its promoter, prime minister Yoshida Shigeru, who served as prime minister from 1946 to 1947 and from 1948 to 1954. The bipolarity of the postwar international system until the end of the Cold War and the hegemonic presence of the US shaped Japan's defense and national security policies (Akimoto 2013: 233-234). During that period, the opposition parties and left-wing intellectuals promoted the stance that Japan should be an unarmed neutral country (the 'one country pacifism option') (Kimijima 2011: 474-475). However, from a realist point of view, it would have put Japan's security at risk. The domination of the conservatives after the war led to the US-Japan mutual security treaty, which was enacted in 1952 and revised in 1960 and is presented as the key element that kept the balance of power in East Asia. Squeezed between the USSR (without having

signed a peace treaty) and the US during the Cold War the only realistic solution was to ally with the US to be protected. Peace without military capability was presented as an unrealistic alternative that would have left Japan unprotected (Kosaka 1963). Thus, Japan had little option but to become a 'relative-pacifist country' under the US nuclear umbrella, limiting its military might but refusing the absolute pacifism option. At the same time, from realism perspective, it can be said that Japanese policy-makers preferred giving responsibility of their national security to the US because it transferred to the US the financial burden of the security policy (Lind 2004). Since the US remained committed to Japan's security in the post-Cold War, Japan never had any compelling reason to change its policy.

1.1.4 Internal and External Balancing

Power transition in the international system means shift in the balance of its distribution. It is a concern for neorealists because it has an influence on the state decision-making and is the key determinant of international politics (Hughes 2015a). Thus, the evolution of the system strongly influences the states and decides to what extent they cooperate or start conflicts. Engaging in internal or external balancing is necessary to remain secure. Strong countries tend to balance against one another while less powerful ones try to align with one of the great powers (Noguchi 2006; Waltz 1979; Catalinac 2007:67).

A bipolar system forces states to side with another one while a multipolar one provides a degree of freedom. Japan began to adopt a more independent foreign policy in the 1970s when the US political hegemony started to be challenged after the defeat in Vietnam. It

established diplomatic relations with China, and got closer to Arab countries - especially after the first oil shock in 1973 that had also triggered a power shift - and the USSR (Hook et al 2011; Iokibe 2014). From a realist perspective, Japan was trying to maximize its political influence while keeping the Japan-US alliance as the lynchpin of its foreign policy but with growing worry about possible decline of the US. In this line of thought the Gulf War revealed Japan's unpreparedness for the new world order. Japanese policymakers were worried that the US would abandon Japan if it continued to procrastinate the share of the security cost. The trauma that followed the Vietnam War was in their mind and they considered US return to isolationism possible in the case of large number of US casualties during the Gulf War. In the worst scenario it could have put in question the security treaty, the cornerstone of Japan's security (Cooney 2002; Berger 1996).

1.1.5 Balancing in a Transitional Period: US Decline and China's

Rise

Ozawa Ichiro, the Secretary General of the Liberal Democratic Party during the Gulf War, with other politicians in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), saw the war as a unique opportunity to expand the scope of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) activity. Ozawa was instrumental in promoting legislation to that effect, although it was eventually abandoned because it was still difficult to get a majority to support such change at that time (Hook et al 2011; Catalinac 2007: 68). Nevertheless, as a result of Ozawa's initiative, the International Peace Cooperation Law (also called the PKO Law) was enacted in 1992 as

a compromise and the SDF was then dispatched under the strict condition of the law¹. From another realist point of view, although Japan was aware of the US critics and was eager to show that the country was ready to take its share of responsibility in security matters, the highly controlled and very limited operations and the cautious attitude toward the Gulf War were indications of Japan's reluctance at this stage to drastically change its traditional attitude and invest in its own security (Saltzman 2015: 500).

Under accusation of 'free-riding' from the US the stance gradually changed in the following years with new laws reinforcing Japan-US cooperation in security. Through the revision of the Japan-US defense guideline Japan's role became bigger as will be described later in more details. In the 1990s China reinforced its military might, both quantitatively and qualitatively, including acquisition of nuclear capability and indicated to the world that it was ready to use it in the region, as the Chinese intimidation against Taiwan in 1995 and 1996 have shown (Hughes 2004). At about the same time, North Korea conducted test firing of two missiles (the Nodong in 1993 and the Taepodong in 1998). In response Japan and the US increased defense expenditures (Catalinac 2007: 68) and, as will be explained later, worked at the reinforcement of the alliance through new agreements.

For neorealism the states seek relative gains to enhance their national interests and security. They attach importance to the power shift among themselves and the relations

¹ The following conditions have to be arranged to dispatch the SDF: 1) a cease-fire must be in place, 2) the parties to the conflict must have given their consent to the operation, 3) the activities must be conducted in a strictly impartial manner, 4) participation may be suspended or terminated if any of the above conditions ceases to be satisfied, and 5) use of weapons shall be limited to the minimum necessary to protect life or person of the personnel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013).

adjust according to the relative power changes. Japan may be just entering a power transition period because its relative power is declining vis-à-vis China. China has replaced Japan as the second largest world economic power in gross domestic product (GDP) terms (Smith 2015). Moreover, while China's defense budget has increased by more than 10% every year during the last fifteen years or so, Japan's defense-related expenditures remain subdued because of the constitutional constraints. Until the 1980s when Japan was growing rapidly, one percent of its GDP was a large amount of money in absolute terms. However, it is not the case anymore with a low Japan's GDP growth. China has also substantially modernized its armed forces (especially, the air force and the navy), a situation that places the Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) in a weak situation (Hirano 2014: 275; Nakanishi 2015: 416). As a result, Japanese leaders are worried that military power balance has changed in Japan's disfavor, potentially putting the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands and freedom of navigation in danger (Hughes 2015a) in case of conflict around the islands.

Japan's reaction is to counterbalance China's increasing relative power by reinforcing its own capabilities but also in strengthening cooperation with the US. The Second Abe administration increased Japan's defense budget in 2013, for the first time in more than a decade and it reached the largest amount in the postwar period in 2015 and 2016 (Hughes 2017). For the time being this financial effort to redress the balance of power in Japan's favor remains limited because the budget continues to mainly serve to acquire defensive equipment. However, it is likely to contribute more actively to the financing of the

exercise of collective self-defense in the years to come (Hughes 2015a), implying that they might increase in the years to come.

1.1.6 Japanese Variants Inside the Realist Paradigm

Hughes (2016) tells that the consequences of the second Abe cabinet diplomatic initiatives on Japan's strategy are not yet clear. For him, it is possible that Japan adopts a 'resentful realism' policy that does not create a new regional equilibrium in terms of security. The US and China may be concerned because of the lack of transparency on Japan's security intentions. They may reflect the perception of a threat in the case of China, and, in the case of the US, a feeling of distrust coming from a close ally. Subsequently, it may produce strong and uncertain counter-reactions from those two countries and, as a result, Japan's policy may have a destabilizing effect in the region. Because it differs from standard realist balancing policies, Hughes (2016) believes that it is likely to add a new element of unpredictability, especially if it goes with Japan's resentment of its dependence on the US and frustration of being overcome by China. Abe cannot afford to neglect them so that he does not lose the support of the ego-part. Green (2001) recognizes the Japanese aspirations for a national identity that moves beyond the legacies of the Second World War but he argues that Japan seems rather more likely to adopt a 'reluctant realism' strategic policy. This means that Japan tends to increase its cooperation with the US due to 'external material changes in Japan's international environment, and insecurity about national power resources'.

For Mearsheimer (2001), the best way for a state to maximize the prospects of survival is to maximize relative power with the aim to be the hegemonic power in one's own region of the world. Mearsheimer explains four possible strategies in the case of what he calls offensive realism: balancing, buck-passing, band-wagoning, and appeasement. The two latter strategies are not acceptable and he discards them completely because they go against the logic of offensive realism. Conversely, Mearsheimer says that a state gives priority to its security over power maximization in the case of defensive realism. As a result, interstates' collaboration and interaction between the rising power and the state reacting to the rise is possible in order to maintain or preserve the existing balance of power. In such case band-wagoning and appeasement become acceptable strategies. Defensive realism does not regard change of relative capabilities as a security threat as much as offensive realism. Thus, defensive realists may not take actions as radical as offensive realism to rebalance power. They may decide to act in order to balance the rising power but they would do so only in the case they are thinking they are under concrete threat. They would not act only to cope with higher material capabilities of the other state (Mochizuki 2007: 743).

At the end of the Cold War, analysts prospected that Japan would become eager to acquire offensive military capability in order to defend national interests, including nuclear capabilities and that its foreign policy would become more autonomous. Waltz, for example, supported that scenario and it was making him worried about the regional peace and stability as shown in the following quote: 'Ironically, Japan in Asia and Germany in Eastern Europe are likely in the next century to replay roles in some ways similar to those

they played earlier' (Waltz 1993). He believes that Japan will indeed possess nuclear weapons someday, in order to acquire what has been called 'recessed deterrence' (Buzan & Wæver 2003). In that sense Japan would not be different from Pakistan, India and North Korea which have decided to build a nuclear arsenal to protect themselves (Waltz 2008). He adds that: 'Any country in Japan's position is bound to become increasingly worried about its security, the more so because China is rapidly becoming a great power in every dimension: internal economy, external trade, and military capability. [...] Japanese nuclear inhibitions arising from World War II will not last indefinitely'.

Yet, those scenarios have been revealed wrong until now. Japan' strategy has continued to focus on the defense of Japanese territory as exemplified by the acquisition of only defensive weapons. Its security objectives have remained narrow with very limited and insignificant in regard of the existing balance of power security-related activities outside Japan (Hughes 2016). Therefore, Japan's stance has evolved over time in matter of security, especially in the last decade, but overall it can be said it retains mainly defensive realism characteristics.

1.1.7 The Emergence of the 'Normalization' Argument

The precited examples of Waltz (2008) related to Pakistan, India and North Korea show that the realistic notion of 'security dilemma' may trigger an arms race if states perceived an external threat. For Mochizuki (2007: 744) should a state perceive bad (and thus threatening) intentions in a rising state' behavior, it can be expected to shift toward an offensive realism strategy. Conversely, in the case the objective is not considered

malicious the strategy is likely to be of maintaining the balance of power. Thus, acquisition of offensive capabilities will not be deemed necessary (Mochizuki 2007: 744). In the case of Japan, it can be said that the perception of China's military threat has pushed Japan to adopt an external balancing strategy by using the alliance with the US. In turn the attitude of Japan toward China may be transforming the perception of Japan in US eyes. US authorities may increasingly believe that Japan is ready to commit more resources to military support because of the 'China's threat' and engage with the US more substantially. At the same time Japan has moved toward internal balancing to cope with China's military force. Japanese conservative politicians have pushed for Japan's military normalization since the 1950s but the pressure grew in the 1980s (Ishihara 1989; Ozawa 1993) and accelerated with the collapse of the USSR. In this respect, it could be said that the SDF participation in PKO since 1992 indicates that the process of becoming a 'normal country' is at work (Akimoto 2013).

1.1.8 The Resilience of the Centrality of Japan-US Relations

From a realist viewpoint, Japan's slight shift away from the US and the tilt toward China during the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) from 2009 to 2012 was a natural reaction to the rise of China and the perceived decline of the US. As the world had entered a power transition period Japan had to react to the change (Hemming 2010). But in line with the neorealist importance given to relative gain and loss of international relations, it could be argued that the growing Chinese influence impacts on Japan's relative power. Considering this, Japanese leaders may be inclined to believe the Japan-US alliance is the

optimal option along with other Asian countries (Hemming 2010). The shifting balance of power in the region pushes the second Abe administration to support the US 'rebalance' to Asia. The Pax Americana that Abe considers the key to maintain stability in Asia would be maintained with the US as hegemon and Japan would keep its place in the system (Sahashi 2016). From this neorealist perspective Japan's increase in defense expenditure, the new security-related laws allowing collective defense, and the strengthening of the Japan-US alliance those changes represent are important factors to maintain the status quo (Mulgan 2008: 59).

1.1.9 Response to the China's Challenge: The Security Dilemma

Mulgan (2008: 59) says that the Koizumi (2001-2006) and Abe administrations coped differently with the rise of China. Koizumi focused almost completely on the relationship with the US in order to convince the US of the necessity to keep a strong presence in Asia. Abe's position was more nuanced as he adopted a two-pronged policy mixing both stronger bilateral relations with the US bilateralism and deeper involvement in regionalism.

Hughes's stance on Abe's policy is that Abe perceives that the US faces strong budgetary constraint and is unwilling to intervene in Asia's regional conflicts where it would have to confront and financially match a country, China, with much stronger - and fast growing - military capabilities than in the past (Hughes 2015a). That is why, similar to Koizumi, he is eager to encourage US involvement in Asia with increasing Japan's security profile. Then, at the same time Abe aims to build a coalition with other Asia-Pacific states such

as Australia and some SEA countries through diplomatic and military agreements. The objective is to lure those countries away from China, even partially, in order to retake the lost ground and recreate a more favorable balance of power to Japan that will help cope with China in better condition (Hughes 2015b). Jimbo (2013) shares this opinion. Japan needs to be ready to cope with the rise of China despite US decline. This requires the creation of a security network that would put together Australia, India, South Korea and SEA countries to build a counterweight to China (Jimbo 2013). On this point, it has to be pointed out that Abe became the first Japanese leader to visit all 10 Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) within his first after assuming the office in 2012 (Lee, L and Lee, J 2016).

However, those attempts to cope with possible US decline in the region could bring about the emergence of a security dilemma between Japan and China. China could consider the US and Japanese attempt to build a containment network detrimental to its national interests (Mochizuki 2007: 745). Hughes argues that in the case of an end of the US security commitment to Japan, the security dilemma may reach the point of making possible the acquisition by Japan of offensive military capabilities, even nuclear ones, with clear negative consequences on the regional stability (Hughes 2015a). At the same time, it is possible to consider Japan's posture a defense-dominant strategy, though. Economic and technological collaboration, for example, can induce China's change in its offensive drive. Alongside with reinforcement of the Japan-US alliance it may reduce the risk of deterioration of the relations with China and avoid triggering an arms race in the region (Mochizuki 2007: 746).

1.1.10 Mercantilism and Security

Security concern is a key reason, adding to the economic objectives to explain the decision of Japan to enter the Transpacific Partnership (TPP) agreement that was expected to link the economies of 12 Asia-Pacific states as never before. The economy-security nexus of the agreement clearly appears is with the inclusion of key Japan and US allies and strategic partners – including in security matters - in the TPP membership: Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore. Besides boosting purely business interest for Japanese companies the objective of Japan and the US in the TPP is to make the region less dependent on China in trade and investment. Diversification of market opportunities and sources of financing would make the members stronger to withstand China's political pressure and would reinforce the economic and political relations with the US and Japan.

1.1.11 Neoclassical Realism and Power Convertibility

Saltzman (2015) analyzes the reinterpretation of Article 9 to allow collective self-defense activities with neoclassical realism theory. Neoclassical realism uses threat perception and the potential resource extraction as intervening variables to analyze state behavior. Quoting Saltzman (2015): 'A threat is a function of external or internal aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive capabilities and offensive intentions'. For him the identification of changes in the global or regional balance of power is largely in the hands of those who occupy key strategic planning position in the administrative system. In this connection, the perception inside the Japanese government of the political, military and economic decline of the US, the rise of China, and the growing importance of a North

Korean threat because of the enlargement of its nuclear capabilities, played an important role in the decision of Abe to revise Japan's security stance (Saltzman 2015: 502-503).

Neoclassical realists insist that the existence of material resources is different from the actual capacity of a state to extract and mobilize them to be converted into policies. For Saltzman, 'Military, economic, political and public support' can convert to power. Japan's material resources are higher than before in military capability terms. The SDF is de facto a world class military organization with high expertise in many fields. Those resources can be extracted in better conditions than before because the SDF has higher legitimacy among Japanese people. Yet, Saltzman does not think that Abe has enough leverage to achieve his ambitious security-related objectives. Economic growth is structurally low and the population decline makes prospects of significantly better business environment quite limited. In addition, Abe must confront growing domestic opposition and the reluctance of its coalition partner, the New Komei Party (NKP). Although the NKP is a coalition partner of the LDP since 1999, it is opposed to a constitutional revision of Article 9 that will have Japan renounce its pacifist stance. Compromise can be found but any dramatic move in the direction of militarization would be met with strong opposition that would jeopardize the existence of the coalition, as will be explained in detail afterward. So far, the sole result is the enactment of collective self-defense-related legislation that maintains strong constraints. The revision of Article 9 remains a long-term objective that will require a significant political leverage that Abe is unlikely to ever get (Saltzman 2015: 503).

1.2 Liberal Approach

1.2.1 The Importance of Non-State Actors

In contrast to realism, liberals and neoliberals take into account the non-state actors, such as multinational enterprises, non-governmental organizations and domestic political actors in determining a state's foreign policy (Catalinac 2007: 71). Liberals say all issues must be considered on the same footing (Sugiyama 2006). Moreover, that there is no centrality of the nation-state and international cooperation and participation in international organizations is important (Dobson 2003; Hook et al 2011). It is said that those two elements can even create a certain level of coordination among states, an argument going against neorealist theory (Carr and Wallis 2016).

1.2.2 The Importance of the Domestic Actors

Contrary to realists, liberals think the cost of the use of force is often higher than the expected profit. International politics and domestic politics are interrelated, and the latter cannot be neglected in foreign policy. Especially, liberalism emphasizes domestic politics and domestic political and interest groups. Like Hirata (2016) who uses role theory to analyze role contestation in Japan, Singh, B (2016) says it is important to identify which actors and agents are involved and their degree of involvement in policy-making. Postwar Japanese politicians broadly belonged to three groups with separate visions or ideological positions: mainstream conservatives, revisionists, and progressives. They had different visions concerning Japan's roles in the world and the adoption of the appropriate security policy. The conservatives in the LDP including Yoshida expected Japan to be a respected

and dignified country after the defeat. In order to achieve this objective priority was given to economic development, technological autonomy and avoidance of military involvement. In so doing, Japan was able to repel US pressure to play a military role during the Cold War period (Samuels 2007). Revisionist prime ministers and politicians such as Kishi Nobusuke (Abe's grandfather), Fukuda Takeo, Nakasone Yasuhiro and Abe Shintaro (Abe's father) also supported the Japan-US alliance but their nationalist leaning was also making them claim for an autonomous and thus more active defense policy at the same time. It required what Abe is attempting to do now, namely the revision of article 9 that would permit Japan to rearm and the enlargement and deepening of the SDF's activities abroad (Samuels 2007). Progressives included left-wing intellectuals, labor unions leaders, and politicians of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) and Japan Communist Party (JCP). To protect peace was the mission of Japan. In virtue of its unique pacifist constitution Japan had the opportunity to become an example for the world as a country that does not use arms. They argued for unarmed and neutral policies and the abolition of the US-Japan Security Treaty to achieve such a goal (Inoguchi & Bacon 2006: 2; Hook et al 2011). During the Cold War, the conservative group kept control of the LDP that remained the sole ruling Party during the next 50 years. Japan's Cold War security policy remained under the umbrella of the US and the government gave priority to Japan's economy as explained before. During that period the revisionists were a relative marginalized group inside the LDP and the JSP was never close to power (Singh, B 2016).

1.2.3 Integration through Compromise: Priority to Economy

For liberals, state sovereignty becomes less important and the need to make compromise with a number of governmental and non-governmental actors is emphasized (Dobson 2003). They do not think states always struggle, conflict and compete for power. The worldview is a positive-sum game, not a zero-sum one. Power change does not necessarily become conflictual. In some cases, it may even encourage cooperation (Keohane & Nye 1977). In this respect it can be argued Japan's foreign policy has been close to the liberal viewpoint.

State's preference for peaceful solutions to resolve conflicts are said to progress with the integration of states, communication and exchanges advance (Deutsch 1957). States do not always limit others' gain in order to secure their share. According to neoliberalism, international institutions give the opportunity to states to negotiate and create a more rules-based multilateral order that can benefit all of them. Conflicts in the international neoliberal system are inherent but they are not inevitable because rules integrate states in an interdependent order in which respect of the rules and customs guaranteed by treaties and laws and not egocentric behavior is the optimal strategy (Keohane 2005). Cooperation is facilitated and opportunism avoided by information sharing, exchange and discussion in all fields of activities (Hemmings 2010). Military and security issues can be separated from technological and economic ones and the latter could promote cooperation in security. In this line of thought Japan-China relations can be considered a model case in view of its priority given to business. Both countries have benefited from trade and

investment. Economic interdependence coupled with the shelving of political issues is said to have prevented conflictual behavior (Smith 2015).

Saltzman also argues that military power is costly and its use by Japan would impede its long-term economic growth. The best solution is to integrate further the global and regional markets (Saltzman 2015: 501). Growing Japan's integration in international institutions has probably helped alleviate the trade frictions that had conducted to sharp deterioration of Japan's relations with the US (Oshiba 2012). Indeed, membership to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and then to the World Trade Organization (WTO) was instrumental in Japan's economic success during the Cold War period. Japan is now a core member of all key international institutions such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the G-8, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization of Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD), and the World Bank, while being a large contributor to the UN (Miyagi 2011). In Asia, Japan provided China and SEA countries with ODA and massively increased its foreign direct investment (FDI) since the 1970s. In turn, prosperity induced by the Japanese economic involvement and the dynamics created by wider regional economic integration triggered a virtuous circle. It encouraged further economic and political integration in the region and helped reinforce cooperation (Hughes 2015a). The need for higher level of institutionalization, especially in the areas of finance and protection of trade and investment led to the creation of new institutions such as the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) and East Asia Summit (EAS), as well as the China-Japan-South Korea Trilateral Cooperation Dialogue (Hook et al 2011). Even if Japan is perceived as a declining country in relative term it remains the

most advanced Asian country economically. Therefore, there is no reason to believe that it cannot remain an effective and cooperative player in the region (Tselichtchev & Debroux 2009). This mindset also explains Japan's membership in the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference and the Asia-Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) (Iokibe 2014). In this connection, in 2009 prime minister Hatoyama Yukio proposed the creation of an East Asian Community that would include China. It aimed to facilitate the opening of the Chinese political system through participation in regional organizations and exchanges with democracies (Hemmings 2010).

1.2.4 Security as a Strategic Tool

After the Cold War and the enacting of the PKO law, Japan also started military-related international cooperation with the dispatch of PKO troops to Cambodia in 1992. It is pointed out that once established, international institutions tend to depart from initial expectations of the member states (Keohane 2005). For example, APEC had only economic objectives at first but it gradually became a forum where security issues are discussed. It is also the case of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) that is now a useful forum for dialogue on security in which Japan is an active player (Hook et al 2011).

Jerdén and Hagström (2012) defend the idea that Japan has not strongly reacted to China's economic and security terms. Collaboration from 1978 to 2011 facilitated China's implementation of its grand strategy, which consists of: 1) securing the unity of China, 2) developing the economy, and 3) rising peacefully as a regional power (Jerdén & Hagström 2012: 223). It cannot be denied that Japanese FDI and ODA helped China's economic

development considerably. Hughes (2009) recognizes the fact but argues that Japanese policy-makers always kept in mind the key interest of Japan at the same time. They always thought that Japan had to counter the rise of China and prevent China's domination of the region. Miller and Yokota (2013) also believe that Abe's policy toward China follows this pragmatic route. He wants to counter the leadership drive of China but without impeding its integration in the region. That is why he actively started to contact South Korea, China and Russia at the beginning of his first mandate. To show its goodwill the Abe administration decided to dispatch a special envoy to South Korea and not to upgrade the Takeshima Day, that is the symbol of Japan's claim on two small islands occupied by South Korea to national holiday status level. At the same time Abe seems to be ready to negotiate with Russia to solve the territorial dispute over the Northern Territories, to the extent of abandoning the idea of take back four Kuril Islands all together (Miller & Yokota 2013).

Liberals consider economic, humanitarian and social matters are related to security. States contribute to security not only to promote only their national interests, but also maintain international order collectively as a mutual obligation between all actors (Dobson 2003). From this viewpoint, some scholars argue that Abe's foreign policy still conforms to the UN ideal. For example, Kitaoka and Matsuoka's Abe administration's 'proactive pacifism' respects Japan's traditional UN-centered diplomacy that puts emphasis on ODA, peace building and PKO activity (Kitaoka 2014; Matsuoka 2016). Singh, B (2016) also argues the Abe administration's security policy is based on internationalism. One of the security laws passed in September 2015 facilitates the SDF operations overseas, including the

dispatching in PKOs. Before the law participation in international peace operations remained strictly limited (Hughes 2015b). Thus the new legislative package may be considered showing a degree of internationalism. It can even be seen as linked to the ambition of Japan to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC), thus in line with the traditional meta-role of emphasis on multilateralism.

1.2.5 Japan and the Rule of Law

For liberals, international law and institutions constrain state sovereignty and help to achieve peace. From a liberal viewpoint, the Japanese Constitution drastically limited Japan's security initiative. It led to the quasi ban on the arms export (Togo 2014: 244), and the three non-nuclear principles prevented Japan from making or having nuclear weapons and also forbade those weapons to enter Japan (Keddell 1993). Based on democratic peace theory liberals also argue democracies are less prone to wage war among them (Cooney 2007). Sakamoto (1959) went so far as to suggest the presence of the United Nations Emergency Forces in Japan instead of the Japan-US security treaty for Japan's peace. It was even predicted that Japan could emerge as a pacific 'civilian power' based on international cooperation and supranational structures (Maull 2011). So, it could be said that a form of liberalism has deeply permeated the postwar political system (Haas 1997). Japan constantly reiterates its commitment to never become a military power again (Iokibe 2014). Like Berger (1998), Wada (2015) says that Japan's foreign policy became based on non-military pacifism because of negative, collective understanding about war among Japanese people. During the Cold War, Japanese political leaders and the

population at large had often directly experienced war and their shared understanding was a strong deterrent for successive governments that would have been tempted to shift toward military-related foreign policies (Wada 2015) and the reluctance to seek leadership in global and regional forums (Hook et al 2011).

1.3 Constructivist Approach

1.3.1 The Importance of Shared Understanding among States

Constructivism originates from idealism and liberalism and attempts to put together the two theories (Kegley & Wittkopf 2006) while also complementing realism (Dobson 2003). For constructivism, if 'the state is a key central actor in international politics to pursue a state' interests' these interests themselves must be included in the identity construction (Wendt 1992). Power is also discursive and objective reality is not assumed. It is not appropriate to limit the origin of behaviors to conformity to norms reflecting concern for security, prosperity, peace and power (Hopf:176). That is why models based on power maximization are not considered adequate by constructivists. The social environment molds the identity and interests while building the norms that define them (March & Olsen 1989). Socially constructed rules, institutions, principles and norms induce the collective shared expectations that can evolve all the time about the behavior of an actor who is considered endowed with a specific identity and beliefs (Katzenstein 1996). Those expectations may include cultural practices, beliefs and values telling what is right and wrong. Only when all the elements of the structure are included, it is possible to grasp through an interactive process between an actor and the structure, and what the former

considers 'important, valuable, effective and legitimate to realize its goals' (Finnemore 1996).

1.3.2 The Possibility of Social Change: Continuity and Change in Japan's Foreign Policy

As Catalinac pointed out: 'While structure constitutes the states, states constitute the structure. They constrain themselves through ordinary practice. This means that the structure of the international system is not the only determinant of the state's interests and actions. Those interests are evolving social constructions that vary between states' (Catalinac 2007: 74). The analysis of interaction between states shows the ways they perceive themselves and each other before responding to international structure demands (Sato 2006). Social change in international relations will always remain difficult because of political and economic constraints but it is possible to interpret state' actions by using the proper tools (Hopf 1998: 181).

As explained beforehand, in the early 1990s realist and neorealist theorists (Waltz 1993) again predicted like in the 1970s that Japan intended to gain political leadership in East Asia and that it would be a factor of instability. However, Japan has pursued until now consistent national security policies that eschew military instruments as a means of achieving national objectives. Japan has not reacted in the same way and to the same extent as other countries might have done to security problems despite its stronger economic position and higher international profile. For example, Japan remained quite restrained when North Korea launched missiles in the Sea of Japan and China invaded what Japan considers its territory. Japan always tried to avoid military confrontation,

especially around the Senkaku Islands, and there was never any move toward active military balancing or even retaliation (Hughes 2015a).

By using constructivism concepts it could indeed be argued that in those cases domestic constraint and identity factors were stronger determinants of Japan's behavior than the materialistic dimensions of international politics (Katzenstein 1996; Berger 1998). It could be said that, as argued by Berger that 'the depth of the ideas and values embedded in the pacifist mantra had been underestimated. Japan was unlikely to use military means because of its 'politico-military' culture' (Berger 1998), i.e. the Japanese security identity has been strongly influenced by the dominant pacifist rules and norms during decades and thus Japan was very reluctant to engage more deeply in foreign policy even after the Cold War regardless of the capability it had built in economic and political terms (Katzenstein 1996; Berger 1996, 1998; Catalinac 2007; Hook et al 2011). For the constructivists, continuity and stability have characterized Japan's international strategy to the point that its security stance was even compared to an 'immovable object' (Hughes 2016: 111-112). Singh, B's (2016) argument is that the identity of Japan's national security has changed the consciousness of the elites taking part in policy decision-making. As pointed out by Soeya: 'Because norms do not only limit but also reshape actor's behavior and interests, both normative constraint and structural imperatives influenced Japanese security policy' (Soeya 1998). In this line of thought he even argued that because of the constant polarization between two contradictory identities, one 'pacifist' and one 'traditional statist' Japan suffers from a 'dual identity' syndrome that could be thought to be the source of its long and protracted identity crisis (Soeya 2005).

However, it cannot be said that Japan's security stance has been an 'immovable object' during the whole post-Cold War period. Part of scholarship prefers to support a kind of modified continuity. Japan has indeed continued to reject dominating regional roles. However, the need for reinforced self-defense capabilities is recognized as exemplified by the acceptance of the legality of the SDF by Japanese society (Seizelet 2007). Japan has been recalibrating its 'peace state' security policies to deal with new security challenges. It never became an absolute unarmed pacifist state but has evolved instead as a relatively pacifist one in which several material limitations continue to exist, for instances weapons still maintain defensive nature or the objectives of military training are also of defensive nature (Seizelet 2007).

This is also exemplified by the various institutional limitations placed on armed forces' activities. Japan's government resisted requests from the US to expand its military role during the Gulf War. This tendency continued even in Afghan and Iraq where the US and its allies conducted military campaigns in reaction to the terrorist attack on September 11 2001. Japan's support was limited to non-combat one. Japanese people are not against stronger and more active SDF but they continue to be opposed to large increase of military capability (Berger 1998) and nuclear allergy is still strong. Japan's participation in international activities can be explained from a neoliberal point of view. However, it is pointed out its support for UN PKO was accepted after intense domestic debates (Dobson 2003).

Abe and other conservative politicians do not accept the 'core tenets of anti-militarism', but they impose constraint on them, for example acquiring nuclear weapons' capability

(Hagström & Gustafsson 2015: 16; Hook et al 2011). Japanese national identity of ‘non-nuclear’ country is still powerful enough to constrain the government’s policy to normalize in this regard (Soeya 2005).

1.3.3 Acceleration of the Challenge to the Pacifist Mantra: A Debate on Values and Identity

The constitution remains a powerful normative constraint to the exercise of the right of collective self-defense and it is bound to remain so, short of drastic revision or scrapping of Article 9. The Abe administration attempts to reinterpret it without amendment of the constitution² but there are limits to what can be done to that effect (Hardacre 2005). However, it is pointed out that there is no kind of cultural or political atavism in regard to Japan’s security policy that should be self-constrained forever. It is possible to think that Japan is gradually modeling its image of military power while believing that such capability can be used in its interest (Pyle 2007). Cooney argues that Japan is ‘in the midst of a maturation process in which it is seeking to present itself as a great power’ (Cooney 2007), and Pyle contends that it is ‘on the threshold of a new era’ (Pyle 2007). Similarly, it is also said that ‘the emergence of a new national security consensus is observed that entails gradual change in Japan’s foreign policy’ (Samuels 2007). The new security-related legislation enacted in the 2000s seriously challenges the pacifist mantra for the first time since the Second World War (Maull 2011). The rising perception of a threat

² Achieving two-thirds majority votes in both chambers of the Diet is necessary to propose an amendment to the constitution. Next, majority of the total votes in a national referendum is required.

from China goes in the direction of the neorealist framework (Smith 2015). It explains why the argument of the normal state emerged again among politicians (Ozawa 1993; Koizumi 2003) and academics telling that ‘military normalization was indeed in the cards’ (Hughes 2009; Oros 2008).

If it looks paradoxical in using realism and neorealism theories, in accepting the constructivist concept that ideas can originate from social actions created through shared experience it is possible to justify why values and ideas became more important in Japan’s foreign policy just when the country lost self-confidence and was trying to build a new identity and role. The concepts of the ‘arc of freedom and prosperity’, ‘value-oriented diplomacy’ and ‘proactive pacifism’ in the first and the second Abe administrations were born through intersubjectivity and can be considered the result of this drive toward new identity and roles (Hosoya 2011a).

At the same time, historical revisionism and nationalism also challenge the antimilitaristic norm (Berger 2014: 10). As Katzenstein pointed out culture and identity are an important strategic resource for nationalists if they want to promote their interests (Katzenstein 1996). As a matter of fact, identity politics is endlessly contested in the media, textbooks, museums, shrines, in the streets, and in school ceremonies. For Nakano (2016) Abe’s desire is to rewrite the shared history dominant narrative with other Asian countries before and during the war with the help of revisionists. However, according to Hashimoto (2016) the identity of pacifist values and norms is so engrained in the Japanese psyche that Japanese people are ready to resist Abe’s attempt to change it. In Nakano’s view (2016),

the conservative elites are driving this jingoist and revisionist movement against the feelings of the population at large.

Saaler (2016) expresses the view the activities in the Diet of groups such as the Nippon Kaigi (the Japan Conference), and the Shinto Seiji Renmei (Shinto Association of Spiritual Leadership) support a drive to spread revisionism. So, Saaler agrees with Nakano (2016) to argue that Abe's ideological agenda is to throw away the postwar pacifist philosophy because it drained away all the vitality of the Japanese political, social, and educational systems. As a strong symbol of Abe's way of thinking in this respect, Saaler points out that he is even ready to challenge the judgment of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) in which Japan's war leaders were found guilty of waging a war of aggression.

1.4 The Insufficiency of the Traditional Explanations

1.4.1 The Limitations of the Realist Arguments

In specific situations it may be right to think that the states have monolithic, rational and immutable simple identities in specific situations. If so it can be thought that they can easily balance or bandwagon their political activities in institutions that give the opportunity to lower transaction costs (Katzenstein 1996). In this respect the research from realism, neorealism and neoliberalism viewpoints that have been undertaken on the concept of the Yoshida Doctrine, the position of Japan in the Cold War and post-Cold War international system and the resilience of antimilitarism feeling have been insightful.

However, they may have looked to Japan from a too narrow focus. Therefore, the results that can be drawn remain uncertain.

In fact, it is more realistic to think states inherently challenge norms all the time and constantly construct and reconstruct identities and new national interests. Therefore, it is impossible to believe that they are actually unitary and their policies do not change over time. If realism does not completely vindicate constructivism and neoliberalism it gives at least some credit to their arguments.

Neorealists (and neoliberals) recognize to some extent the importance of norms in international behavior but they are said to neglect the constitutive norms of behavior (Dobson 2003). Thus, the international system has almost no normative content for them. Specific political values, ideas and beliefs may impose constraints and create opportunities on foreign policy but they cannot affect the very conception of state interest and change the orientation of foreign policy. So, because they do not have much influence on national security the state's identity is a given. Thus, political leaders with their specific identity, values and beliefs cannot be assumed to represent the people.

Because of all those limitations realism and neorealism's focus is too narrow to give precise and broad explanations about Japan's international behavior during the whole postwar period (Hook et al 2011). Shortcomings already appear in the analysis of Japan's policy during the 1960s and 1970s as seen in the text. From neorealism perspective, greater Japan's responsiveness to international changes, including in the security field, that would reflect growing economic power could have been expected (Catalinac 2007: 68) but it was not the case. Neorealism is not able to explain neither the behavior of Japan

after Japan continued to eschew the use of military means in foreign policy nor what roles Japan desires to play in the world under Abe's administration. Should he attempt to pursue a nationalistic agenda security-related conflicts could occur with neighboring countries and even Japan's ally may object to it. Abe's value-driven diplomatic initiatives could drive relations with China in negative direction and those with Western powers in the positive one. However, it has to be pointed out that even in the latter case not all the Abe agenda may trigger positive reaction. Western countries may like the emphasis on sharing democratic values and the appeal to multilateralism. Conversely, they may feel uneasy with his nationalist values that seem to contradict the defense of universal values and could even be perceived as putting in question the postwar democratic values in Japan. Neorealism is not very helpful to make a deep analysis of Abe's initiatives in those regards (McCormack 2014).

As explained beforehand realists are unable to provide explanation to the paradox to see Japan's leader decides to emphasize Japan's military role just at a time of economic decline while it was observed that Japan did not attempt to do so when it was at the peak of its economic power. It seems contradictory to realist theory. It is difficult to explain the emergence of a leader expressing the desire to see his country play a stronger international role, just at a time of growing economic and military tensions in East Asia, while committing to remain a pacifist state.

It has been observed previously that realists neglect ideas and values in their analysis. However, it may well be the case that Abe's concept of national interest is different from that of the previous leaders. It may also be true that what Japan considers its national

interest is different from country to country. Even in the case of one country, for example China, some elements of Japan's policy can indeed be explained using realism but it is not the case of all of them. As explained beforehand Japan's behavior with China in term of security policy is based on realism theory but elements of nationalism (including historical revisionism) are also present in Japan's behavior. In the case of the relations with the US and other like-minded countries, Japan has constantly downplayed any nationalistic aspects in favor of appeal to universal values and has been cautious not to arouse concern about issues related to the Second World War. US role in building democracy in Japan has never been seriously challenged. Up until now, as observed beforehand, Japan has always emphasized its democratic credential and close relationship with Western countries in terms of values (Maull 2011).

In the specific case of the Abe administration, elements going against realism in Abe's foreign policy speeches and policies are observed. As seen in several instances in the thesis Abe has always been cautious not to show openly his political beliefs, both in Japan and international settings. Keeping attuned with the domestic audience is considered especially important in view of the difficult juggling between contradictory demands he faces and the necessity to maintain afloat the coalition with the NKP. Such focus goes against the grain of realism theory which tend to neglect domestic elements. Even if the Japanese government wants to reinforce the US relations it faces domestic opposition. As seen before, the NKP influences the administration's foreign policy not to deviate from postwar pacifism. The NKP is not against the reinforcement of the Japan-US alliance but it has to take into account the pacifism leaning of its constituency, the Buddhist group

called the Soka Gakkai (the name means ‘Value-Creation Society’). Therefore, it imposes limitations on the government’s initiatives. This can be seen in the very narrowly circumscribed conditions of foreign operation imposed on the SDF that are included in the Collective Self-Defense law (Fisker-Nielsen 2016).

Whether it is because of the NKP’s influence or not, Abe constantly reiterates that he prefers economy to military forms of power along with the denial of Japan’s reemergence as a militaristic country again. He also indicates that he wants to eschew unilateralism and dominance over other countries and always repeats Japan’s attachment to universal values such as democracy, human rights and rule of law. Moreover, he also confirms Japan’s commitment to aid developing countries in the UN (Kitaoka 2014). So, Japan does not necessarily put emphasis all the times on the realism-driven external threat. Rather more, under Abe’s leadership Japan actually insists on the trust that Japan has to some extent toward other countries and international organizations. He balances between internationalism and nationalism, taking the international and national actors into account concurrently.

If all those aspects are not included into the analysis, the only interpretation that could be given from the analysis of Abe’s foreign policy would be that it merely copes with the political and economic rise of China and with the North Korean threat in a rational way without taking in account national and international constraint.

1.4.2 The Limitations of the Liberal Arguments

Neoliberalism takes identity, values and belief into account as important variables. They play a role between the assumed state interest and the results of its behavior (Katzenstein 1996). In both cases the degree of interpenetration of the social environment and the actors cannot be neglected. In this view states operate in environments that create constraint and opportunity. Liberalism considers states rational although they think a state has multipolar characteristics. Non-state actors, such as international organizations, and domestic political actors cannot be neglected in determining a state's foreign policy. One of the most important points in liberalism is probably the contention that there is much less to gain from war than before. Economic interdependence and the presence of international organizations make the cost of war quite high because it may lead to trade loss and lower influence internationally.

Liberals explain well why Japan has been a pacifist state for a long time from a legal and economic point of view, especially Japan's constitution and Japan's economic centered-policy. Nevertheless, there are limits to the validity of the liberal arguments. Since the Second World War, Japan has made the centrality of the UN one of the three axes of its foreign policy³ (Hook et al 2011). Japan's contribution to the UN budget is the second highest in the world and the UN enjoys high level of support from the Japanese people (DeFilippo 2002). However, when the UN had issues with the US, Japan often sided with the latter. This was the case with the UN Resolution on the eradication of nuclear weapons - Japan abstaining to support the UN Resolution (the Mainichi 2016a) and at the time of

³ Another two pillars are 'Cooperation with the free world', and 'Maintaining the position as a member of Asia' (Togo 2005).

the Iraq War when Japan decided to side with the US without resolution from the UNSC. So, the UN-centered policy may compete at time with Japan's support for US foreign policy and Japan's behavior has to be analyzed according to the context (Catalinac 2007: 71-72).

Liberals also tend to interpret in an exaggerated manner the influence of domestic economic interests over geostrategic concerns and see economic relationship a security provider. Still, cold political relations can coexist with good economic relations. Japan and China have deliberately put a number of political disputes on the shelf and the two countries have developed successful economic relations. However, those economic relations are increasingly asymmetric with China becoming more important to Japan's economy than Japan to the Chinese economy (Smith 2015). Japanese leaders believe that it could threaten Japan's desire to preserve its political leverage in Asia. It shows that economic interdependence has limits, especially when one country seems to take the lead and is perceived as a political and economic threat.

Actually, while neoliberalism emphasizes that institutions change concepts of national interests of the member and reduce the incentive of going to war through regulatory norms in institutions, the disputes between China and Japan have widened in matters of security and regional organizations. The East Asian region becomes an arena of struggle for hegemony (Drifte 2014). This makes security cooperation unlikely although functionalism assumes its probability in view of economic interdependence. So, liberalism cannot explain why both Japan and China persist in their struggle for the small Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea and cannot shelve the issues completely anymore.

The perception that political - and even military ones - clashes between China and Japan is now plausible may be reflected in the statement of Abe comparing the current situation between Japan and China to that between Germany and the UK and France before the First World War. The War erupted despite flourishing business relationships among European big powers (Reuters 2014a).

So, it could be argued that liberals overestimate the importance of economic interdependence to reduce security tension. Long-standing trust cannot be created only through economic relationships with disregard or underestimation of the security environment. China started to fill the military gap with Japan after the end of the Cold War. In turn, this is leading to Japan's military reinforcement through closer security-related relationships with the US and other democracies. Finally, liberalism explains democracies come to terms with each other but it does not explain Abe's linkage between security and economic cooperative aspect that appear in his statements about the TPP. They may cause security dilemma in the region and raise questions about why Japan wants to extend its international security role.

1.4.3 The Limitations of the Constructivist Arguments

As stated beforehand, for constructivists, understanding of state's behavior requires the association of both material and discursive powers (Hopf 1998: 177). Because of those features constructivism is useful to explain the change of actor's behavior, thus to understand for example why Japanese diplomacy was passive in the pre-Cold War era but became gradually proactive and internationally cooperative in the post-Cold War era.

However, constructivism does not offer clear criteria to understand to what extent which norms, international or domestic norms affects post-Cold War Japanese foreign policy, including Abe's foreign initiatives. As a result, it is difficult to learn when, to what extent and how the constructivism-driven expectations of behavior coming from the domestic and international environments can guide Japan's foreign policy initiatives. Japanese foreign policy studies from a constructivist viewpoint cannot explain how other states have developed their expectations from Japan to undertake and not to undertake certain actions. Most of them focus only on war experience and explain how it has shaped the perceptions that deter the government from deviating from antimilitaristic norms. They do not give the opportunity to understand the opposite direction, i.e. how Abe perceives Japan's NRC and how external factors affect the government's change of perception. There are few empirical studies that would help back up the arguments.

Many studies show that the Abe administration seems to clash with deeply engrained anti-war sentiments. The government and the traditional pacifist ideas are different on key issues, leading to role contestation (Hirata 2016). However, the actual impact of role contestation on Japan's behavior in foreign policy is still unclear. So far, there is little concrete information about its level and scope. Some may consider Abe hawkish but it cannot be denied that his administration enjoys support from the public. His policies do not seem to reflect only his perspective but also embodies the population's viewpoint, including about amendment to the constitution (Nakanishi 2015). Indeed, while Japanese people are attached to pacifism they are not opposed to certain changes in the constitution that would reinforce the roles of the SDF, for instance. Likewise, even though the Abe

administration adopts what China and South Korea consider provocative foreign policy initiatives and reignites historical issue inside and outside Japan, there are few constructivist explanations that would give the opportunity to grasp the reality of the relationship. China remains an indispensable trade and investment partner and Japanese companies do not seem to suffer from politics. In fact, two new phenomena are observed. Chinese tourists are becoming an engine of growth in Japan and Chinese companies are massively investing in Japanese small and medium sized companies (Tselichtchev & Debroux 2009). Therefore, despite the undisputable tension that causes the Senkaku Islands dispute and Japan's indirect involvement in the South China Sea (SCS), it cannot be said that the relations with China deteriorated. Reinforcement of military might, deepening of the relations with the US, and the building of relations with other allied countries has recently been observed in Japan. It could be thought that a key objective of those policies is to counter the rise of China. However, as pointed out before it has to be asked how it can be reconciled with the reiteration of the importance of having a good relationship with China and antimilitarism in Abe's statements (Maull 2011).

1.5 Role Theory Approach in Research on Japan

1.5.1 Role Theory as an Interpretative Tool

As Aggestam (2004) stated NRCs do not cause states conduct directly. Rather, they give support in providing reasons and motives for behavioral patterns. Therefore, similar to conventional constructivism, role theory cannot explain foreign policy behavior in a positivist sense. However, it can be utilized as an interpretative tool that exposes and

highlights the perspectives and viewpoints of decision-makers and register possible linkages to foreign policy behavior. In this sense, role theory is part of constructivism, producing not causal explanations but interpretative explanations (Benes 2011: 8).

Yet, role theory is different from conventional constructivism by using NRCs to clarify state's objectives, duties and responsibilities. Its theoretical tools of analysis permit the exploration of the regulative and constitutive effects of roles in international relations. So, it gives the opportunity to investigate more precisely the impact of norms and ideas on the selection of behavior and strategic outlook of a given country. However, Benes (2011) has pointed out that role theory seems to neglect the fact that national identity and role are not limited to domestic experience of the state decision-makers. It tends to forgo the role prescriptions coming from the structure of international expectations. Responding to this criticism role theorists increasingly acknowledge the impact of the international structure (external expectations) (Benes 2011: 6). It remains to be seen how it can be applied to the specific case of Japan, namely, how Japan's and its alter-parts NRCs connect intersubjectively, fit and evolve together over time (Sakaki 2011: 307). The next section describes and analyzes the research on Japan with implicit and explicit use of role theory.

Without using role theory Inoguchi and Bacon (2006) argue that Japan can be expected to utilize military might in order to become a normal global power from the 2010s onwards. Their viewpoint is that ideas of appropriate role shape the state's behavior. In the same line Catalinac (2007) makes an analysis of Japan's national security policy in putting emphasis on the international roles of Japan. The author argues that Japan's NRC

shifted from pragmatism to proactiveness during the period between the Gulf War and the Iraq War.

1.5.2 Elgstrom's Research on Japan's Foreign Policy during the Cold War

Elgstrom (1988: 166-167) recognizes that expectations voiced by the alter-part influences the formulation of NRCs and thus they must be taken into consideration. However, he also observed in his study examining ego and alter-part NRCs of Japan between 1969 and 1982 that the behavioral expectations of foreign countries toward Japan were more passive, reactive, and ambiguous than those held by the Japanese people themselves (Elgstrom 1988: 208). This seems to confirm the centrality of the ego-part compared to the alter-parts. He also conducted a research on to what extent the Yoshida Doctrine changed before and after 1993 when a change of government occurred for a short period by analyzing prime ministers' speeches in the Diet. He concluded that it did not change.

1.5.3 Macleod's Research on the Aftermath of the Cold War

Macleod examined Japan's NRC in the 1990s in explicitly referring to role theory. His argument is that Japanese NRC comes naturally from outside the country. National identity cannot do more than just merely determine the way the roles are played. Japan is becoming more assertive because the evolution of the international system and the demands of Japan's neighbors and the US are all pulling in the same direction (Macleod 1997). He focused on speeches referring to responsibilities and duties delivered by prime

ministers, foreign ministers, and parliamentary vice-ministers. From the presentation of Japan's NRC, he has drawn a portrait of how Japan views itself. For Macleod, Japan considers itself a prosperous country that has Asian roots but is also a long-standing member of the community of Western advanced industrial countries. It is a peace-loving country eschewing power and preferring influence to have its voice heard. Its overwhelming preoccupation is to be perceived as non-threatening by the neighboring countries and its partners.

Macleod's study covers the period from 1991 to 1993, regional leader was the prominent role but Japan did not appear to pay much attention to the developing world outside the Asia-Pacific region. Macleod argues that the notion of regional leader corresponds closely to the Japanese sense of identity as an Asian nation, whereas the role of leader in global cooperation implies a tendency to conform to the expectations of those countries that want Japan to assume greater international responsibilities. While reluctant to assume political roles commensurate with its great economic power, Japan seeks to project the image of a pacifist country. Macleod considers that the most important point is that Japan appears torn between idealized perceptions of not just the West and Asia but also of its own sense of uniqueness created by 'an invasive socialization process' experienced by most Japanese throughout their lives. He also indicates that Japanese pacifism may be undergoing gradual changes and that value-oriented foreign policy is nothing new in Japan.

He also indicates that Japanese pacifism may be undergoing gradual changes and that value-oriented foreign policy is nothing new in Japan. Elements related to values appeared

since the era of prime minister Nakasone in the 1980s (Macleod 1997). Macleod argues that if identity is at the root of Japan's role conceptions more than external factors, then one would expect to find little evidence of rapid change in these conceptions between the post-Cold War period and after the Second Abe administration. This does not mean that there could not have been any changes at all, but rather that most of the observed changes have been incremental and might have started before the emergence of the Abe administration (Sakaki 2015: 22)

1.5.4 Hirata's Research on Role Contestation in Japan

Hirata (2016) addresses this issue, especially related to role contestation. She explains that role contestation can trigger shifts in security policy orientation when it leads to a new distribution of power. When politicians defending a different strand of NRC take over, they can be expected to insert their NRC viewpoints into their foreign policies and, subsequently, it may lead to policy changes. Moreover, in parliamentary democracies, role conflict may well erupt across intra-party lines, but it is furthermore the case in coalition cabinets, which is the case of Japan since the beginning of the century.

From that perspective she analyzes Japanese foreign policy from the end of the Second World War to the second Abe administration. She focuses on the domestic interactions or role contestations to understand change and continuity in a state's security policy. She says there are four salient NRC categories: mercantilism, normalism, pacifism and nationalism. Emphasis on fast economic revival and growth, alongside with low defense spending allowed by the US security umbrella characterizes the mercantilist strategy

(Hirata 2016). One important thing is to contribute peacefully to the world order through collaboration with other advanced countries, economic aid to the developing world and support to the international monetary order. Conversely, normalists advocate for the removal of the obstacles that constrain security activism, especially Article 9 and the limitations to the right to collective self-defense. On the contrary, pacifists adhere to stringent interpretation of the constitution which denies the possession of military forces on the strict interpretation of the constitution which denies the possession of armed forces. At the other end of the political spectrum, nationalists glorify Japan's wartime past and push for remilitarization. According to Hirata the two former NRCs have been marginal in the political world. She explains that mercantilists prospered during the Cold War but their influence declined thereafter. Conversely, normalists became strong in the political world from the 1990s onwards with the growing demand of the US for an expanded role for Japan in the framework of the Japan-US security alliance. As a result, Hirata argues that Japanese security policy changes take place in line with normalist views. However, she points out that the foundation of the legal system for national security remains rooted in mercantilism and that the population at large support mercantilism and reject the normalist NRC. She makes the point that the pacifist and nationalist NRCs have always lacked mass appeal because of their extremism. They are not likely to disappear, though, but their impact is bound to remain marginal in the formulation of security policy (Hirata 2016).

1.5.5 Sakaki's Research Focusing on Ego-Part in Japan and Germany

Focusing exclusively on the ego-part, Sakaki (2011) compares the NRC of Germany and Japan and attempts to demonstrate how cognitive and ideational variables affect the foreign policy making in Germany and Japan. She identified seven important NRC components in Japan-US relations: 1) Japan should promote global security through close partnership with the US, 2) Japan should be a proponent of 'universal', i.e. American values, 3) Japan should not act unilaterally and remain a reliable partner, and 4) Japan should help to stabilize the East and SEA regions, relying on the US-Japan security alliance first and foremost. At the same time Japan also sees itself as a 'non-militarist country', a 'contributor to regional cooperation' that may not always include the US. Moreover, Japan wants to be a 'respected and trusted country' (Sakaki 2011). She also contrasts German and Japanese policy-makers. The former are confident regionalists composed of mutual interdependence, multilateral cooperation and mediation, and supranationalism which enabled Germany to resolve security dilemma. In contrast, Japanese decision-makers adopted a balance of power policy and put emphasis on the presence of the US to secure stability in East Asia. Multilateralism is considered a kind of supplement and not an alternative in order to secure stability. Still, Japan shares a number of normative policies with Germany as well, such as militarism and unilateralism aversion and consideration of democracy and human rights. The difference between Germany and Japan in respect for multilateral cooperation largely originates from the quasi absence of organizations of the likes of the European Union (EU) and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty

Organization) in East Asia. The Pax Americana is based on a hub-and-spoke system with the US concluding bilateral cooperation agreements (Sakaki 2011).

In her conclusion Sakaki argues that Japan's NRC remains remarkably stable despite the changes in international environment. There are changes but quite minor and not liable to fundamentally induce the transformation of Japan's foreign policy (Sakaki 2011).

1.5.6 Maull's Research on the Japan-US Relations

From role theory's perspective Maull (2011) remarks that the US relies on Japan to contribute to its own defense against external military threat and to collaborate with the US more extensively in the region. Japan is expected to remain a faithful ally which contribute to sustaining US regional and global policies through material, financial, political and security support. Japan expects the US to provide protection while asking the US for the autonomy to remain a pacifist country, as well as to sustain the regional security system in East Asia. From a role theory point of view tensions and even drift may persist due to a lack of shared purpose and strategic visions between the two allies on some important issues (Maull 2011).

As Maull claims the US tends to consider itself the sole hegemonic power. In principle, it is committed to supporting international institutions and regimes, and also to international agreements such as with Japan. However, America is an 'ego-centric maximizer of national interest'. It is inclined to define its interests in national terms and not as interdependent with those of other countries. As a result, it could be said that alter-parts do not play a role as significant as other countries, including Japan. As Maull points out US instrumental viewpoint of foreign policy means that it always reserves the right to

act unilaterally and it has done so rather frequently in the case of its relations with Japan. In role theory term it may be argued that this is a case of alter-casting (Backman 1970: 316), i.e. the US cannot accept that Japan ever challenges its leadership in the relation. With the emergence of international terrorism as a major security threat, the US challenged Japan's willingness to show loyalty and solidarity after the terrorist attack in 2001. The Koizumi administration played a role of a reliable ally the US expected, and it seemed to put the relationships on a good footing again. Maull also argues that suspicion about US intention is observed in the way Japan has to cope with the rise of China as an economic and political great power. In the 1990s, the Japanese political elite perceived the Clinton administration as neglecting Japan in search for a 'Strategic Partnership' with China. Maull points out that the Japanese political elite also perceived American President Barack Obama's 'Asia pivot' policy intended for China. The danger of mutual perceptual NRC inconsistency could emerge again because the stronger commitment that the US seems to expect from Japan goes along with what could be considered lingering doubts of the US about Japan's loyalty and reliability. Maull points out that if the foundations of the Japan-US alliance are examined from a role-set point of view some aspects may be different but compatible but others are actual or potential sources of conflicts. First, the two countries apparently share implicit assumptions in their words and deeds even if they do not appear in foreign policy statements. They may have been justified in the past but they may not be so clear in the current changed environment and cannot always be taken for granted anymore.

1.5.7 Maslow's Research on the Japan-China Relations

According to Maslow (2016), seemingly contradictory dimensions of partnership and rivalry describe Japan-China relations. Maslow argues that the impact of past roles of aggressor and victim have affected Japan-China relations. This is in the line of 'historicity of roles' (Maslow 2016: 190). As explained before, in the process of establishing amiable relations after an aggressor/victim chasm, differences were made less important as China decided not to claim compensation for the aggression from Japan and Japan broke off diplomatic relations with Taiwan (Drifte 2014). Japan does not fully accept the idea of 'one China' that would politically include Taiwan but it says that it 'respects' the position of China on the issue. As a result of this 'role bargain', relations were normalized in 1972 with the opening of official diplomatic relations. Japan worked hard to keep China in international society in the aftermath of Beijing's violent oppression of the 1989 Tiananmen Square democratic movement that made China a pariah state again (Maslow 2016). There has been a growing economic partnership between Japan and China since the 1990s and this prevents political tension from escalating. China is the second largest trade partner and investment destination for Japan since 2007. For China, Japan is the second largest trade partner next to the US as of 2016 (Zhang 2016).

However, after the Cold War, nationalism became strong in both countries due to domestic political and economic changes in Japan and China. As seen above, rivalry between the two countries is gradually overcoming friendly relations.

1.5.8 The Limit of Existing Role Theory Approach

Regardless that the Abe administration expresses it is eager to have Japan play bigger roles in the world, comprehensive role theoretical analysis of the Abe administration does not exist. Elgstrom's researches were remarkable to take into account both ego-part and alter-part. But, his assumption may have only held true during the Cold War when the Yoshida Doctrine strongly influenced Japan's NRCs. Both ego-part and alter-part remained exceptionally stable in the Cold War bipolar system. Japanese domestic and international roles were limited in many ways (Samuels 2007). However, it became less true during the post-Cold War period when international interaction increases. Elgstrom's second research and Macleod's analyses are important but their researches date from the 1990s and thus it copes with only the first stage of the transformation of NCR, including the development of new elements of Japanese identity that has started with the end of the Cold War. The Abe administration extols value-oriented foreign policy more explicitly and in a different internal and external context. In the 1980s and 1990s the memory of the Second World War was still not far away in the mind of Japanese politicians, intellectuals and the population at large. Therefore, it was natural that a strong desire of maintaining a strictly non-military stance in international affairs was subsiding within Japan's intellectual and political elites. China was opening to the world and considered a huge business opportunity. It was only a question of time before it became a democratic country (Hosaka & Togo: 2012). The advent of the next generations of politicians without direct experience of the war means a new awareness of the roles of Japan in international affairs. With the demand from the most important alter-part, the US, to participate in the war

against terrorism, Japan's roles have already started to expand in the 1990s (Seizelet 2007). Thus, they can be expected to have furthermore significantly evolved twenty years later. Japanese decision-makers still show concerns of neighboring countries. As seen above, China is now considered an economic rival and a military threat despite successful economic relationship (Drifte 2014). SEA countries may not expect as much from Japan in business terms as in the 1970s and 1980s. However, it is possible to think that they consider Japan an important ally to protect the region against China's complete domination. Internally, Japanese people are less self-confident than in the 1990s because of the perception of relative economic decline and the subsequent loss of influence in the region. All those reasons make valuable to use role theory to examine the dynamic of Abe's value-oriented and proactive foreign policy 20 years after Macleod and the complex interaction that it may have with the nationalistic revival that reemergence of Abe, who is described as more 'realist and conservative' than 'any political leader in Japan' (Purnendra & Horimoto: 2016), represents. In this connection another limitation of Macleod's research is in his exclusive focus on foreign policy elites in the LDP and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). The impact on role formulation by the NKP which is eager to maintain traditional pacifism and the constitution is absent although it can be argued that NRC construction and expression derive also from the Japan Conference with which Abe has intimate relations.

Except the study of Macleod (1997) that uses role theory in taking the international dimension into account, i.e. exploring the mechanisms of role change because of external expectations, most studies have in common a focus on ideational influences such as

culture, identity, and historical experiences that originate at the domestic level. Some studies take into account international dimensions but almost exclusively focus on the bilateral ties such as Japan-US (Maull 2011) or Japan-China (Maslow 2016) although it is natural that a country takes several countries' expectations into account concurrently. The work of Hirata (2016) and Sakaki (2011) do not incorporate alter-parts into their research and their empirical analyses focus on sources of national roles. It is worthwhile to enlarge the scope of the analysis in considering both ego-part and several key alter-parts comprehensively, and to examine the specific impact of the Second Abe administration in view of the important regulative and constitutive changes that his initiatives have brought to the fore.

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Concept of NRC and Role-Set

Role theory emphasizes the interaction between an actor and international structure. It aims to check the linkage between the role and behavior of a state in foreign policy. Holsti drew on Mead's symbolic interactionism (Mead 1934) and the study of this author to analyze the impact of the behavior of 'others' on an individual's self-conceptions to develop his conceptual distinctions between the 'self' and the 'alter' in the case of states' relations (Holsti 1970: 237). Symbolic interactionism remains the core source of inspiration for role theorists until today (Harnisch 2011) as it is also the case of mainstream constructivism (Wendt 1987).

Thus, role theory's objective is to describe and analyze a variety of roles, which are generally defined as a set of norms that describe the state's objectives, interests, obligations and responsibilities. They can be understood to be social positions or 'socially recognized categories of actors' (Stryker & Statham 1985: 323) constituted by expectations about proper behavior in an organized group (Thies 2010). In his first publication Holsti (1970: 260-270) selected 71 heads of state and government, including foreign ministers. Then, he looked at their statements related to foreign policy. His core argument is that when they become embedded in the leader's discourse, roles define foreign policy optimum within a specific range. Roles can be encouraged but others may be proscribed because they are considered outside of the range. The agents are actively creating and transforming the social structure all the time but they are also influenced by it at the same time because they cannot neglect the existing symbols, language, social

customs in their behavior. So, agents and structures are not independent because there is a constant interaction between both. Wendt explains as such:

‘Agents are inseparable from social structures in the sense that their actions are possible only in virtue of those structures, and social structures cannot have causal significance except insofar as they are instantiated by agents. Social action, then, is ‘co-determined’ by the properties of both agents and social structures’ (Wendt 1987: 365).

Due to the understanding of the internal and external interactions, role theory gives the opportunity to study foreign policy issues through relevant angles that cover political but also social, and economic dimensions. As a result, state’s objectives, duties and responsibilities can be clarified with concrete research tools.

A country can possess multiple NRCs at any one time that forms a set. Role-set is ‘a set of actors positioned as ‘significant others’ and the web of mutual expectations. It represents a dynamic and interconnected system’ (Walker & Simon 1987) that is composed of the sum total of a country’s role conceptions (Aggestam 2004). Walker and Simon (1987) argue that the structure of the role-set is a product of the role location process, which can be defined as the interactional process by which an actor locates itself and the other in the social structure. As will be explained later the selection of proper role location is important in order to avoid role inconsistencies that can degenerate into role conflict. The articulation of a national role and role-sets shows preferences, concretizes an image of the world, triggers expectations, and influences the definition of the situation and of the available options. If a state changes its role in the social structure to correct an

inconsistency or resolve a role conflict the whole role-set will also change (Benes 2011: 7).

2.2 The Intersubjective Character of NRCs

Defining roles subjected to norms and having those roles accepted by other countries are the objective of the state (Le Prestre 1997). Thus, as claimed by Holsti it can be said that role performance, ‘the general foreign policy behavior’ of a state, can be understood through NRC (Holsti 1970: 306-307). Holsti defines NRC as follows:

‘A national role conception includes the policy-makers’ own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems’ (Holsti 1970: 245-246).

Building on this definitions Krotz (2002) explains that the state defines the strategies, tactics and tools seen as legitimate and acceptable in foreign policy within the respective countries. Roles are often modified through words and (inter) actions of many individuals. The changes can be limited or important and the involved actors may be more or less influential in devising the social order. As Krotz points out: ‘National role conceptions make [certain] interests and policy options intuitively implausible, categorically exclude them as wrong or unacceptable, or make them unthinkable’ (Krotz 2002). So, NRCs are built over time by formative events, failure or success of certain policies. All of them become kinds of shared experiences that shape collective convictions and

represent perceptions based on the way the state regards and understands the world in interpreting them (Sakaki 2011: 9). So, roles are conceived of intersubjectively shared objects that become the collective memory of a society which political leaders represent and reflect to the outside world through decisions, commitments, rule-making and actions (Holsti 1970; Walker & Simon 1987; Harnisch 2011).

They are ‘in part an effect of learning and socialization in interactive negotiation processes...where self-conceptions are confronted with others’ expectations’ (Elgstrom & Smith 2006). States express their preferences and roles resulting from negotiated agreements. During the process of mutual understanding certain patterns and both implicit and explicit characteristics of the behavior of a country become recognizable. It makes its behavior predictable and stabilizes the boundaries of understanding. It can be said that the individual and social structure are conceptually linked through expectations that practice makes increasingly refined and stable. Bengtsson and Elgstrom (2011) explain expectations include the understanding of its own place and position in society by the actor, and the appropriateness of the behavior of this actor in a specific social environment. They result from endless interactions in the process of which the actors express their preferences. The actors decide to authorize, proscribe, discipline and police and, in doing so, facilitate the reproduction of an intersubjective reality that encompass the expectations of all national and international communities (Hopf 1998: 179).

2.3 Ego-Part and Alter-Part

Expectations can come both from actors inside a country in which case they are defined as ego expectations (ego-part) and/or from external actors in which case they are called alter expectations (alter-parts) (Le Prestre 1997).

Interdependency of ego-part and alter-part at bilateral and multilateral levels, and constant reconstruction and recreation of implicit and explicit counter-roles are inherent in the nature of foreign policy roles. Countries often internalize alter-part expectations through the socialization of other countries' behavior (Holsti 1970; Aggestam 2004; Barnett 1993; Sakaki 2011).

Roles are divided into meta-roles and context-specific ones. A meta-role represents expectations of generic, predictable and stable role behavior encompassing several related issues. As Le Prestre (1997) points out a role reflects a claim on the international system, i.e. it is a constituent part of the recognition by international actors of a specific conception of national identity of a state. In the case of Japan, the 'structural environment of roles' that Maull (2011) describes means that during the whole postwar period, including that of the first Abe administration, the meta-roles of Japan are that Japan acts to maintain peace; does not become a militaristic nation again; works at the eradication of nuclear weapons, and does not challenge the historical conception of the countries with whom Japan fought during the war.

Context-specific roles relate to expectations of behavior that are particular to certain policy area, country, or geographic region (Harnisch 2011). In the case of Japan, it means that, for instance in the framework of the Japan-US relations, Japan will work at keeping

the Japan-US alliance and will share values with the US in a follower role; in economic terms, Japan will refrain from adopting protectionist policies that could damage the interest of US companies. Conversely, Japan's expectation is that the US will keep its commitment of protection of Japan and that Japan will never unilaterally attempt to change the status quo in East Asia and SEA. In terms of the relations with China, Japan will keep its promise to separate business from politics and will refrain from escalating the territorial conflict in the ECS and SCS.

2.4 Roles as Interpretative Tools

As Aggestam (2004) states NRCs do not cause states to conduct actions directly. Rather, they give reasons and motives for the behavioral pattern. Therefore, role theory cannot explain foreign policy behavior in a positivist sense. However, it can be utilized as an interpretative tool to expose and highlight the perspectives and viewpoints of decision-makers and register the possible linkages to foreign policy behavior. Roles can be expected to remain stable but they are inherently contested because they are linked to the roles of the other actors. The socially negotiated understandings emerge from multiple sources, and thus expectations will not always coincide or align, leading to possible change. As said before, the extent of roles' coincidence is important because discrepancy can lead to inconsistency and subsequent conflict if no negotiated agreement can be concluded. According to Maull (2011), such discrepancy may emerge about the perception an actor has of its own roles. For example, the actor may consider them 'better' in ethical and normative terms. However, it is possible that it does not coincide with the

expectations of the others. They may think that the actor misread its role conception and reject it. Certain roles are said to be structurally rigid and can end up creating strong constraint on social choices. The very existence of some other actors can even be in jeopardy in the most extreme cases (Stryker 2006: 227) but the risk of role inconsistency and conflict is always present. To avoid taking the risk, it is always possible that the ego-part renounces its role entirely. Conversely, if there is no agreement it may also decide to reject the others' one or attempt to impose its own. In that case the alter-part may reciprocate and, for example, decide to impose material sanctions or use normative persuasion, triggering mistrust and uncertainty that can eventually lead to conflicts (Sakaki 2011).

2.5 Role Conflict

Biddle (1986: 82) defines role conflict as the 'concurrent appearance of two or more incompatible expectations for the behavior of a [state]'. Sakaki (2011:31) distinguishes two main types of role conflicts: ego/alter role conflict when there is divergence between ego-part and alter-part about a role conception and 'endogenous role conflict' (originating from role contestation as seen below) where the actor faces role conception within the ego-part that are incompatible or extremely difficult to reconcile. Sakaki (2011: 31) adds another role conflict named 'exogenous role conflict'. This is a role conflict that results from a role conception raising different expectations among the alter-parts. The NRC may encounter the expectations of some alter-parts but be rejected by others.

In practice, role conflicts may encompass dimensions that the three types of conflict share. For example, Abe's proactive pacifism role conception can trigger both ego/alter role conflict and endogenous role conflict, while being accepted by some alter-parts. The US alter-part may welcome it if it means a stronger alliance because Japan takes on greater financial and security-related responsibilities, and the other Western allies may consider it an opportunity to strengthen relationships with Japan. However, it may remain difficult to secure sufficient support from the part of the ego-part attached to the traditional viewpoint on pacifism. The traditional Japanese pacifists are worried about the possible use of the concept to justify militarization. Proactive pacifism signifies championing peace through non-military policies for them (Ina 2016). Conversely, at the right side of the political spectrum the perception is that proactive pacifism implies that Japan can be more equal security partner of the US. Japanese normalists and nationalists want to deepen security cooperation with the US to deter China (Weston 2013: 171) but they also want Japan to be more autonomous from the US. These are antagonistic role locations that are difficult to reconcile through negotiation because of their value-laden features. The ambivalence and ambiguity found in Abe's foreign policy initiatives and peace rhetoric reflect his worries about endogenous role conflict going alongside ego/alter conflict with the US. As will be explained in details afterward, he finds himself in the position of having to navigate between two or even sometimes more positions. At times this may lead to contradictory role enactments.

If a compromise can be found, both endogenous and ego/alter conflict can be avoided. It would require that the NKP and the public opinion accept some levels of militarization

because of the looming threat from China and North Korea and because the Japanese can be convinced that it would not fundamentally change the pacifist meta-role of Japan. Overall it would vindicate the concept of normalization of Japan to a certain extent. At the same time Abe needs to convince right-wing supporters to tone down their demand and accept a very gradual and informal adaptation of Japan's role performance, while the US must accept that Japan cannot remilitarize on a large scale for the time being because of domestic constraints. Both the right in Japan and the US would recognize that the process of complete normalization will be long and tortuous and that to push for rapid change could be counterproductive. Also, if an agreement cannot be found because of role contestation, it can block, delays, weakens or completely impedes Abe's security initiatives. In this case the prospect of an ego/alter conflict becomes possible as well because of failing in meeting alter-part expectation when the US and the other democratic allies underestimate the role contestation in Japan and continue to push for remilitarization. As a result of Japan not fulfilling the expectations of the US and other democratic allies of more involvement in security affairs, they may doubt about Japan's reliability as an ally. At the end it could make difficult to achieve Abe's objective of the development of proactive pacifism and value-oriented diplomacy with other democracies. Concurrently, proactive pacifism can also lead to exogenous role conflict because the role enactment raises different expectations among the alter-parts. The US and the other democracies welcome Abe's legislation of new security laws in September 2015 to enable

Japan to change Japan's security policy⁴. The new security-related laws and policies during the first and second Abe administrations are attuned to what the US ally always expected from Japan. Through those initiatives Japan fulfills its expected context-specific role of faithful ally in the alliance. In contrast, China considers Abe's proactive pacifism the expression of an assertive and nationalistic Japan eager to be a big military power again under the disguise of value-oriented diplomacy emphasizing human rights, democracy and rule of law (Drifte 2014). Japan's nationalization of some of the Senkaku Islands and the involvement in the SCS dispute in the name of universal values of democracy, human rights and respect for the rule of law put in jeopardy the pragmatism of the Japan-China relations during the last forty years (Smith 2015; Drifte 2014). Moreover, it goes against the spirit of the most important postwar meta-role commitment to never utilize military means to solve conflicts in the region again. As a result, it threatens the perception of Japan as a 'reliable security partner', increasing the risk of ego/alter role conflict with China.

The perception of the Abe administration's willingness to rewrite the historical conception of the Second World War in the direction of legitimizing Japan's actions that had been condemned by the international community can become the source of both ego/alter and endogenous role conflict, although it is unlikely to be a source of significant exogenous role conflict. Ego/alter conflict is possible because all alter-parts, including the US and the other democracies are likely to have negative expectations on this issue. It

⁴ The security laws took effect in 29 March 2016. Collective self-defense becomes legalized to the minimum extent necessary. Rear area support does not have geographical restraint and the SDF's role expands. It is also possible to protect UN staff when they are attacked (The Mainichi 2016b).

contravenes the expectations toward Japan not to challenge the accepted postwar conception of history. Japanese leaders were condemned in the IMTFE for launching an aggressive war against Asian countries and the US. To challenge this conception cannot but lead to resentment that rekindles hostility among Asian countries and adds to the already high political tension (Seizelet 2007). On their part, Western democracies would have difficulties to deeply engage in security affairs with nationalistic Japan. Endogenous conflict is plausible as well because many Japanese people and the NKP are opposed to Abe's revisionist viewpoint (Ina 2016).

As just seen above, ego/alter conflict with China is possible. At the same time endogenous conflict is plausible as well about how to deal with China. There is a schism even inside the government, i.e. between the LDP and its coalition partner the NKP on the issue of relations with China. To envision a kind of China's containment policy, indirectly driven by the appeal to universal values that would aim to isolate China may not only be unrealistic but also counterproductive. China is an indispensable country and it is Japan's national interests to establish the best possible relations (Smith 2015). Japan should cooperate with China by harmonizing historical views, shelving the issue of sovereignty over Senkaku Islands, being non-interventionist in the SCS and working with China on their economic development. Potential exogenous role conflict also exists because alter-parts may differ in their expectations of Japan's role performance in this latter case. Japan's strengthening of relationships with SEA countries in the field of national and regional security is welcomed by some of them, notably the Philippines and Vietnam (Drifte 2014). However, this means a departure from the meta-role of non-interference in

political issues in the region through military means. The territorial issues involve China and some countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines, and Malaysia. For China, Japan has no stake in the disputes. Its involvement in them is irrelevant and must be interpreted as anti-Chinese policy (Drifte 2014).

2.6 Degree of Role Formality and Priority

Role expectations of the NRC may differ with regard to their obligation. They may also vary based on their degree of generality, scope, clarity, specificity, consensus, and formality of the position (Thies 2014: 6). Moreover, it is necessary to differentiate formal and informal roles. There are not many formal roles. They are those linked to the state sovereignty and those for which the expectations are largely acknowledged by the ego-part and alter-parts. Their existence is sanctioned by public knowledge (Thies 2013). Informal roles constitute the large majority of the roles and they are generally referred as social types (Klapp 1962). Stryker and Statham (1985: 323) define social typing as referring to the specific characteristics of an individual, appearing in the way that individual acts, or a 'socially recognized category of actors'. As Holsti (1970) points out social types can develop into different kinds of NRCs in the international system.

Not all alter-parts can be put on equal footing (Le Prestre 1997). As a result, all expectations do not acquire the same importance (Shih 2012). Countries have to respond to the expectations of a number of alter-parts that may be very different according to the particular relationship between the ego-part and the alter-part. Because of that the alter-part expectations are likely to be less homogeneous than those faced by the government

with the ego-part (Le Prestre 1997). Japanese attitude varies because different countries expect Japan to do different things on the same issue (or the same thing but differently and/or with the same intensity/level of relationship). For example, Western countries' demands on historical issues can be expected to be weaker than Chinese and Korean ones because of the different historical context. While security cooperation smoothly progresses with Western and Indian regional partners due to their relative neutrality about them, historical issues may prevent Abe's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine and hinder security cooperation with China and South Korea because of the population hostility toward Japan. Japan cannot completely neglect the US reaction either on those historical issues. The US is wary of a resurgence of Japanese nationalism and Japan's historical revisionism. Since the end of the war the US has imposed informal roles on Japan to embrace the postwar international liberal order and prevent the reemergence of prewar Japanese history interpretation and values insofar as those values challenge this order. Attempting to do so now, even symbolically through visit to the Yasukuni Shrine would mean to reconsider the US legacy of helping Japan become a democratic country. So, it cannot be overlooked that Japanese leaders consider positively some prewar Japanese values that may be in contradiction with democratic values, beautify Japan's military actions during the war and qualify the judgment of the Tokyo Trial of merely being a 'winner's judgment' (The Japan Times 2016a). Any kind of negotiated agreement is unlikely in this regard. The US can be expected to always refuse to compromise with the Abe administration on historical viewpoints that re-evaluates the war in terms that put in question Japanese aggression in Asia and against the US.

Therefore, complete conformity to all alter-parts is either unrealistic because of resource constraints or unfeasible (unacceptable) because of contradictions or mutual exclusiveness: ‘not all others are equally significant, however, so power and dependency relations play important roles in the story’ (Wendt 1999). Which alter-part is particularly meaningful depends on the role holder’s past experience (Harnisch 2011). This means that leaders must focus on the ego and alter-part prescriptions and expectations to establish priorities. Their preferences and predispositions are affected by expectations, proscriptions, role demands and role enactment. Thus, a given country (Japan for instance) could consider behavioral expectations of a specific alter-part legitimate, appropriate and/or relevant and could adopt and incorporate them into its NRCs through socialization in using the rule of prioritization (Le Prestre 1997). For example, if Japanese leaders embrace the self-conception of being a faithful ally or partner of a particular country (the US for instance), the demand coming from that country will probably have high importance in the decision-making. Japan may well side with the US because of the defeat and the strong dependence on security. In turn this could lead to problems of role competition between two important roles (Backman 1970: 315). This is exemplified by the case of Japan’s dilemma between its NRC of multilateralism and the UN-centered diplomacy, and its role of faithful ally to the US. In the Iraq War, the Japanese government prioritized being a faithful ally to the US over the UN-centered diplomacy when the US intervened in Iraq without UNSC resolution (Maull 2011).

2.7 Role, Identity and Behavior

Role theorists argue that NRCs give the state a sense of selfhood, identity, and purpose in international community: ‘Without [the sense of identity, individuals] cannot order their environments and consequently find social behavior intolerably difficult to understand and manage’ (Chafetz 1997: 664). According to Chafetz (1997), the same process occurs within the states. However, as Harnisch (2011) points out role is different from identity, although the two concepts are connected and often mixed, and are often utilized with the same meaning. Identity is at the origin of a number of rules for proponents of role theory. Holsti believes that different roles can emerge from national values and ideology (Holsti:1970). Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot (1996: 735) share this viewpoint when they explain that ‘role conceptions are generic statements of identity’. In specific contexts and time countries can play roles of ‘bastion of revolution-liberator, regional leader, regional protector, active independent, liberation supporter, anti-imperialist agent, defender of the faith, mediator-integrator, regional-subsystem collaborator, developer, bridge, faithful ally, independent, example’ and others (Thies 2014: 2).

In this thesis, the distinction is based on the claim that roles - what we should do - are also connected to the ideational factors that impact on the behavior of the state. However, they are more directly linked to action than identities which represent what we are. The thesis focuses on how various ego-part and alter-parts develop NRCs and expectations with respect to how Japan should behave. The points are examined in the specific case of the Abe administration’s behavior in regard to Japan’s meta-roles. It is true that these NRC expectations are very often influenced by how those actors (including Abe himself)

conceive the identity of Japan. In that sense there are indeed close links between role theory and the concept of identity. However, Sakaki (2011: 23) argues that an intersubjective process is at work with countries influencing each other expectations. This makes role theory different from identity theory.

2.8 Role Enactment and Role Change

Role enactment is related to how well one can play a selected role. Three core dimensions of role enactment are their number, efforts and time devoted to a specific role compared to other possible ones (Sarbin & Allen: 1968). The more roles one has the better one is ready to face the demands of social life. Enacting many roles creates advantages in facilitating the integration into the norms of society. For instance, a skilled role-taker mastering many roles in one's role-set stands a better chance than the unexperienced and thus unskilled role-taker with a smaller number of roles in coping with the effects of new and critical situations (Thies 2001: 701). As explained before it can be expected that role performances have relative stability over time. However, research demonstrates that roles can continue and others disappear, while another role-set can emerge that is different in content (Hirata 2016). Political leaders may undertake change in role-set according to the evolution of domestic and international situation. Thus, because they can adopt different interpretations of the ideational, material, and institutional internal and external context it can be argued that when a decision-maker changes the definition of the international situation, its interests will also change.

Oros (2014: 141) notes that it is the perspective foreign policy-makers have on the domestic players, for example the business elites and opinion leaders that create expectations. Role performance is built up through the recognition of the changes by others. Then, it is this formed role performance that impacts future recognition (Bengtsson 2009). Role holders continuously interpret expected social roles while the role performance forms external expectations (Harnisch 2011). Thus, role and role-set changes are important determining factors for role performance and NRCs (Harnisch 2011). Chafetz, Abramson and Grillot (1996: 741) argue that states do not usually abandon suddenly some NRCs suddenly. They tend to gradually lower their centrality or transform the meaning. Yet, rapid changes may take place when the leaders and citizens are strongly dissatisfied with the foreign policy. Adigbuo (2007) argues change of definition of roles can happen in two ways: 1) it could occur through unidirectional contests between the definitions of old and new roles, for example, whether Japanese pacifism should include dispatching the SDF outside Japan or not to keep the pacifistic ideal, and 2) it could occur in a way that is based on societal flexibility in regard to traditional roles. In the second case, change may be observed in a particular sector without indicating a movement going in one direction; greater flexibility of action may be accorded to the individual, and instead of one substituting for the other, the old and the new NRC become fused (Le Prestre 1997). In the case of Abe, the administration seems to intend to shift security policy without change of Article 9 because of the risk of role conflict with the ego and the alter-parts. Instead the Abe administration reinterprets the meaning of the Article 9 in its favor - creating a *fait accompli* that Japan is a 'normal'

country. The changes occur in the form of an informal role that Abe probably expects to formalize at one point in time. Social typing may become a social role in the future. The SDF is officially not an army but its activities are broadening to the point that the difference with a normal army not subjected to exceptional constraint (the constitution) are increasingly blurred. Also, when there is a necessity to adapt to international environmental change, modification and/or redefinition of roles can occur. The Abe administration perceives that Japan faces the issue of redefining its priorities and responsibilities given the unstable environment in East Asia resulting from China's expansionism. It justifies the very gradual shift from 'traditional' to 'proactive' pacifism.

2.9 Role Location, Adaptation and Learning

As explained before 'Role location' refers to the process of location of the actor itself and the others in the social structure (Thies 2009: 12; Benes 2011). A role and a proper position are selected that fit the specific situation to solve and avoid role conflicts. Processes of historical learning and adaptation are important in shaping role location. Role adaptation means strategy and instrument change when a role is played (Harnisch 2011). In this thesis the definition of adaptation is similar to the first three levels of foreign policy change in Hermann's typology that will be used in the process of analysis and explained in details later: 1) increasing or decreasing the use of certain instruments, 2) changing how and in what order certain instruments are used (tactics), and 3) changing the way the problem is perceived (strategy) (Hermann 1990:6). For Levy to learn is to change beliefs but it may also reflect the evolution of the degree of confidence one has in own beliefs,

or the rise of new beliefs, ways of doing things and skills that comes from study of observations and experiences. He makes the distinction between ‘diagnostic learning’, which entails ‘the definition of the situation or of the preferences, intentions, or relative capabilities of others’ (1994: 285), and complex learning, which entails a change in the ranking of the actors’ own preference(s) or a modification of the understanding of the nature of the political system within which they behave (Harnisch 2011). For Harnisch (2011), in rationalism and cognitivism, the actors change role conceptions when experience gives them the opportunity to get access to new information. In social constructivism, there is no causal sequence as in rationalism and cognitivism. Learning is the result of a constitutive process in which the actors create new roles they deem appropriate in the evolving environment in responding to signals and demands from the other member states. Once they have mastered their new roles and adjust their behavior to the expected standard, they can also reproduce what Harnisch (2011) calls ‘counter-roles’.

The Yoshida Doctrine came under strong criticism in the 1990s (Pyle 1995; Ishihara and Morita 1989). Ozawa (1993) claimed that the exclusive focus on business was an escape from international responsibility, specifically in the matter of security. The position of Japan in international society and the mindset of Japanese people had changed and his claim was that the Yoshida Doctrine not only infringed on Japan’s sovereignty, condemning it to perpetual dependence on the US but it also entrenched the image of a weak and procrastinating (and thus unreliable) Japan in the world (Weston 2013). In the US, Japan’s contribution was criticized as a mere ‘checkbook diplomacy’ after the Gulf

War (Hosoya 2011b). Qatar and Kuwait did not explicitly express their gratitude for Japan's financial and technical contribution because it was inconsequential to them.

There are indications in Japanese official discourses of the time and in the press that Japanese leaders and the population (Macleod 1997) deeply believed that Japan had significantly contributed to conflict resolution during the Gulf War in providing not only money but also unique expertise cultivated by the SDF (in this specific case, demining expertise). The idea that Japan's contribution to international community was limited to money - meaning that in terms of role location Japan is a country that wants to remain aloof and limit voluntarily its involvement in world affairs - has always been strongly rejected by Japanese authorities and considered misleading. In view of what the Japanese leaders and the population at large consider Japan's role location, it is normal that Japanese authorities insist on the deep technical and managerial involvement in UN civilian activities related to health, education and culture but also to peace. Thus, the very fact that Japan contributed without military intervention to the Iraq war was considered a positive point, enhancing the image of Japan as a peace-loving country. Japan's behavior squarely fitted to its traditional meta-role of a pacifist state based on non-militarism making Japan a unique case in terms of role location in the world. This was in line with what Japanese people was considering the alter-part expectation of Japan. According to Harnisch (2011), this was the Japanese 'me', i.e. the perception of position vis-à-vis others. But the fact is that, paraphrasing Harnisch (2011) when 'old routines do not promise to achieve the anticipated effects, namely material pay-offs and/or immaterial stabilizing effects for the self' they can lead to changes of the 'I', the individual

disposition. This calls for the 'I' part, to take over because it does not reconcile anymore with the 'me' in terms of perception of social norms through practices (Harnisch 2011). The reality that Japan learned after the Gulf War was that its political influence in world affairs was low and that its role location was misunderstood.

Borrowing from Levy's (1994) concept of learning, Japan learned that it had to play according to its own rules, i.e. it had to enlarge its role-set. Economic stagnation in the 1990s put the successful socio-economic model and the business-driven diplomacy of the postwar period into question. In the mind of Japanese leaders' economic difficulties meant that Japan's overall influence in Asia, especially in SEA also declined. Japan was no longer seen as a role model for economic development or a generous provider of expertise and finance (Smith 2015). Perceptions of relative economic decline occurred concomitantly with China's rise and growing assertiveness in the region.

Japan is likely to remain a key economic player in the region for the foreseeable future but cannot pretend to be the leader anymore if its strategy is solely based on economic power. Therefore, in view of the perception of 'China's threat' in the region, Japan's leaders, for example, Abe may well believe that some SEA countries' role expectation of Japan are also of provider of security-related expertise (including military hardware) and of political/legal support against China. Influential actors in Abe's conservative camp, for example the Japan Conference, strongly support such positions (Tawara 2017a) and expect Abe to abandon - or at least drastically reduce - the traditional pacifist stance in regard to military support.

Role inconsistency can evolve into role conflicts that are liable to cause alter-part role enactment change (Harnisch 2011). Probably the most important concern in the mind of Japanese leaders after the Gulf War criticism was that the US would reconsider its defense support (Hosoya 2011b). Some scholars argued that the sense of humiliation felt after the insufficient recognition of Japan's contribution and the fear that its role performance was perceived as inappropriate and could lead to change in role enactment by its most important alter-part were a turning point in regard to the reconstruction of Japan's identity, the shift to new socialization instruments and objectives, and the evolution of the NRC that they drove (Nakamura 2006; Maslow 2016; Singh, B 2016). This started the process of learning that led to the reconsideration of the meaning and impact of pacifism in Japan's NRC, triggering change in role enactment and performance that continues with Abe's initiatives since the start of his first administration in 2006.

Coming back to the concept of 'counter-roles', Harnisch (2011) insists on the point that foreign policy learning is not always limited to accepted or prescribed behaviors. Roles that actors learn may not be acceptable for some actors or the community in general (Harnisch 2011). Japan's learning from the Gulf War was indeed that it was necessary to be strong militarily to be respected in the international forum, which is the core argument of the proponents of Japan's 'normalization'. As seen before this is a response to the role demand of its most important alter-part. However, at the same time such adaptation of the role location may trigger role conflict because the end result of the 'normalization' process may be unacceptable not only to China and even friendly countries but also to the

traditional pacifist constituency in Japan if it means a significant departure from the non-militarism meta-role.

2.10 The Concept of Alter-Casting

Harnisch (2013) notes that ‘international roles belong to the group of immaterial social constructions that give meaning to international interaction and structures. As such, roles do not only induce behavior but also constitute actors. In this connection roles can also be called ascribed, of the master - slave kind, for instance. The new countries can be considered novices. They do not have many roles and mature countries often assign roles to them. This is the opposite of mature states’. Harnisch (2011) identifies ‘alter-casting’ as one of the modes utilized to bilaterally ascribed roles. He points out the term is used in cognitive role theory to designate ‘the conscious manipulation of one’s own role-taking behavior’ serving to shape or transform the role of another actor to create what would be considered appropriate role or a counter-role. For example, China and Japan compete to gain legitimacy in the international community. To do so, they attempt to cast their rival in specific roles. The Abe administration points out China’s neglect of international law and human rights, and presents China as a country purposefully clashing with the commonly accepted rules of the international community. It is time for China to take responsibilities corresponding to its important role in the world economy. Conversely, China alleges Japan is still a country unwilling to shed its prewar past and which does not genuinely accept the postwar order (Pugliese 2014). As a result of this constant alter-casting China and Japan’s fight for regional leadership may lead to role conflict.

In this regard, Backman (1970: 316) suggests that some role conflicts occur because of alter-casting. As stated before in the section explaining role conflict, Japan's policy in SEA could be considered an alter-casting case because there is a possibility that SEA countries perceive Japan as manipulative by pushing its universal value-driven brand of diplomacy. As a matter of fact, Japan is extremely cautious in this respect. In the case of the countries embroiled in territorial disputes with China, especially Vietnam, the issue of respect for the international rule of law is emphasized in order to cast China as the culprit. However, Japan never raises the issue of human rights and democracy in communist Vietnam and other SEA countries with shaky democratic credentials. In the case of Myanmar, for example, Japan prefers to insist on the traditional economic development side of its policy.

In the case of the Japan-US relationship, the US chooses a role as the 'leader' and concurrently casts Japan as the 'follower' (Maull 2011). Japan sometimes opposes the US, as will be seen afterward, especially in matters of business such as access to the Japanese market. Nevertheless, there have not been fundamental changes to the postwar casting. Any attempt to break it, i.e. Japan asking for equality in relationship (Ishihara and Morita 1989; Ozawa 1993) could create uneasiness or even role conflict because it would challenge the leadership position of the US that this latter country considers indisputable. It is pointed out (Maull 2011) that far from strengthening the Japan-US alliance it could instead send conflicting signals about the kind of relations both countries want with their most important alter-part in the region. Japan could perceive the US as reluctant in making joint decisions - for example in regard to the relations with China - and to make

technology transfers that could be used by the SDF. As a result, it could push Japan to look for alternative partners that Japan regards as sharing similar values in weaponry development, such as France, the UK, Australia and India. In relative terms, it could eventually lead to a gradual decline of Japan's close relations with the US.

2.11 Role Demand

Constraints exist on the choice of roles in specific contexts because of role demand (Sarbin & Allen, 1968: 510-514). Role demands are normally of an implicit nature but certain norms imposed by some situations demand the formal enactment of certain roles. For example, certain norms can include face-saving of the alter-part or strict reciprocity that demand specific roles when they are applied. So, it can be said that the context imposes role expectations in this case (Thies 2013). For example, Japan had to side with the US and not with the UN in the Iraq war. Priority of relations with the US imposed a choice on Japan. During the Cold War, successive cabinets rejected US demands to rearm in order to share military expenditure. Using Article 9 as legal constraint, they repeated conventional phrases that the constitution - that the US had actively supported immediately after the Second World War - prohibited Japan from waging war and to possess an army as well. Mainstream conservatives in the LDP were divided on the issue with some willing to accept the US demand and others who opposed it. However, all of them wanted the US to keep its commitment toward Asia. The nationalist right in the LDP accepted pacifism with qualifications (Seizelet 2007). It considered the civilian posture, i.e. the Yoshida Doctrine, an ascribed role (Le Prestre 1997) imposed by the defeat. It was

supposed to be a temporary constraint and Japan would relish any opportunity to gradually rearm. However, Yoshida and his successors continued to defend the NRC of a pacifist state based on non-militarism and focus on economic development. Support for the removal or even reinterpretation of Article 9 to enable Japan to wage war or to dispatch the SDF abroad remained weak. Arguments for amending the constitution stayed taboo (Seizelet 2007). In view of the identification of the Japanese people's role demand to protect Article 9, the LDP was willing to avoid a head-on confrontation with the pacifist constituency.

Since then, the meta-role of Japan has kept its benevolent, pacifistic, and no militaristic features. Japan has neither killed even a single person during the whole postwar period nor dispatched the SDF outside Japan up until the 1990s (Wada 2015). Japan has made efforts to keep peace and achieve the goal of total abolition of nuclear weapons; it has been active in financing developing countries through international organizations such as the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank as well as through ODA. The SDF's technical and humanitarian roles, for example in natural disasters and peace building, also played a role in the cultivation of the image of a country assuming its responsibility as civilian power in the international community (Kimijima 2011). The SDF provided assistance for the tsunami in SEA in 2004 and in the Philippines after the typhoon in 2013 (Kliman & Twining 2014: 16-21). At the same time, however, even after the Iraq war, the SDF's role was limited to the reconstruction of Iraq after the war while being protected by the Dutch army.

In the case of Japanese ‘pacifism’ what makes the situation exceptional is the fact that it has been enshrined in the stringent interpretation of the constitution. Japan is not the only country in the world having a peace clause and condemning war of aggression but it is argued that it is the country where it has led to the most constraining environment in political, sociological, psychological and legal terms (Seizelet 2007). Thus, the traditional pacifists consider the promotion of Abe’s proactive pacifism, a significant demarking from the traditional NRC. This distorts the very idea of what peace-defending activities should be and may destroy the perception of Japan as a ‘non-war’ nation. It took a long time to build the pacifist image and it gives the country a unique corporate and social identity. It is claimed to be a heritage to the world that has to be preserved. Japanese people who oppose Abe’s concept of proactive pacifism, argue that it should mean active engagement for the abolition of nuclear weapons, arms reduction, conflict prevention, resolution of poverty, and the spread of education and not building of military power in the name of peace (Kimijima 2016).

Until now this role demand of ‘Pacifism of Action’, inspired by the ideas of Galtung (1969) is enhanced in the academic world, the media, the education system, and in civil society with the presence of about 9000 grassroots Article 9 associations promoting peace-related activities (Kimijima 2016). Any involvement in defense and security matters has to remain limited, thus continuing to impose foreign policy constraint (Ina 2016). Thus, the creation of the National Security Council (NSC) and the enactment of the state secrets law in 2013 keeping strict control over breaches of state secrets (Weston 2013: 3), and the enactment in 2015 of the laws on collective self-defense rights are said

to increasingly clash with this role conception of an ideal-type of pacifist and non-militarist Japan (Kimijima 2016). Galtung also accuses Abe of dishonestly taking his idea of ‘positive peace’, which means absence of structural violence such as oppression, inequality, poverty and discrimination, for own use of proactive pacifism that just means Japan’s reinforcement of military might. So, Galtung considers Abe’s proactive pacifism totally different to positive peace⁵ (Akimoto 2018). For Galtung collective self-defense is an ‘anachronistic form of national security’ (Ryukyu Shimpo 2015).

2.12 Audience and Role Contestation

The debate on the role demand described hereinabove shows that domestic consensus over a country’s external relations is not always a given and there is a possibility of domestic role conflict along with exogenous role conflict (Hirata 2016). It is argued that a value-added point of role theory is precisely that it does not treat states as some kind of unitary ‘black boxes’ (Benes 2011: 4). Benes (2011) explains that domestic political process must integrate from vertical (elites versus the public) and horizontal (elites versus elites) points. Like ego/alter conflict, a country may have to cope with a number of roles or elements of a role that are mutually incompatible. As explained beforehand, instead of the term role contestation, Le Prestre (1997: 260) and Sakaki (2011) use the term of ‘endogenous role conflict’ to explain conflicts where the actor must confront mutually exclusive roles within the ego-part. In this thesis, the concept of endogenous conflict is termed role contestation. It means that the state is not considered a unitary actor. The

⁵ In fact, both ‘proactive’ and ‘positive’ are identically translated into ‘sekkyokuteki’ in Japanese. At least the Japanese audience may confuse the two concepts.

inclusion of the concept of role contestation aims to describe and analyze the contestation that occurs among all actors that have foreign policy-making power and establish how role contestation influences the country's foreign policy. In other words, while role conflict - ego/alter and exogenous role conflict in Sakaki's (2011) parlance - considers the ego actor unitary, it is not the case of role contestation. A political party (the NKP) and a political group the Japan Conference are considered as ego-parts' actors in this thesis. Therefore, ego-part is treated in a disaggregated manner. It is pointed out that some actors belonging to the ego-part can challenge the behavior of the state (Cantir & Kaarbo 2016). It is indeed the case of the NKP and the Japan Conference. Both have different orientations and roles for their country to enact. Role contestation has two dimensions, which refer to the lack of a consensus within the government (horizontal role contestation), which is the case of the role location of the NKP as a member of the coalition government, and the lack of consensus between the government and the public (vertical role contestation), which is the case of the Japan Conference which is strongly present in the ruling party elite, regarding the selection of a NRC in foreign policy. In all role enactments there are role performers, individual actors in complementary roles, and third parties called the audience. Those latter ones are present in several functions as observers of the interaction process between the two other parties (Sarbin & Allen 1968: 527-534). It is pointed out that the audience is very important in role theory but that it is often neglected (Thies 2009: 11; Sarbin & Allen 1968: 534). In fact, the audience is instrumental to explain the domestic ambivalence of the Japanese approach to changes in the international system (Thies 2009). It is said to construct the 'consensual reality' for the role in

validating and, thus, confirming or not the role enactment in sending positive or negative responses. It means its function is also to send a signal to serve the actor's role enactment. (Walker 1979: 177). At last, it keeps the role unchanged or, at least, stable over time by constantly checking the respect for role enactments. As seen above, Japanese governments until the 1990s used the opposition of public opinion to military activities to limit Japan's military support to the US. The consensus (Walker's consensual reality) on the pacifist mantra was kept alive through high-profile numerous symbols, for instance at Hiroshima and Nagasaki's yearly mass commemoration ceremonies of the atomic bombing. As mentioned earlier Japan's role enactment up until the end of the Cold War more or less fitted the external audience, in this case the US, China, South Korea and the SEA countries but also the domestic audience. Now, the NKP and the Japan Conference could be considered Abe's foreign policy discourse and behavior incompatible with the traditional role conception. The NKP urges Abe to compromise on his project of amendment of the constitution because the NKP believes it significantly demarks from the traditional pacifist NRC (Saltzman 2015: 503; Sakaki 2015; 18). The NKP presents itself as the defender of traditional pacifism representing those in the population who are reluctant to accept the stance of Abe's security policy (Pugliese 2015a: 107). The NKP is open to discussions about constitutional changes and is even thinking they are necessary. However, changes should not depart from the stance that Japan is a pacifist country based on non-militarism (Fisker-Nielsen 2016).

At the right side of the political spectrum, the Japan Conference is a main supporter for the administration that cannot be neglected. There has been a Diet members league, a

group of lawmakers affiliated with the Japan Conference, composed of both chambers since 1997. When it was formed, it had 189 members and the number continued to increase. As of November 2015, there were 281 diet members who belonged to the Japan Conference, mostly coming from the LDP ranks. Abe and Aso, the deputy prime minister are special advisers in the Japan Conference's Diet Members League and thus it can be considered one of the most influential political lobbies in Japan. In the 3rd Abe Cabinet (since October 2015), 16 in 20 (80 percent) of the ministers are members of the Japan Conference Diet Members League (Tawara 2017a). The strong emphasis Abe puts on relations with the Western countries may create a schism with Japanese traditional conservatism that advocates respect for Japanese history and independent foreign policy of the US (Weston 2013: 187). In this way, the Abe administration runs the risk of being caught in a double bind between the NKP and the Japan Conference.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH QUESTION, HYPOTHESES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objective of the Thesis

This study aims to identify potential changes (and the level of the change, if any) in Japan's foreign policy that could occur because of the evolution of NRCs under the Abe administration. Concretely, it is possible that some or all Japan's traditional role locations, enactment and performance are shifting. Some NRCs may become less or more central and/or replaced by new ones. The evolution could happen in both cases of Abe's initiatives in foreign policy being a natural extension of the conventional Japan's role locations or not. The role-set of Japan may undergo changes of different scope and nature that have internal and external origins. As a result, consistency, inconsistency, and conflicts between Japanese NRCs and expectations of the Japanese ego-part and alter-parts toward Japan can be observed.

It has already been stated that Japan's international political presence has traditionally been subdued after the Second World War (Hook et al 2011). Such behavior was in response to the expectations of the key alter-parts and part of the ego-part. Moreover, its political presence was without articulating a distinctive political claim except general commitment to the UN and Western liberal democratic values. It may not be entirely true that Japan never tried to export any universal values to other countries. Japan did it through the UN specialized organizations such as the WHO, UNICEF and others. However, it never attempted to make it an active instrument of foreign policy since the end of the war (Taniguchi 2010: 1-2).

Traditional role location, enactment and performance stayed very stable during the whole period. However, the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region is shifting and it leads to perception of growing instability in this transitory period (Macleod 1997). In the context of uneasiness caused by the perception of Japan's relative power decline and the desire to erase the negative legacy of the Second World War in order to rethink about its roles and recreate dynamism in its society, a more determined domestic movement pushing for an amendment to the constitution and resurging nationalist ideas are emerging. Therefore, it is plausible to think that the Japanese ego and alter-part expectations related to regional economics as well as security may change accordingly. It does not seem that Japan already has an overall foreign policy strategy to cope with the new environment. However, multipronged changes of views seem to gradually form a new strategic framework that gains coherence. It is in such a context that the Abe administration's initiatives are worth examining because they seem to have the potential for becoming an agent of change leaving legacy behind.

The thesis also seeks to explain the above-mentioned apparent paradox between, on the one hand, Abe's relatively prominent foreign policy engagement with democratic value-driven policies and, on the other hand, his hawkish conservatism. Role theory helps to nurture a nuanced reflection on ideas expressed by key decision-makers that seem to be difficult to reconcile. Abe's initiatives seem indeed to be contradictory or, at least, could be perceived as ambiguous by the ego and alter-parts. Therefore, the research question can be formulated as such:

Are Abe's initiatives in foreign policy inducing changes in Japan's established NRCs that have been nurtured through the evolving intersubjective process between ego-part and key alter-parts in the period following the end of the Second World War. In other words, the thesis examines whether Abe initiatives impact the very stable NRCs that result from the socialization process with countries such as the US, China, Australia, India, and the Philippines to the point of departing from the long-term continuity or whether they are staying in the same line of continuity.

If changes are observed, what are the types of changes and for which of Japan's NRCs the foreign policy-related statements of Abe and those of foreign leaders representing Japan's key alter-parts can induce? What level of transformation of those NRCs can be expected, in which direction and in which specific aspects could Abe change Japan's NRCs to the extent that the possibility exists that Japanese foreign policies could be different, compared to conventional ones?

3.2 Theoretical Relevance

Previous research on Japanese foreign policy has identified roles such as those of a country which eschews military action and abandons any plan of becoming a nuclear power; a member of the liberal democratic camp devoted to trade and economic development, and a country which supports UN-centered multilateralism. These roles have been recognized and analyzed by interpreting the history of Japan's foreign policy. Some research have utilized concepts that have similarities with the NRC. Still, it does not seem that there are many studies that explicitly make use of role theory.

This thesis intends to fill the gap by providing a template for how role theory may be utilized to study Japan's foreign policy. In order to understand the Abe administration's foreign policy, it is necessary to come back to the origin of the roles that formed Japan's foreign policy and pay attention to their characteristics. Then, the factors that have played a role in the changes in Japan's foreign policy since the end of the Second World War have to be examined.

Defining own roles and getting other countries to accept them are two of the fundamental objectives of all countries. Thus, the nature of Japan's foreign policy can be understood more clearly not only by realism, liberalism, and constructivism theories but also by role theory. Role theory creates a framework that helps reveal that the study of roles, responsibilities, and duties can also serve the understanding of Japan's foreign policy. Foreign policy change and continuity can be grasped in examining the meaning of the relations between role and action (Le Prestre 1997).

The role theory framework illustrates the obligations that roles create beyond attention to the national interests in a narrow sense. As part of constructivism, it assumes that a state is a social actor restrained by its identity and self-defining national interests. It pays attention to the self-understanding of the actors and how they understand the others before acting. On the one hand, identity and self-defining national interests form social practices producing predictability because of their relative stability. On the other hand, role theory also assumes roles can change because of various evolutions of role expectations. Those changes may then trigger role inconsistencies and conflicts internally and externally in an intersubjective process. Some roles are changeable, but others have a strong path

dependency that may make them very stable and even rigid. Instruments of analyze using realism, liberalism, and constructivism are useful to examine the change process but they do not give the opportunity to grasp the nuances of the changes. Thus, only using them may lead to insufficient or contradictory conclusions. As seen above, the Abe administration promotes military buildup and wants to develop security partnership in the region while pursuing historical revisionist policies domestically. However, emphasis is put at the same time on the continuity of the pacifist constitution, international cooperation in the UN activity and universal values, and in pushing internally for the internationalization of Japanese society. Overall these policies could create confusion about Japan's intentions in its foreign policy because they seem difficult to reconcile. Thus, it is important to use appropriate tools, in this case the role theory perspective to decipher them.

As stated before, role theory does not deny the importance of the other theories. It combines their concept to integrate structural and rationalistic styles of analysis and socio-economic perspectives. Thus, role theory enables to enlarge the range of the involved actors in the policy-making process.

The level of continuity, change and the specific impact of the Abe administration is assessed more precisely by using content analysis and Hermann's (1990) classification but the following broad hypotheses related to NRCs possible evolution can already be devised. Abe's internal and foreign policy initiatives could just be an extension of Japanese foreign policy since the end of the Cold War with little or no original input. For instance, those related to the reinforcement of the links with the US, the

internationalization drive of Japanese society and the importance that must be given to Japanese identity and culture because of this international exposure, can be considered to be in line with what post-Cold War prime ministers pursued, including DPJ governments (Weston 2013; Nakanishi 2015; Sakaki 2015).

It is also possible that some of the changes occur that may be thought to be completely or partly the result of some of Abe's policies. The Abe administration's assertiveness in regard to security and defense; his attempts to use values in international relations, and his strong ambition to assert a leadership role for Japan on the world's political stage are plausibly of a different - larger and deeper - nature than what his predecessors envisioned. The Abe administration may be attuned to the growing assertiveness of the Japanese conservative establishment but also to the change of mind of the population at large on security and national identity issues, and, more globally, about the roles of Japan as a geopolitical power (Seizelet 2007).

As a result, there is a possibility that Abe's initiatives that depart from conventional diplomacy are linked to different objectives of Japanese foreign policy externally and internally. The Abe administration may be attuned to the growing assertiveness of the Japanese conservative establishment but also to the change of mind of the population at large on security and national identity issues, and, more globally, about the roles of Japan as a geopolitical power (Seizelet 2007). Several alternatives are possible: 1) NRC performance continues to be completely legitimated in the eyes of the Japanese people and of those of other countries, 2) it could be only partly so, and 3) it may not be considered legitimate by the ego-part and/or anyone of the alter-parts.

The first alternative would mean that Abe's initiatives to cope with the internal (ego-part) and external (alter-part) environments maintain consistency between ego-part and alter-parts expectations despite changes in NRCs or because they do not trigger any NCR change. In the case of the second and third alternatives changes may induce or require new roles' enactment; break up role demands; create new role expectations and maybe new role-sets that impact on the ego-part and alter-parts. In that case it is possible that it opens the door to inconsistencies, misunderstandings, and conflicts of different nature, intensity, level and ultimate consequences with either the ego or one/or several alter-parts, or with both ego-part and either of the alter-parts. Therefore, Abe's initiatives could comfort existing NRC or induce changes. In the latter case the changes may be accepted by the ego-part and the alter-parts or may be partly or completely rejected. The reject could trigger transformation of role policies in the ego-part and alter-parts and induce the emergence of new foreign policy objectives and strategies.

3.3 The Hypothesis of Continuity

It is possible that the centrality of the key elements of the meta and context-specific roles of Japan, notably those related to pacifism and/or to the stability of alliances, partnerships and relationships with key alter-parts such as the US and China does not show any noticeable evolution despite Abe's initiatives - or precisely because it is what they were aiming from start. Only slight shifts that keep the current NRC-induced stable foreign policy anchors may be noticed. The role location of Japan as an open and benevolent country may remain central, while key alter-parts and the ego-part accept Japan's military

buildup. In that case, the postwar period of unarmed pacifism can be considered a temporary parenthesis. So, Abe's initiatives could just be considered in line with the 'normalization' of Japan, understood as a breaking out of the remnants of the defeat in foreign policy but with Japanese NRCs' remaining fundamentally similar and potential changes in foreign policy limited (Sakaki 2011).

Following this reasoning, like Western powers - especially Germany - there is no reason to believe that to have a bona fide army instead of 'self-defense forces' can make Japan less democratic. There is no equivalent to NATO or the EU - that anchored Germany in the democratic camp and probably facilitated the transition toward a more proactive security-related behavior - in East Asia and SEA. Nevertheless, Japan has established strong relationships with the democracies in the region, from India to Australia. Japanese democracy is well entrenched and the military force is under civilian control. Provided that Japan's behavior (role performance) does not indicate departure from its peaceful postwar policies it is unlikely to trigger role conflicts.

It could be possible that the Abe administration's foreign policy is driven by the perception that Japan's position as the representative of Asia and historical bridge between West and East is being taken by China (Smith 2015). The policy could also be the consequence of the growing perception of a security threat shared by the Japanese leadership and the population because of the Chinese military assertiveness (Pugliese 2014: 51-52). Linked to this latter point it could be that Japan's foreign policy initiatives result of the impression that US commitment to East Asia is diminishing or that it is unable to maintain the Pax Americana without greater assistance from Japan and the other allies

in the region. This would explain the attempts - in making use of the concept of shared democratic values - to keep the US in the region by deepening the alliance while promoting closer ties with the other democracies (Yuzawa 2014).

True, it may lead to NRC conflicts if those initiatives are perceived as bellicose and antagonistic to China and, in turn, if China continues to reignite nationalistic feelings in Japan (Hughes 2015b; Maslow 2016). Nevertheless, China may recognize that even with the Japanese military bolstered, it is non-threatening for its interests unless it hampers economic relations and Japan strengthens the administration over the Senkaku Islands. Thus, NRCs' consistency is possible despite partial rejection of the NCR changes as long as Japan continues to prioritize business over politics, i.e. keep a low-profile in international politics - especially in areas where China considers its core interest at stake, for example in the SCS - and does not defy accepted historical views on Japan's aggression in China (Yuzawa 2014). In counterpart China has to recognize Japan's legitimate interest in the region and to refrain from starting what Japan could consider provocative actions. Provided that Japanese ego-part and Chinese alter-part understand each other's expectation, the risk of role conflict would remain limited. If role inconsistency occurs, it should be possible to avoid role conflict thanks to the principle of separation of politics and economics.

3.4 Hypotheses of Changes

However, Abe's initiatives may contain elements that might be considered a plausible trigger of deep transformation of some NRCs in the long term. If this is the case, it could

mean that Japan is entering a new era with potentially different roles than the traditional ones. The latter ones would be viewed as outdated and the new ones deemed necessary for a number of internal and external reasons (Pugliese 2014: 12). Eventually, this could lead to new foreign policy objectives and strategies but with higher potentiality of role inconsistencies and conflicts.

First of all, possibilities exist of creation of situations of partial acceptance and partial reject of the changes by either one of the parties. Consistency is indeed likely between Japan and Western countries as long as Japan supports what it considered to be universal values and carries out collective self-defense. The US certainly relishes Japanese military support that it has been requesting since the 1950s (Maull 2011) but, as noticed beforehand (Backman 1970: 316), it is unlikely to accept the Japanese ambition to establish equal relations inside the Japan-US alliance. Western countries expect Japan to take concrete measures in terms of military-related activities and are ready for deeper relationships with Japan in weapons purchase and development, and common military exercises. However, Japan cannot guarantee to deliver its promises in view of possible role contestation in Japan - the engrained pacifist mindset - that is liable to hinder rapid decisions in that respect (Kimijima 2016). As a result, role inconsistency may emerge because the NRC of Japan as a reliable security partner would lose its credibility.

The strong drive of Abe to support Japan's weapon industry through the loosening of export limitations, the proactive stance showed in concluding agreements with several countries on weaponry technological development⁶ (Maull 2011) and the recognition of

⁶ It should be noted that even before the new principles, DPJ government had exceptionally permitted arms and other defense equipment export and military technological joint development and production between

the right of the SDF to engage collectively outside Japan can be seen as outstretching the alter-part expectations of Japan as a reliable security partner. Uncertainty of role location could surface because of doubt about Japan's real intention. The role enactment of becoming a big weapons exporter means that Japan desires to create economies of scale in order to develop a more competitive weapon industry. The weapon industry is different from other industries because it is not purely economic. In the case of a country of the size and economic development of Japan it cannot but be thought that it is linked to the country's national security policy.

Coupled with technology transfer through common research and development with key alter-parts such as the US and Australia the United Kingdom (the UK), Australia and France (Prezstup & Tatsumi 2015), it could be considered an indication that Japan wants to create an industrial military complex, i.e. rearm in earnest with objectives that are not limited to participation in UN PKO activities. This could include more military exercises of the SDF with Japan's partners outside UN framework, and even the participation in common military activities. Thus, it would largely parallel the evolution of the German army toward larger and deeper military involvement in the framework of NATO, the EU and the UN since the end of the Cold War (Sakaki 2011: 50-51). Once again Western powers may welcome the move and it may also be the case of some SEA countries (and India), such as the Philippines and Vietnam that are eager to benefit from Japan's military expertise to manage a better bargain with China. Conversely, in this case it is liable to

Japanese and foreign weapons manufacturers in 2011 to deepen ties with the US and like-minded countries in military field as long as they serve peaceful and humanitarian purpose (Purnendra 2017).

increase the risk of role inconsistency and even role conflict, especially with China. Linked to the value-driven diplomacy concept that puts Japan in the camp of the liberal democratic countries respectful of international law and human rights in contrast with China, depicted as a bullying country in defiance of the rule of law, closer relations with the other democracies would create an alter-casting case with the latter country. At the opposite, the fit between Japan and some SEA countries in security may not exist in values. They would resent pressures to adopt democratic values as interference in internal affairs and are likely to react negatively.

It is also possible that the Abe's administration initiatives proclaimed since 2006 already triggers significant changes in the perception of Japan's NRCs and performance in the ego and alter-parts that can favor the emergence of NRC inconsistencies and even conflicts. As a possible sign of this, China's actual moves remain subdued, but official sources indicate that China considers that the nationalization of the Senkaku Islands in 2012 - although it occurred during the DPJ administration era and not under Abe's administration - was a fundamental breach of the territorial problem shelving agreement concluded in the 1970s (Maslow 2016: 198-199). This may have reinforced the already existing China's leadership tendency to think that the 'normalization' of Japan is indeed the first stage of large-scale militarization (Drifte 2014). There is already no fit between Japan and China in security, values and historical revisionism. The only remaining fit is based on economic interdependence, and implicit consensus that both governments do not escalate the territorial dispute. The same risk of NRC inconsistency exists with the democratic alter-parts. Fit between Japanese ego-part and democratic alter-parts cannot

be expected if Japan advocates what they are liable to perceive as historical revisionism. Japan's proclaimed role of a country defending universal values is less credible for the US but also for the other democratic alter-parts if it adopts parochial internal viewpoints at the same time. For the time being the US and SEA countries are showing their uneasiness in a subdued manner, so as not to upset their most important alter-part in Asia, but China's (and South Korea) hostility appears clearly (Pugliese 2014: 37).

The interpretation of Japan's behaviors is still difficult at this stage. To reconsider national history and instill pride in the nation in the population are a normal phenomenon in the evolution of any political system at some point in time. Once again it has to be examined whether it is just part of the normalization process, in the same way as it happened in Germany since the 1980s (Sakaki 2011: 5), or the prelude of the reconsideration of some of the tenets of postwar democratic Japan - in the worst case a return to some prewar non-democratic traditions. In this latter case it would lead to both ego-part role contestation and role conflict with alter-parts. Changes in expectations of some of them could trigger changes in their role enactment, and location that, subsequently, could induce changes in Japan's foreign policy.

Thus, in role theory term the broad hypotheses that have been described hereinabove could mean that Abe's initiatives to cope with the internal (ego-part) and external (alter-part) environment maintain consistency between ego-part and alter-parts expectations and do not induce important changes in NRCs or even no change at all. But they could also open the door to NRCs' inconsistencies, misunderstandings and conflicts. In other words, those short examples indicate that NRC changes are possible partly or completely

resulting from Abe's policies because of his idiosyncratic leadership and thus possible departure from previous policies.

3.5 Qualitative Content Analysis: Focus on Leaders'

Statements

The first step of analysis consists in a qualitative content analysis of important foreign policy statements (speeches, interviews and remarks on the media) of Abe and of his foreign key alter-parts consisting of the US, China, Australia, India, the Philippines. Not only leaders' speeches but interviews and remarks on the media are also helpful when they speak about roles, expectations and proscriptions that are not found in speeches or when they are seen more informative than similar speeches. To consider role contestation, Japan is supposed to be a pluralist state. The ego-part consisting of the LDP's junior coalition party NKP and the Japan Conference will be examined as they could have an impact on Abe's foreign policy. On the other hand, alter-part states are seen as unitary actors in this thesis to simplify the analysis.

The content analysis is expected to give indications about the evolution of the key NRCs. From the result of the content analysis a number of hypotheses will be devised. Hermann's (1990) classification model will be utilized to check and assess the levels of change in foreign policy that the evolution in NRCs could imply.

The focus is on top leaders' statements, but other documents are referred to if necessary. They cover topics including politics, security, economy, universal values, historical issues as long as they are related to Japan's NRCs and can be inserted into the selected meta-

roles and components (see details afterward). Although context-specific roles are also important parts of NRCs, they are assumed to be part of meta-role and the main focus of the thesis is meta-role and not context-specific role. This is in line with the works of Holsti (1970: 294-297), Wish (1987) and Elgstrom (1988: 166-167) mentioned in the theoretical framework section. Those authors argue that a large range of background factors cannot be ignored when analyzing the determinants of NRCs.

Sakaki (2011: 38) notes that 'qualitative content analysis in particular focuses on the *meaning* of texts'. Role theory assumes that top political decision-makers' remarks generally reflect the main role conceptions on foreign policy issues that international society ascribed to a given country and the role concepts ego-part expects (Elgstrom 2004).

As stated in the theoretical framework section policy-makers need support from the public to justify their ideas and thus they try to respond to their demand (Hermann 1990: 5).

Leaders utilize a statement to gain legitimacy and show they are right. On the one hand it aims at raising the audience level of support and justifying the decisions they have taken.

On the other hand, what they state raises existing expectations or creates new ones that are bound to impose constraints on their choice of policies in the future (Sakaki 2011: 36-37). This is the reason to include ego-part analysis as well as alter-part in this thesis.

Overall, statement analysis is an appropriate method to identify the roles embedded in widely shared conceptions that affect foreign policy behavior. In the line of the claim of Holsti (1970) it can be said that they give an overview of the collective representations and beliefs of a country's NRCs. They clarify what leaders deem important and how they perceive the world.

A minimum of one statement per year delivered by each ego-part and alter-part are selected for the period of the investigation from any of the meta-roles (especially from 2013 to 2016 because Abe's office term in 2012 is less than one month). The statements refer as accurately as possible to the components which are formed to reflect meta-role. The number per year could increase if there are statements worth analyzing. Also, 'the impact of personality traits or situational moods' decreases (Hansel & Möller 2015: 82) with the number and variety of statements. Therefore, when collecting statements, it is important to balance international statements and domestic ones and not to select only either of them. Conversely, if statements referring to a specific meta-role are not found, it can be concluded that there is no alter-part reaction in regard to this meta-role.

Statements are chosen among those made by leaders who have the greatest political authority. However, statements of important government officials such as foreign and defense ministers and ambassadors are also be used if they are considered relevant to complement the decision-makers' statements. Top political leaders often do not deliver statements they believe could have a negative impact. They prefer indirect channels to convey messages that could arouse controversy. On this point, government officials' contribution may be important to grasp the real meaning of a particular foreign policy initiative, thus assess its appropriateness and legitimacy (Bach 1999: 10). So, to interpret statements accurately, it is sometimes necessary to refer to other actors related to political leaders (Elgstrom 2004: 66). Likewise, pieces of material originating from academics, journalists, politicians, civil servants in Japan and in the key alter-parts can be useful

because they can help understand the meaning of the statement more precisely. Therefore, they can be utilized as explanatory sources (Mayring 2014: 85).

3.6 Focus on both Ego-Part and Alter-Part

This thesis assumes that both ego-part conceptions, i.e. the rights and obligations a country's leaders perceive on behalf of their country - taking into account role contestation - and alter-part conceptions, i.e. behavioral expectations held by other countries or by international organizations, have an important impact on state behavior. A country may decide to assume more responsibility and duty under the influence of key alter-part expectations. This justifies why not only Japanese statements reflecting self-conceptions of their role but also foreign statements reflecting alter-parts' conceptions have to be considered. Ego-part is said to have the most immediate and significant impact on the behavior of states. As a result, its prevalence as the most relevant field of study appears in the studies utilizing role theory (Sakaki 2011: 24-25). Holsti (1970: 243) had already pointed out in his first study that norm of national sovereignty guarantees that foreign policy cannot be controlled by another state, otherwise the state would lose its independence. Likewise, Barnett (1993: 278) observes that a state's survival is normally not in jeopardy even when it adopts policies that do not respond to alter-part expectations. Conversely, though, government's position at home can frequently be at stake because of ego-part contestation (Hirata 2016).

Indeed, it cannot be denied that alter-part expectations are generally less specific and less action-oriented than those originating from the ego-part because national sovereignty is

the basis of international relations. Those arguments justify why leaders tend to give more importance to ego-part than alter-part in foreign policy decisions. However, as seen above, Japan is more and more expected to play important roles from the world and thus alter-part influence cannot be considered negligible. Thus, it is necessary to examine it as well as ego-part expectations to see to what extent it has an impact on Japan's behavioral foreign policy framework. It may be especially true during the second Abe administration period that has seen the emergence of many initiatives.

3.7 Use of Deductive Approach

Categories used in content analysis can be determined deductively, inductively, or by a combination of both (Sakaki 2011: 39). This research starts with predetermined aggregate meta-roles and thematically grouped components. They have been formulated through official documents, media representation, academic articles and journal articles about Japanese foreign policy. They reflect what can be considered the key Japan's NRCs for the research. Defining meta-role categories and assigning parts of the text to one meta-role or another requires interpretation (Mayring 2014: 9). Concrete ideas and concepts that are deemed useful to explain the meaning of the text are identified. Then, the meaningful parts of the statements are inserted according to their objects in considering all the dimensions in each meta-role. Care is taken to allocate them into the appropriate meta-role. Japanese statements, which are the main subject of the thesis, are examined first. And then foreign statements reflecting alter-part expectations of Japan's NRCs for the same meta-roles are examined.

3.8 The Coding Process

The categorization of the sentences and group of sentences is needed to avoid putting several distinct behavioral expectations under one label, i.e. in the same meta-role in this case (Mayring 2014: 28). Mayring (2014: 61) has introduced a model that can be used to organize the coding process. Three different procedures of coding can be used in a sequential manner: summary, explication, and structuring. It depends on the research question whether they are implemented independently or in combination (Mayring 2014: 85).

- Summary: Sentences are shortened during the summary process. Thus, the individual is re-written (using paraphrasing) in a descriptive form limited to the content. The objective of summary is to group and integrate information, and to raise the level of abstraction of the text. The objective of summarizing single statements is to keep the size of empirical material manageable and eliminate insignificant and vague parts of the statements. However, when the volume of material is not so large, paraphrases can actually be written in full or quasi-full sentences (Mayring 2014: 65).

- Explication: The object of the analysis is to provide additional material on individual text components (terms, sentences...) when there is a doubt on their signification. When part of the text has to be interpreted, explication is given by additional sources of empirical data. The goal of explication is to make the texts more legible, subjecting them to comment and illustration. The content is explained, clarified and annotated (Mayring 2014:85-89). Interpretation must be based on lexical-grammatical definition. It means that the terms have to be clearly defined in taking into account the cultural context and the

normal usage. This can be checked in dictionaries and works of reference. Mastering of the knowledge of the lexical-grammatical for each particular term utilized in the texts is necessary for their interpretation (Mayring 2014: 85).

- Structuring: The purpose of structuring is to identify a particular structure in separating out specific aspects of the material by splitting it according to preset ordering standards, or to assess it in line with certain standards. The content, form and scaling can structure the text. The units of analysis are determined in the first stage of analysis.

In this content analysis the summary and structuring forms are the most utilized method with explication as a complementary tool through the use of the different types of secondary material that are listed beforehand. However, because the volume of material is not large in many instances the full text or quasi full texts are utilized. In the case of summary the texts are summarized while keeping the contents and themes. A core of concepts that reflects the meaning of the original statements are identified and classified into the appropriate meta-role. Areas of correspondence for each part of the texts has been examined to label each of them in the appropriate distinct area (Mayring 2014: 93).

3.9 Identified Japan's Meta-Roles and the Components

The types of statements considered representing specific NRC have been selected according to certain criteria. They reflect particular responsibilities or functions Japan performs in the world. The marking and paraphrasing of the statements that refer to Japan's NRCs in Asia-Pacific and the world that can be thought to have an impact on state behavior have been undertaken by utilizing the following keywords or expressions in

order to facilitate the process of determining whether statements should be included or not and, if yes, in which meta-role.

1 Japan is a Reliable Security Partner

- Japan is not a free rider and a reliable ally of the US by increasing security activity cooperation
- Japan is a reliable ally of countries sharing values such as liberal democracies, international law and human rights in and beyond the region

2 Japan is a Country that puts Emphasis on Multilateralism

- Japan takes international responsibility in international organizations through such as PKO and financial contribution to international issues such as refugees, infectious disease, natural disasters, health care, education and so on.
- Japan opposes protectionism and is a proponent of free trade and market economy in the region and tries to connect economy with security.

3 Japan is a Pacifist Country based on Non-Militarism

- Japan takes an exclusively defensive security policy.
- Japan promotes worldwide denuclearization.
- Japan renounces use of force as an instrument of foreign policy.
- Japan is a country deeply reflecting on its past behavior: it recognizes its responsibility before and during the Second World War and accepts the postwar international order created by victorious countries.

4 Japan is a World/Regional Leader

- Japan deserves to become a permanent member of the UNSC.
- Japan is a world/regional leader and in terms of economic development through leadership in regimes such as the G7 and the TPP.
- Japan is a regional leader in universal values in Asia, being proud of its long history of liberal democracy in Asia.

3.10 Assessment of the Levels of Changes in Japan's Foreign Policy that Could Be Inferred from the Evolution of Japan's NRCs with Hermann's Classification Model

Although Hermann (1990) does not explicitly utilize role theory, including the term of NRC in his work, his classification model can be used in this thesis as a tool of evaluation of the changes in Japan's foreign policy. The author considers four change agents: 1) leader driven, 2) bureaucratic advocacy, 3) domestic restructuring, and 4) external shock (Hermann 1990: 3). Using the example of the US-USSR relations during the Cold War and observed recent changes at that time (the 1980s), he raised the following questions (in paraphrasing them) that are also at the core of this thesis' research questions: 'How profound are the changes underway? How will policy-makers recognize that they are fundamental and not mere window-dressing? If the problem that preoccupied security and foreign policy issues is being transformed, what is the nature of the new problem or problems?' (Hermann 1990: 4). The 4 levels of the model create a spectrum ranging from insignificant or very limited change (level 1 - Adjustment change) to extensive types of change (level 4 - International orientation change) with two intermediary levels that permits a finer assessment of the changes: level 2 (program change) and level 3 (problem and goal change) (Hermann 1990: 5).

The purpose and objectives of foreign policy do not change in the first and second types of change. The structure of normative beliefs may be amended but without significant transformation. It may go alongside behavioral change but the guiding principles remain untouched. No existing policy is discarded and new one is adopted. This is not the case

of levels 3 and 4 changes. They occur when the redefinition of goals and roles is required because of new policy challenges or when the external context puts into question shared norms. As a result, the role-set may transform significantly. Level 4 change may occur when significant foreign policy events require a reconsideration of foreign policy objectives (Hermann 1990: 5-6).

1) Adjustment Change

This change is restricted to the scope or importance of activities in the NRC. Modification is also related to countries, the extent of efforts. In Hermann's phraseology, the 1st change means: 'what is done, how it is done, and the purposes for which it is done would remain unchanged' (Hermann 1990: 5). According to Hermann (1990) this type of change generally results from a re-evaluation of the centrality of one NRC or several NRCs after successful experience or failure (Hermann 1990: 5). It would occur without changing the role-set. In this case, the impact on the ego-part and alter-part is likely to be minimal and the potentiality of role inconsistency and role conflict is very limited.

The experience of the Gulf War corresponds to that case. The outcome was that Japan's financial and minesweeping contributions were not enough to satisfy the requirements of its role of a reliable security partner. More highly evaluated contributions were supposed to get involved in international problems beyond financial contribution. As a result, Ozawa (1993) argued Japan should get involved in international activities including military ones such as PKO, following other 'normal' countries to gain respect in the world and this corresponds to the spirit of the constitution's preamble. Amendment to the

constitution would not even be required to do so because Japan's behavior (role enactment) has not clearly shown any deviation from the Japanese Constitution. Dispatching the SDF to military action as PKO under UNSC resolutions does not go beyond the use of force admitted by the constitution. It does not lead Japan to abandon its priority given to economy as a key basis of power and influence. The rejection of unilateral actions that would impose constraint on other countries may retain their centrality in the NRCs.

The interpretation of Japan's behavior could be that Japan is indeed becoming a normal country, ready to assume more international responsibility to share the defense burden not only financially but also in terms of personnel contributions without changing the relations with friendly countries. As pointed out beforehand key alter-parts and ego-part may eventually accept the normal country argument if they think that Japan will not be an aggressive power again. Role expectations, demand and performance would not change significantly or at all.

2) Program Change

At the 2nd level of change, there is still continuity and stability in the collectively shared core objectives of a NRC. Adoption of different means to fulfil objectives features the 2nd change (Hermann 1990: 5). This type of change occurs when previous policy tools prove ineffective or inefficient in answering the requirements of a new context (Hermann 1990:12).

Adoption of new means may trigger problems because of actors' different viewpoints about their appropriateness associated with a specific role conception. For instance, adoption of offensive weapons and revisionist historical view as new means of interpretation of history may raise role conflict because of doubt and uncertainty about Japan's real intention. Such a development can be seen negatively. It may raise concern in foreign countries such as China and consequently Japan would lose its credibility as a pacifist country based on non-militarism. Conversely, the US, Australia, and India may welcome the changes as it fits with their expectation of Japan's NRCs as a reliable security partner, a 'country that puts emphasis on multilateralism' and a 'world/regional leader' that Japan is ready to do military activities commensurate with its military and economic might. All 'normal' advanced countries have weapons that can serve offensive purpose. Japan is a liberal democracy and there is no reason to think that it will use offensive weapons without proper civilian control and with aggressive purpose.

Likewise, the welcome given by some SEA countries (the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam, for example) means that a reliable security partner NRC may be no longer be based anymore exclusively on economic support through free trade, FDI and civilian ODA. It may also include delivering of high-level military hardware, expertise and advice on security matters complex legal issue, and mutual development of arms and common military drill. In Hermann's term it would mean qualitative changes, i.e. changes that 'involve new instruments of statecraft' (Hermann 1990: 5). Conversely, role contestation in Japan proscribing such possibility may downscale the collaboration and disappoint these allies.

3) and 4) Problem/Goal Change and International Orientation Change

According to Hermann (1990) the 3rd type of transformation implies more drastic changes of a particular NRC in terms of objectives and means, replacing old ones. This change may occur when urgent issues emerge to push for one to redefine the objectives or when these issues change collectively shared ideas. Subsequently, new objectives and means can induce change of alter-parts' attitude toward the actor and thus increase the risk of role inconsistencies and role conflict.

Level 4 is wide-ranging and the change can happen to several NRCs concurrently. It also accompanies change of collectively held norms. Mostly, this change occurs in the case of very major upsetting problems inducing the necessity of adoption of new NCRs. It is possible that the necessity to protect sovereignty drives Abe to change NRCs because of China's expansionist maritime policy. Japan's initiative can change the delicate balance of the relationship in lowering the level of trust by explicitly claiming for the right to the Senkaku Islands. It may be considered breaching the meta-role of the pacifist state based on non-militarism leads Chinese leaders to think that Japan is ready to reconsider its stance of non-confrontational relationships (Drifte 2014). Likewise, the US strongly indicates its preference for Abe's initiatives to separate Japan's reinforcement of military might from the nationalistic aspect such as historical revisionism, visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, the denial of past atrocities, and escalating the territorial dispute with China (McCormack 2014: 77-78; Green 2013).

Japan's normative pacifist framework composed of the constitution (Article 9), a number of laws and non-binding principles has shaped Japan's postwar foreign policy. Therefore, changes in the framework are likely to be considered strong indicators of strategic reorientation of key tenets of foreign policy. In Hermann's term, the reorientation could involve a fundamental shift of Japan's international roles and activity (Hermann 1990: 6). In an extreme case, it could mean that Japan intends to downgrade the meta-role of a pacifist country based on non-militarism and challenge the international system that Japan was expected to accept. The changes could lead Japan to depart from other meta-roles as well such as a reliable security partner and a country that puts emphasis on multilateralism, let alone a world/regional leader.

At the end it could signify that Japan is ready to embark on a military-oriented policy independently or with the US and the other friendly countries, abandoning the Yoshida Doctrine. As a result, it could also lead to both ego-part role contestation and role conflict with alter-parts. In this case, changes in expectations, either positive or negative, may lead to changes in alter-parts role enactment that could change Japan's foreign policy drastically.

CHAPTER 4 ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE POSTWAR NRCS OF JAPAN

4.1 The Japanese Constitution and Legal Constraint and Role Change from Militarist Nation to Pacifist Nation

As Le Prestre (1997) says, there are two ways of role change; whole and unilateral change from old to new and change adapting to traditional and existing society. In the case of postwar Japan, the former can be applied, although the willingness to maintain the imperial system shows that keeping key elements of the traditional society was also important. The new roles had to incorporate both new and old elements to satisfy the role demand and expectation of the ego-part and alter-part. Postwar Japan abandoned the Imperial Constitution and militarism and came up with new NRCS. In using Harnisch's (2013) phraseology, being a militaristic country under the undemocratic Emperor system used to be Japanese 'me', the perception of position vis-à-vis others. Japan was a strong and influential country with consistent values coming from its long past. It was respected because it was able to defend itself and impose its will in using force if needed. The 'I', the perception of Japan as ego-part was that the Japanese were proud to be united under the strong leader representing their specific political and cultural values. The Imperial Constitution was attuned to those values.

There was a fit between the 'me' and the 'I' during the military-dominated era but Japan fell into ruin with the defeat owing to these roles and became isolated in the world. Japan announced it accepted the pacifist country role ascribed by the US but was also able to change the role enactment of the US to abolish the imperial institution that could - at worst

- have led to the indictment of the Showa Emperor. Thus the 'me' changed because Japanese leaders understood that the international community associated the imperial system to militarism and was ready to push for its removal. At the same time, they understood that Japanese people were also rejecting anything that was associated with the military regime. It meant that the 'I' had also to change. Imperial system and militarism had to be disentangled, so that the system could be preserved as fundamental long-term element of Japan's identity and as an anchor of political and social stability of Japan's polity in the troubled war-aftermath period. It had to be done in satisfying both ego-part and alter-parts and it triggered broad and deep reconsideration of Japan's NRC.

As Walker (1992) says, position, objective and appropriate repertoires influence NRC. In this sense, US strong position over Japan significantly influenced Japan's decision on constitutional revision. The Occupation authorities' role demands were comprehensive and unilateral: demilitarization and democratization of Japan based on a new constitution had to be achieved. The US presented a draft and urged Japan to adopt it instead of the draft written by the Japanese government. The US draft was strongly inspired by the 'Outline for Draft Constitution' written down by the Constitutional Research Association, a Japanese private organization composed of people who were interested in postwar constitutional reform (Kimijima 2009: 540). Thus, it can also be said that postwar Japanese NRCs were the result of intersubjectively shared value-driven expectations between Japanese public opinion and the occupation authorities on the one side, and the Japanese government on the other. There was a gap between those two former agents and Japanese government. However, while clearly preferring a more conservative constitution,

the government had to take the society (ego-part) and the occupation authorities (alter-part) demand into consideration. The Japanese Constitution was eventually promulgated in 1946 and enforced in 1947. It ascribed Japan the role of a non-militarist pacifist state, using only non-violent means to achieve peace and prosperity of the state and its people. This ascribed role has affected Japanese postwar foreign policy during the whole postwar period. It is most prominently expressed in the 1st and 2nd clauses in Article 9 of the constitution⁷:

'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'.

The Article 9 became the embodiment and cornerstone of state pacifism in Japan, the core of the central NRC that all Japanese governments came to project onto their relations with the ego-part, the alter-parts, and the international organizations. The collective experience and memory of war damage resulting from the oppressive and reckless policies of the Japanese army played a social learning role and changed the view of Japan's role-set (Wada 2015; Kimijima 2009: 543). Reflecting the political and socio-cultural context in

⁷ See the website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet. *The Constitution of Japan*. http://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html.

Japanese society, Article 9-centered pacifism became a fixture during the whole postwar period. Japanese leaders believed that respecting the pacifist constitution in Japan's behavior and attitude was responding to the role expectations of Japanese ego-part and all alter-arts, especially in East Asia and SEA countries that had suffered from Japan's behavior before and during the war. In 1945, the population in East Asia and SEA had vivid memory of Japanese colonial period and of the war, and Japanese militarism was considered the largest threat to peace. Therefore, promoting the role of non-militarism was necessary to rectify the negative impression (Kimijima 2006: 619-620; Ina 2016; Shi 2015; Miyamoto & Watanabe: 2014: 101).

Since then Article 9 has functioned as a symbol abroad that Japan would never become a militaristic country again. It unilaterally decided that it would never send troops abroad in any form⁸. In 1954, a Diet resolution was voted in the House of Council to proscribe overseas mobilization. The argument was that the SDF had been created for exclusively defensive purpose from the origin. Thus, they could not be permitted to perform activity outside Japan even under the UN framework or have offensive weapons to attack military bases in a foreign country (Wada 2015). As a result, 'senshu boei [exclusively defense-oriented policy]' became the central element of the national defense policy⁹ (Mochizuki

⁸ During the Korean War (1950-1953), Yoshida refused American demand for amendment to the Japanese Constitution and sending troops to Korea, raising the argument of Article 9. Still, it should be noted that not only pragmatic reason but also antimilitaristic national feelings dissuaded Yoshida (Wada 2015).

⁹ Ministry of Defense has defined the 'exclusively defense-oriented policy' in the following manner: 'The exclusively defense-oriented policy means that defensive force may not be employed unless and until an armed attack is mounted on Japan by another country in which case, it must be limited to the minimum level necessary to defend itself, and furthermore that the extent of the defense forces retained and the use of these forces should be kept to the minimum level necessary for self-defense. This exclusively defense-oriented policy thus refers to a passive defense strategy that is consistent with the spirit of the Constitution' (Ministry of Defense 2006: 5).

2007: 306). Japanese decision-makers were expected to base their defense-related policies on the anti-militarist norm. In this sense it played the role of counterweight that served to cushion its pacifist foreign policy from foreign pressure. Indeed, after urging Japan to forgo almost all kinds of military policies in the immediate after war US leaders started to request a shift away from unarmed pacifism due to the Cold War (Katzenstein 1996; Hook et al 2011). For instance, the US exerted pressure on the Sato Administration (1964-72) to cooperate in the Vietnam War. Sato was not completely opposed to collaboration with the US but he had to do so under constraint imposed by ego-part proscription not to deviate from traditional pacifism and with the fear of reigniting negative anti-Japanese feelings in SEA. He refused to send the SDF in Vietnam but allowed the use of the US Okinawa bases to dispatch bombers, taking advantage of the fact that Okinawa prefecture was under US judicial control at that time. Acknowledgment of the strong ego-part's conviction that Japan is a non-militarist pacifist state influenced how the US alter-part responded to the role being projected by Japan.

The pacifist NRC developed into several non-militaristic policies: 1) the three principles regarding arms exports, 2) the non-nuclear principle, 3) the one percent cap on defense budget, 4) the 'Fukuda Doctrine', and 5) 'comprehensive security policy' to show Japanese willingness to fulfill international responsibilities based on pacifism. As for the self-imposed ban on weapons exports, the Sato administration stated that Japan would not export arms to: 1) communist bloc countries, 2) countries subject to 'arms' exports

embargo under the United Nations Security Council's resolutions, and 3) countries involved in or likely to be involved in international conflicts (MOFA 1967).

After that, successive governments have devised policies that strictly maintained or even enlarged the application of those principles. They were presented as based on the identity of a country that had been responsible for extended war damage but also had endured atomic bombing. The Miki administration (1974-1976) extended the self-imposed ban on weapons exports to other areas (Hook et al 2011). The Fukuda Doctrine, named after the Fukuda administration (1976-1977), was in line with the reiterated statement that Japan had no intention to play a military role in SEA, nor would compensate for the declining military power of the US in the region. Japan was only eager to develop relations based on what Fukuda proclaimed 'heart-to-heart' understanding on political, economic social and cultural issues. This inclusive viewpoint meant Japan was ready to work at building constructive relations with the three communist regimes in SEA, particularly with Vietnam. The projected idea was that consensual approach between ASEAN members and those communist countries was the best option in the region (Hook et al 2011). The concept of comprehensive security, launched by prime minister Ohira in 1980 included economic security based on economic cooperation to prevent military conflict and stabilize the region along with the Japan-US military alliance. It evolved and expanded into the creation of APEC in 1989, a transpacific organization aiming to promote market economy principles and economic and technological exchanges among the advanced countries of the region while helping the developing countries to build up autonomous capabilities (Potter 2008; Hook et al 2011).

4.2 Role Expectation and Performance during the Cold War

4.2.1 The NRC of a Reliable Ally of the US

As seen above, Japanese position during the Cold War was based on the Yoshida Doctrine (Singh, B 2016: 595). Flexible interpretation of Article 9 was adopted, meaning acceptance of the SDF is within the range of self-defense with minimum necessary use of force (Akimoto 2013: 231; Hirata 2016). Yoshida signed simultaneously the San Francisco Peace Treaty with victorious countries and the US-Japan mutual security treaty in 1951. It gave an opportunity to fully reintegrate Japan into the international community. In return, the US was allowed to build and maintain military bases in Japan, meaning Japan entered the West side during the Cold War¹⁰. The treaty meant that Japan did not need to build costly offensive capability and nuclear weapons.

As a result, Japan built a new NRC of US partnership in Asia. As part of the Western camp Japan was under US military protection and able to take advantage of the free-trade business environment that the US was promoting. Quoting Harnisch (2013): ‘International roles belong to the group of immaterial social constructions which give meaning to international interaction and structures. As such, roles do not only cause behavior but they also constitute actors (master-slave)’ as explained in the chapter 2. Role theory supposes that each decision-maker has a unique interpretation of the international

¹⁰ It was natural that Japan entered the Western camp. Yoshida and other conservative leaders opposed communism and supported free market economy. It was in the name of those principles that the LDP was created in 1955. Although roles comprise ego-part and alter-part, the weight and meaningfulness of alter-part is different from one to one due to power, the degree of dependency and ‘past experience’ (Wendt 1999; Harnisch 2011). So, although the conservative factions had different opinion about the appropriate degree of independence vis-à-vis the US the LDP remained united to support the above-mentioned principles. They had a common view that Japan needed to rely on US military power in the Cold War in order to prevent Japan from becoming a communist state.

situation and that interpretation can also change according to perceived power relations and national interests. So, after the Second World War, Japanese leaders learned that Japan had to keep a low-profile, i.e. Japan should not attempt to play prominent political roles. Japan acknowledged the existence of anti-Japan sentiment in Asia and the overwhelming power of the two superpowers (the US and the USSR) in the socializing process in the new world order. Accepting such constraints meant a reduction of Japan's role-set, an unusual case for a country having a so long history, and so high social and economic development level. Harnisch (2011) points out that 'mature' countries often assign roles to newcomers in international society. In the case of postwar Japan, the Japan-US alliance treaty clearly assigned an inferior position to Japan (Potter 2008). Defeated in the war Japan accepted a status of semi-sovereign state whose foreign policy choices were made in the US. While China was either direct or indirect sponsor of countries such as Vietnam, North Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Malaysia, and Northeastern India, Japan worked in line with US interests, offering bases on Japanese territory and supporting US close allies in Asia such as South Korea and South Vietnam (Carr & Wallis 2016).

Role theory makes it possible to explain not only foreign leaders' expectations and behavior but also the circumstances enabling them to do something and restrictions born from the social context where they exist (Holsti 1970). It could be for example a 'structural environment of roles' as explained above. Stryker (2006) explains that stringent control of the behavior (social choice) and properties (social status) of some actors may be imposed by such structural environment of roles. In extreme cases the existence itself of some actors may be put in question. In this case, the Cold War structure

with the bilateral US-Japan Treaty as the cornerstone of Japan's foreign policy prevented Japan from implementing the UN-centered and regional foreign policy. Japan did not participate directly in activities related to security at the regional and multilateral levels. It even seemed to avoid entering into cooperation mechanisms and dialogue process (Hook et al 2011). It was not what Japanese leaders had envisioned just after Japan's constitution was enacted, i.e. the adoption of UN-centered Japan's security policy. On the contrary, Japan increased its dependence on the US-Japan Security Treaty¹¹(Kimijima 2016). Japan's postwar security bilateral policy moved to the next step with the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation in 1978. The guidelines aimed at countering USSR threat but Japan's leaders also considered them necessary out of fear of the 'Nixon Doctrine'¹² and US-China rapprochement from 1960s to 1970s (Maslow 2016: 191).

4.2.2 Mercantilist NRC and Role Contestation

The 1955 system that unified the conservative camp with the creation of the LDP strengthened non-militarist pacifist role. Without abandoning its long-term objective of establishing Japan's own independent constitution, the LDP acknowledged that Japanese

¹¹ Indeed, the UN Charter stipulates in Paragraph 4 of Article 2 that 'all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force' (The UN 1945) like the 2nd clause of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. The Preamble of the Japanese Constitution described Japan's roles for international peace: 'We desire to occupy an honored place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace'; 'we believe that no nation is responsible for itself alone' and that 'we, the Japanese people, pledge our national honor to accomplish these high ideals and purposes with all our resources' (The Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 1946). In this regard, the current constitution shares the same ideal with the UN (Kimijima 2011).

¹² Nixon doctrine is also called Guam doctrine. It stipulated that America's Asian allies needed to assume more of the defense burden for their own (Beeson 2014).

people thought about militarism was very negative. The party also adopted policies fitting with what they believed the alter-part expectation of Japan had to be. The concept of role contestation presents the view that the consensus within the political world and between the government and the public about Japan's NRC is always contingent and, thus, can be challenged (Hirata 2016). During the Cold War, there were two mutually exclusive notions within Japan's ego-part. As seen above, opposition parties such as the JSP and JCP, backed-up by a number of intellectuals and part of the socially and politically engaged civil society promoted the pacifist norm they thought was the optimum role location for Japan, both in Asia and in the world in the era of nuclear armament. They opposed constitutional revision, with in mind the lofty ideal of making Japan a kind of 'peace state' (Hook et al 2011). While the LDP officially aimed at constitutional revision and rearmament, these parties constantly held around one-third seats in the Diet in the 1955 system and it was impossible to achieve the goal of constitutional revision that requires a two-thirds majority (Hook et al 2011; Akimoto 2013: 225; Pempel 2015: 369). However, Japan was never a silent actor nor a client state in its relations with the US like military regimes in Asia. While relying on the security treaty and US-inspired liberal trading system the NCR of non-militarist pacifist state and of 'merchant nation' gave Japan leeway in pursuing active and peaceful roles in foreign policy during the Cold War (Singh, B 2016: 595). Not only security-related role conflicts but also economic conflicts sometimes occurred between Japan and the US over a number of issues, notably related to 'resource diplomacy' (Hook et al 2011). Resource diplomacy is linked to the merchant nation stance of the Yoshida Doctrine. Yoshida did not think that Japan should

limit its global ambition to business activities forever. He thought that economic development and extension of business relationships was the only way in current circumstances to recover international influence in view of the narrow role-set Japan was obliged to limit itself to. Japan utilized ODA to fill the lack of military means in its diplomacy, especially in SEA countries. As Japanese economy thrived, it actively cultivated relations with countries in the third world, such as in the Middle East and South America, to have access to energy and other natural resources. ODA was also a crucial instrument to open markets to Japanese companies, for example in offering credit to government for infrastructure projects. As a result, Japan became the world largest donor in 1989 (Beeson 2014; Potter 2008). Japan normalized diplomatic relations with China in 1972 prior to the US while this latter country was still thinking under Nixon leadership about containing communist China. There was a fit between Japan and China to apply the merchant nation paradigm. Chinese was a poor country at that time but everybody understood that its market was potentially very attractive. In the short term human and natural resources were attractive. Conversely, China focus on economic development made it eager to attract Japanese capital and investments (Maslow 2016; Hosaka & Togo 2012).

Therefore, as explained before, it is true that until the end of the Cold War, there was no significant inconsistency in ego-part despite role contestation from right and left. Likewise, alter-parts' expectations from outside Japan were largely reconciled. Japan was indeed a faithful ally in the ascribed role of follower accepting US leadership. China and other past sufferers did not see Japan as a military threat but as a reliable economic partner

in the region from which was expected money, market access, technology transfer and management expertise. Japan tried to respond to those role demands and expectations. At the same time, however, as seen in the examples mentioned in this section Japan always attempted to keep a degree of diplomatic autonomy in the framework of the established NRC. In so doing, it was able to elude to some extent the prescriptions that underpinned the Yoshida Doctrine and the Japanese Constitution.

4.3 The Turning Point of NRC Reconsideration after the Cold War

The Gulf War, triggered by Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, revealed the limits of the foreign policy built on the premises of the Yoshida doctrine. It reactivated the debate on the roles Japan should play in the world, including especially those that the SDF should be allowed to play as military force (Macleod 1997; Ozawa 1993). For some members of the political and intellectual establishment, the roles that some alter-parts - especially the US - expected from Japan conflicted with Japan's self-restrained military capability.

4.3.1 The Gulf War and the Challenge to the Established NRC

The criticisms and lack of consideration for its contribution - termed as just checkbook diplomacy - during the Gulf War became the proof that the purely reactive Japanese role performance did not respond to the role demand of key alter-parts. The performance was considered all the more inadequate in view of the importance of the Middle East in Japan's

energy policy (Hook et al 2011). Japan was criticized for its perceived failure to respond in a proper manner, i.e. more actively and with more celerity to the call for participation in the war. Japan It seemed to have just adopted a reactive attitude, doing the minimum to avoid disappointing the US. This was despite the fact that Japan's contribution had totaled the hefty amount of \$13 billion, covering about 20% of the whole war cost (Hirata 2002). There was a sharp contrast between the indisputably high technical level of the intervention, the risk incurred by the SDF in minesweeping and Japan's considerable financial contribution, and the negative reaction of the international community.

Japan was confident that its behavior responded to the alter-part expectations because they - especially the US - were supposed to know well what Japan could deliver in terms of role performance. Acknowledgment of the gap in expectation, i.e., that it was not necessarily true that the US had clear understanding of the real situation in Japan, did not trigger sudden change in Japan's role-set. Such attitude is not particular to Japan as Chafetz, Abramson and Grillot (1996) argue that states do not usually abandon role conceptions suddenly. They gradually lower their centrality or transform the meaning. In this particular case, it may be argued that it has accelerated the trend toward the necessity of rethinking some key tenets of the NRCs. Quoting Harnisch (2011) when 'old routines do not promise to achieve the anticipated effects, namely material pay-offs and/or immaterial stabilizing effect for the self' they can lead to changes of the 'I' as 'individual disposition'. The key argument for Japan's 'normalization' was that non-military based foreign policy had limitation and, thus that it was time to reconsider the centrality of the pacifism concept (Seizelet 2007), or, at least, its meaning and objectives for both ego and

alter-parts. The credibility of Japan in the world was at stake and the impact on foreign policy had to be thoroughly examined (Macleod 1997; Ozawa 1993).

In the line of Chafetz, Abramson and Grillot (1996) the Gulf War shock was such major amplitude that it played the role of an accelerator of an already existing trend. Actually, while Japan continued its business-centered policy it had already started to become more active with respect to security policy and more flexible in regard to the roles' demands from the alter-parts for assuming more responsibility in security affairs after the Cold War (Sakaki 2011: 302; Hosoya 2011a; Hughes 2015a). Japan did not think of abandoning the Yoshida Doctrine completely, but the momentum to modify it began to grow from this point.

Reflecting role conceptions' differences infighting inside the LDP had always been rife and several NCRs had existed at the same time. However, until the 1990s the dominant conception that determined the behavior and discourse of the foreign policy had been in favor of the status quo, i.e. maintenance of the Yoshida doctrine's tenets. As mentioned above, there are four orientations in the LDP, i.e. mercantilism, normalism, pacifism and nationalism that always competed over the definition of Japan's international role. Both mercantilists and normalists consider the Japan-US alliance crucial. The former was pragmatic and legitimized the SDF unless it would be sent abroad. The latter supported reinforcement of Japan's military forces, including SDF foreign activities (Hirata 2016). Normalists became dominant in the 1990s inside the LDP, corresponding to the loss of the influence of the JSP and they start to push their normalization agenda. The first achievement was the PKO law in 1992 that resulted from a compromise between

normalists, mercantilists and pacifists. The law was a significant move toward normalization despite the strict constraint that it still imposes on the SDF. The domination of normalists became more evident after Koizumi took over in 2001 and imposed a top-down approach of governance. Mercantilists lost power due to a series of infighting that led to factional splits in the 1990s and 2000s (Hirata 2016). Consequently, there have been few role contestations in the LDP since the Koizumi administration¹³.

4.3.2 The Challenge to the Economic Diplomacy-Centered NRC

Japanese citizens' pride in their country developed in the 1960s with the beginning of the high-growth period. However, it remained quite diffuse and low key. It did not focus either on the Japanese state - as the Japanese conservatives would have preferred - or on the idea of emergence of a peace-driven country - as wished by the left. Instead, Japanese citizens were proud of their country's social, cultural, and economic progress after decades of hardship. In the 1970s and 1980s, the growing affluence of the middle class and the world recognition of some Japanese companies as first class competitors became the object of pride. For the first time over 100 years Japan was the undisputable dominant economic power in the region (Berger 2014: 10).

However, the country's identity changed as a result of the emergence of a different international security and economic environment in the post-Cold War period. In the

¹³ Open discussions about security and defense in Japan during the post-Cold War era indicate that there is little taboo remaining in discussing the issues. However, opposition to naval deployment of the MSDF to refuel US ships in the Indian Ocean during the war in Afghanistan was strong enough in the Diet and public opinion to block the project. The center-left DPJ-led government, almost immediately cancelled the operation when it took over from the LDP in 2009 (Maul 2011).

1990s economic stagnation put into question the successful socio-economic model and, as a result, the business-driven diplomacy. Economic decline meant that Japan's political influence in Asia, especially in SEA also declined. Japan was no longer seen as a role model for economic development and generous supplier of expertise and finance but a low growth ageing country which seemed to have lost its poise (Tselichtchev & Debrox 2009). The worry was all the more palpable that political assertiveness of China in East Asia and SEA started to grow with its economic might. It appeared clearly from the support - or at least understanding - that China's territorial claims in the SCS received from some countries, such as Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar¹⁴. Moreover, Japan started to struggle to contain the competition coming from the Asian New Industrializing Economies that adopted successfully the export strategy of manufactured goods that had been at the core of Japan's companies' strategy (Macleod 1997). At the same time, Japan had to position itself in a world characterized by the rise of powerful regional groups in Europe and North America. Japan felt increasingly isolated as the only advanced country not belonging to a regional group.

Since the 1970s Japan had been proud to be the second largest economy in the world in terms of GDP but it was now overtaken by China, a country that had been the biggest recipient of Japan's ODA for a long time (Hosoya 2011a). Japan remains a vastly more advanced country than China by all measures of social and economic indicators other than GDP but in the minds of some Japanese and foreign observers Japan's loss of the position

¹⁴ China's legal basis for its claims is contained in a document (note verbale) submitted to the UN on May 7, 2009. It unilaterally claimed China's 'indisputable sovereignty' over all the islands in the West Philippine Sea and their 'adjacent waters/relevant waters' (Bello 2013).

of the second biggest economic power signified a decline in the country's international influence (Hosoya 2011a). The perception was that it was now possible for China to exert pressure on Japan in ways that had been impossible earlier, including over historical and territorial issues (Berger 2014: 10). All those factors accumulated over the years and gradually eroded Japanese self-confidence on its ability to obtain respect in the world if its role-set were not evolving (Sakaki 2015: 305).

4.4 Bilateralism and Multilateralism Balance in Post-Cold War NRC

The Gulf War crisis did not make Japan abandon non-military NRC, proving the depth of its support. Throughout the 1990s, while strengthening bilateral relations with the US in the new environment as a security partner, the non-military NRC combined with the multilateral one related to PKO, ODA and human security. Japan adopted a two-pronged strategy based on the balancing of the multilateralism and bilateralism dimensions. Multilateral role in international organizations such as the UN and bilateral role of faithful security partner of the US were expected to progress together. So, the two approaches complement each other. The objective was to give the ego and alter-parts a clear indication of which role it intended to perform in the new international system and how they were supposed to be performed.

4.4.1 Strengthening Multilateral NRC through International Organizations and Continuity of Non-Militarist NRC

Strengthening international activities such as those related to PKO, ODA and humanitarian assistance based on the concept of human security¹⁵ was thought to be appropriate because it meant that while showing its readiness to participate fully in world affairs Japan did not abandon its war-renouncing constitution and the self-defense-centered foreign policy (Hook et al 2011; Hosoya 2011b: 15).

During the Cold War, Japan's support for PKO was purely financial and there were only a few limited personnel contributions¹⁶. The PKO law enabled Japan to dispatch Japanese military personnel abroad for the first time since 1954. For example, the SDF cleared mines from the Persian Gulf in 1991 and in Cambodia in 1992, and it was later on involved in infrastructure building, arms collecting, rescue activities and election monitoring in East Timor, Afghanistan, Cambodia and other countries¹⁷ (Yasutomo 2014). Since 2009, the SDF has been present in a military base in Djibouti and in Somalia to eradicate piracy in the region (Maslow 2016: 191). In addition, from 2012 until March 2017 the SDF maintained a small PKO in South Sudan. Since the enactment of PKO law the meta-role

¹⁵ The UN resolution 66/290 states that: 'Human security is an approach to assist member states in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of their people'. Concretely, the resolution explains human security more in detail: 'The right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential' (The UN 2012: 2).

¹⁶ With the relaxation of the Cold War tensions in the late 1980s, Japan started personnel contribution to PKO. Japan dispatched 27 civilians to Namibia in 1989 to take part of the UN Transition Assistance Group. Afterward, 6 civilians were sent with PKO to Nicaragua and Haiti in order to oversee the elections in 1989 and 1990. All those operations remained of purely non-military nature. Therefore, they aroused little opposition in Japan or among Asian countries (Hook et al 2011).

¹⁷ The SDF provided humanitarian assistance for the tsunami in SEA in 2004 and in the Philippines after the typhoon in 2013 (Palatino 2014).

of non-military power has been maintained despite the dispatching the SDF outside Japan. In so doing, Japan has been able to keep its performance of no killing of even a person in military action during the whole postwar period so far (Wada 2015).

In parallel with the change in SDF roles, the nature and objectives of ODA policy and the approach to regional organizations have also evolved. Japan was the world largest donor of ODA throughout the 1990s while being also one of the largest contributors to international institutions such as the World Bank, IMF and ILO (Yasutomo 2014; Saraiva 2014: 35). In addition, Japan pledged in 2008 to double its ODA to African states by 2012 and has made efforts to reinforce its presence in Africa to counter the growing impact of China on the continent. Abe did not change his predecessors' policy by continuing to help African countries. In 2016 Abe promised that Japan would invest \$30 billion in the next three years for the purpose of humanitarian assistance such as education, infrastructure, and healthcare (Reuters 2016a).

Japan adopted a two-pronged approach in relations with regional organizations: 1) efforts to build a 'league of democracies' among countries sharing the same values, centering on the Japan-US alliance, and 2) a focus on regional cooperation in East Asia, centering on Sino-Japanese ties. APEC and the TPP are typical of the former approach and APT, ARF, and ARF typify the latter. Conceptually, the domestic fight was open between those who were ready to embrace values based on human rights, freedom, and democracy in the name of universalism and those for whom those values were merely Western values there was no reason to embrace because they were alien to the traditional values. At best they had to be considered cautiously (Watanabe 2011).

LDP's prime ministers Fukuda Yasuo (the son of Fukuda Takeo) (2006-2007) and the DPJ's Hatoyama (2009-2010) aimed at deepening relations with China. Fukuda and Hatoyama were not keen to accept Australia, New Zealand, and the US in the regional Asian organizations (Watanabe 2011). Finally, Japan was one of the countries that supported the new concept of human security after the publication of the 1994 UNDP Report that launched it. It helped Japan clarify its political values within the international society. The objective of its adoption was that it could contribute to triggering sympathy for the countries and, thus, enhancing its reputation (Saraiva 2014: 35). The Obuchi administration (1998-2000) has been the first prime minister to promote actively the new concept. It led to the decision to participate in the international campaign against landmines, and of making it the starting point of the drive to strategically promote human security¹⁸ (Saraiva 2014: 40).

4.4.2 Evolution of the NRC Linked to the Japan-US Relations

The Gulf War and the subsequent crisis in North Korea and the Taiwan Strait in 1990s revealed the inadequacies of the Japan-US collaboration in time of emergencies. Japan was not in a position to dispatch the SDF, except for non-military mission, because of the interpretation of Article 9. Japanese leaders thought this inadequacy would reinforce US perception of Japan as a free-rider taking advantage of the US. As a result, Japan could not be considered a loyal and reliable country sharing the same values. In such conditions

¹⁸ In 1998, at the 'Intellectual Dialogue on Building Asia's Tomorrow', Obuchi stated his vision for Asia in the 21st century as such: 'a century of peace and prosperity built on human dignity'. He also proposed the creation of a Human Security Fund at the UN (Obuchi 1998). From this time, human security became part of Japan's foreign policy agenda and the Japanese government took numerous initiatives related to it.

Japanese decision-makers had a reason to have doubt about the commitment of the US to Japan's security (Maull 2011).

Under the joint declaration issued by president Bill Clinton and prime minister Hashimoto Ryutaro in 1996, the two countries reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening their bilateral alliance. The new Guideline was an attempt to save the alliance (Soeya 2004: 5). It widened and included collaboration not only to cases of emergency in Japan but also in 'situations in the surrounding areas' of Japan, for example in the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan. In those cases too, the SDF would be allowed to support the US forces (Ministry of Defense 1997; Hughes 2015b).

The attack on September 11, 2001, led to the US' international 'War on Terror (WOT)' and further increased US demand for Japanese security cooperation (Hirata 2016). In response to US request Japan enacted the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law. The law allowed the SDF to be dispatched to the Indian Ocean in order to logistically support the US-led forces in Afghanistan¹⁹. The Koizumi government also enacted the Iraq Special Measures Law in 2003 that allowed the dispatch of the SDF to Iraq where it engaged in reconstruction work in 2004 (Singh, B 2016: 610; Hirata 2016). Those Japanese initiatives helped to recreate a better climate of mutual trust between Japan and the US (Maull 2011). Nevertheless, despite calls for deeper security-related involvement with the US, it did not change the pacifist meta-role fundamentally. The Japan-US alliance gradually evolved

¹⁹ It should be noted that the anti-terrorism measures law to do logistical support in the Indian Ocean when the US attacked Afghanistan was justified in the name of the UN, not in the name of the Japan-US alliance because unlike the Iraq War, the UNSC allowed the U.S-led multinational forces to wage war in Afghanistan (Soeya 2004: 7)

but without changing the constitutional framework. The right of collective self-defense continued to be denied and the pacifist role proscription impact on foreign policy remained paramount regardless of US expectation²⁰. Although Japan sent troops to Afghanistan and Iraq and other areas, the SDF was not allowed to use force except for self-defense and the role of the SDF remained of non-combatant nature (Wada 2015).

4.5 The First Abe Administration and Value-Oriented Diplomacy

The US launched the concept of ‘democratic peace’ idea after the Cold War. The idea was that no war is likely to occur between democratic states. The idea was relaunched by the Bush administration under influence of the neo-conservative right that pushed for the diffusion of democracy in the world (Hosoya 2011a). The Koizumi administration followed the trend. During the Japan-US summit in 2006, prime minister Koizumi and president George W. Bush issued a joint declaration titled ‘the Japan-U.S Alliance of the New Century’, in which they stated that:

‘The United States and Japan stand together not only against mutual threats
but also for the advancement of core universal values such as freedom, human

²⁰ The 2000 Nye-Armitage Report titled ‘The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership’, argued that: ‘We (the US authorities) see the special relationship between the United States and Great Britain as a model for the (US-Japan) alliance’. It meant explicitly that Japanese military-related international contribution was expected (Armitage and Nye 2000). The US demanded that Japan amend Article 9, especially after WOT, telling that it had become a hindrance to the Japan-US alliance as well as for Japan to become permanent membership on the UNSC (The Daily Yomiuri 2004). The 2012 Armitage-Nye Report described that Japan is ‘drifting’ into ‘tier-two status’ (Armitage and Nye 2012). Furthermore, in an article of *the Daily Yomiuri* on 23 July 2012, Armitage stated that ‘Japan’s constitutional constraints will become more, not less, consequential to our alliance over time’, emphasizing again the necessity of constitutional revision (Armitage 2012).

dignity and human rights, democracy, market economy, and rule of law'

(MOFA 2006).

The idea that liberal democracy should be an important dimension of Japan's foreign policy led to the value-oriented diplomacy and the arc of freedom and prosperity in the first Abe administration. During the second term of Abe the two notions were merged in the name of 'diplomacy of a bird's eye view of the globe' and it became the one of symbols highlighting Abe's idea of Japan's most appropriate role location in the world (Hosoya 2011b: 15).

Then foreign minister Aso (2006) intended to anchor Japan in the group of liberal democracies. He used the term the arc of freedom and prosperity to describe the geopolitical area that is covered by the concept. After the DPJ administrations (2009-2012) the emphasis on liberal democracy in foreign policy is present again in the second Abe administration.

The Diplomatic Bluebook specifically mentions that Japan will strengthen cooperative relations with countries 'with which it shares universal values and strategic interests' (MOFA 2014a). For the first time since the end of the war, Japanese leaders declared that they were entitled to promote universal values, and even to take a leadership in this point in Asia. After the lull of the Second World War period it is presented as a normal evolution for a country proud of its long history of democracy, respect of human rights and of the rule of law (Taniguchi 2010: 1-3). Abe and Aso saw an opportunity for Japan to play more important roles as a reliable security partner and world/regional leader actively engaged in strengthening the Japan-US and regional ties. Abe (2006) writes in his book, *Utsukushii*

kuni e [Towards a Beautiful Country] about having a closer relationship with Australia, India and the US, suggesting regular meetings to discuss on how to expand universal values to other countries in their region. Furthermore, Abe (2012) also proposed the idea of the ‘Democratic Security Diamond’ related to his China policy. The objective is to form a diamond among Japan, Australia, India, and the US (Hawaii) to cope with the territorial disputes in the ECS and SCS. As Abe argues, Japan is an important maritime power and an advanced democracy and he expressed his idea that Japan has to connect values with the selection of its security partners.

4.6 Proactive Pacifism as Part of the Pacifist NRC

During the first term, Abe committed himself to changing Japan’s NRC fundamentally with the slogan of ‘sengo rejime kara no dakkyaku [escape the shackles of the postwar regime]’, in the sense of moving beyond the Yoshida doctrine (Hughes 2015b). To adopt a more proactive behavior within the Japan-US alliance was one of the most important points on Abe’s agenda (Abe 2006a). Until now, Japan has constantly upgraded the SDF’s technical capacity and increased its interoperability with US forces. It is argued that Abe’s policies go beyond what has been done before in terms of redefinition of the concept of self-defense, once again with the idea of ‘normalizing’ Japan’s defense policy (Weston 2013: 171-172). As part of this, the Defense Agency became a ministry in January 2007.

To address regional security threats Japan also signed a joint declaration on security cooperation with Australia in 2007 that cope with issues such as personnel exchanges and

joint training and exercises (Medeiros et al 2008). It made Australia Japan's second biggest security partner (Hosoya 2011b: 19). Abe also intended to reinforce bilateral relationship with India as counterweight to China. When prime minister Manmohan Singh visited Japan in December 2006, the 'Strategic and Global Partnership' agreement was signed (MOFA 2017a). During his second administration, Abe named his assertive foreign policy proactive pacifism that could be interpreted as the willingness to shift Japan's passive foreign policy to a pro-active one (Shi 2016).

4.7 Four Pillars of Abe's Security Policy as a Reliable and Faithful Ally

The second Abe administration focuses on fulfillment of the role of a reliable security ally. The task is still incomplete because of constraints imposed by the NKP and the reluctance of public opinion. The SDF's latitude in using force and the collective self-defense are still contested and related roles are not properly enacted yet. Nevertheless, despite remaining obstacles, the administration has already taken tangible steps indicating the orientation of its policy. It is composed of four pillars: 1) new security decision-making system, 2) new defense strategy, 3) new interpretation of Article 9, and 4) new US-Japan Defense cooperation guideline to play a reliable security partner. As mentioned earlier since his first administration Abe has followed Koizumi to advocate democratic values promoted by the neo-conservative in the US. It suited his understanding of Japan's role that it had to play in the framework of the Japan-US alliance and the characteristics

of the system of security cooperation at multilateral level where he wants Japan to operate.

His approach appears in the policies described below.

4.7.1 The Secret Information Protection Act and the National Security Council

The second Abe administration has put in place a new security system (NSC) to partly eliminate the constitutional constraint on military activities. The NSC is supposed to integrate important information from key security agencies in order to facilitate the foreign policy implementation (Yachi 2013; Hughes 2015b). In November 2013, a new law dealing with state secrets was enacted to prevent leakage of information connected with diplomacy, defense and anti-terrorism. Abe rejects the worry that the law represents a regressive step for democracy in Japan because it can impose severe penalty on suspects of information leak, for example academics, journalists or others. He insists on the necessity of the law to better control security-related information. Without it, having the NSC operate efficiently would be impossible (Maslow 2016: 200-201).

4.7.2 National Security Strategy and the National Defense Program Guideline

In December 2013, the Abe government released a new National Security Strategy (NSS) that was based on the concept of proactive pacifism. It aimed to strengthen Japan's defense capabilities²¹, which was considered necessary to deal with China's challenge to

²¹ The main covered areas are maritime and cyber security, collection of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and strengthening of the mechanisms of interoperability inside the Japan-US

‘status quo by coercion’. It also advocated the need for US ‘rebalance’ to the region (The Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 2013: 8) which served to maintain the international order ‘based on rules and universal values, such as freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law’ (The Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 2013: 21). It is a document that aimed at showing how Abe wanted Japan to be perceived by like-minded countries, i.e. a country contributing to the stability of the international order and concerned about peace in the international setting (Tatsumi 2014). In 2014 Abe replaced the 1967 three self-imposed principles of the Sato administration’s period (1964-1972) that had almost completely forbidden arms exports. The three new principles are called the ‘three principles on transfer of defense equipment and technology’²² (MOFA 2014b). In practical terms it puts an end to ban on arms export and open the door to the launch of joint defense research with foreign partners in the longer term. In addition, it authorizes to transfer defense equipment to the Philippines and Vietnam which became Japan’s strategic partners in Abe’s second term (Carr and Wallis 2016). In this connection, in February 2015, the Abe administration adopted a new ‘Development Cooperation Charter’ that replaced the 2002 ODA Charter. The objectives and key principles of the new ODA policies are to focus on ‘human security’, ‘assistance for self-help’, and ‘sustainable development’ (MOFA 2015a). The new charter allows to provide foreign troops with a kind of military support in instances such as disaster rescue, and anti-terrorism and anti-piracy activities in the name of law enforcement issues

alliance. At the same time the development of security partnerships with South Korea, SEA countries, Australia and India is also put to the fore (Hughes 2015a).

²² See the website of MOFA: http://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press22e_000010.html.

(Asplund 2015; Sakaki 2015: 20; Hughes 2015b). Nevertheless, the emphasis strongly remains on the non-military nature of the assistance (MOFA 2015a: 1-4). The Abe administration also revised the National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) and Mid-Term Defense Plan in 2013 to strengthen the naval and air forces. Several new expressions are utilized such as ‘proactive contribution to peace’, ‘Dynamic Joint Defense Force’, and ‘Japan will swiftly and seamlessly respond’ when ‘gray-zone²³’ contingencies happen (Ministry of Defense 2013: 3-10). As Japan wants to reinforce its surveillance capabilities because of the China’s threat perception, the defense plan includes among others the purchase of 52 amphibious landing vehicles and three Global Hawk surveillance drones along with large increase in the budget for paramilitary coast guard (Maslow 2016: 201).

4.7.3 Reinterpretation of Article 9

Leaders’ own images of the appropriate direction or functions of their country in the world are included in NRC (Holsti 1970: 245-246). As such, it is assumed that Abe desires Japan to have different role conceptions, and consequently different foreign policy preferences. As mentioned before Abe reinterpreted Japan’s constitution to allow for collective self-defense in July 2014, with the aim of having Japan play a more active role within the alliance with the US and other partners. In this respect he backed away for reasons from the project for constitutional revision he had envisioned during his first administration (The Japan Times 2014; Hirata 2016).

²³ A border incursion that does not lead to serious armed conflict (Jimbo 2014).

However, Abe is inherently revisionist and did not change his mind on the issue of the constitution amendment. He thinks that postwar reforms, especially the Japanese Constitution, were imposed on Japan²⁴ (Fisker-Nielsen 2016). For example, coming to the aid of an ally under attack is considered beyond the ‘minimum necessary’ use of force permitted by the conventional interpretation of the pacifist constitution. Abe’s viewpoint is that such constraint deprives Japan of a fundamental right of an independent country. Indeed, during a snap election in December 2014, he reconfirmed his intent to revise the constitution and erase the military restrictions (Carr and Wallis 2016). Abe perceives that the relative level of support given by Japanese people to the traditional pacifist roles - in the passive sense of the role, leading to quasi impossibility of the SDF to use its force efficiently and effectively - has gradually declined after the end of the Cold War. Moreover, North Korea’s nuclear development and China’s expansionism give opportunities to Abe’s pursuit of revision of Article 9 (Hasebe 2017). However, he has understood that the public opinion has not evolved to the point of easily accepting a revision of the constitution that would include weakening of the pacifist characteristics of Article 9 (Miyamoto & Watanabe 2014). He is also aware that enlarging roles and missions of the SDF might conflict with the NKP over the reliable security partner and non-military pacifism meta-roles. Since it is difficult to get the majority necessary to fundamentally amend the constitution, either in the Diet or through referendum, he limited

²⁴ Abe’s argument in his book *Towards establishing a beautiful country* published in 2006 is that Japan as a member of the UN has the right to both individual and collective self-defense as explicitly stated in Article 51 of the UN Convention. As a result, the existence of Article 9 does not remove this right (Fisker-Nielsen 2016).

himself so far to cautiously reinterpret Article 9 and to gradually increase the visibility of Japan's foreign policy in security matters. He seeks to engage the SDF in international affairs without formally amending the constitution. Like this, he tries to change Japan's NRC by causing as little role inconsistency as possible, so as not to create potential role conflict.

In this respect, as example of willingness not to adopt a too high profile in security affairs, the new interpretation of collective self-defense in July 2014 is a compromise with the NKP, reached after a tough debate between the two partners. Collective self-defense is limited to help a country with close ties to Japan against which armed aggression was directed and when it results in a threat to 'Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness' (MOFA 2014c). In this interpretation, collective self-defense is thus limited to situation in which Japan and Japanese people are under direct threat (Sakaki 2015: 18). In addition, the right can be used only after it is clearly established that no other means are available to respond to it (Sakaki 2015: 18; Nakanishi 2015: 413). Thus, the principle of an exclusively defense-oriented security policy is still the fundamental rule. Likewise, those of not becoming a militaristic country, and the respect of the three non-nuclear principles are maintained (The Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 2013: 3; Ministry of Defense 2013: 6). During the first Abe administration, Abe confirmed that Japan would maintain its commitment to the three non-nuclear principles and would never attempt to enter in the nuclear weapon race. He purposefully reaffirmed those principles soon after the North Korean nuclear test on 9 October 2006 in order to reaffirm Japan's pacifist

credential even in a crisis circumstance case of political tension. Moreover, he consistently reconfirmed like his predecessors the commitment to work on nuclear disarmament (McCormack 2016). However, during the second Abe administration, after the 2014 Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, 159 countries made a ‘Humanitarian Pledge’ to ban the use of nuclear weapons but Japan was not among them (McCormack 2016). In May 2016, Obama and Abe reiterated in the Hiroshima peace park their commitment to nuclear weapons’ ban (MOFA 2016a), but Japan once again voted against a resolution of the First Committee of the United Nations’ General Assembly that launched the process of banning possession or use of nuclear weapons²⁵ (McCormack 2016). Therefore, the fact is that Japan is under US nuclear umbrella (extended deterrence principle) since the signing of the US-Japan security treaty. As long as it refuses to become a nuclear power, it has to rely on US nuclear umbrella (Mochizuki 2007: 305).

4.7.4 New Guideline and Security Laws

The Abe administration and the US revised the 1997 US-Japan Defense Cooperation Guidelines for stronger cooperation in April 2015 (MOFA 2015b). The new guidelines allow Japan to intercept missile targeting the US. The words ‘regional contingencies’ have been removed and the area where the SDF can provide support under the US-Japan

²⁵ Foreign minister Kishida Fumio admitted that Japan’s voting was partially affected by Japan’s reliance on the US nuclear umbrella (The Mainichi 2016a).

security treaty has been extended to ‘Asia-Pacific and beyond’ (MOFA 2015b). So, they are in a position to participate in military operations with the US everywhere (Craig 2016). Therefore, the new security laws can be considered the logical outcome of the new Japan-US guidelines. They took effect on 29 March 2016 and are known as ‘peaceful security legal system’. The system’s main points address issues related to the protection of the lives and peace of Japanese citizens. It means once again that Abe wants to show that he does not intend to put into question Japan’s pacifism. The Diet revised ten security-related laws²⁶, the most significant ones being the following: the Law on Response to Contingencies enables Japan to exercise collective self-defense under the conditions explained above; the Law to Ensure Security in Contingencies Significantly Affecting Japan, which replaced the 1999 Regional Contingencies Law, was designed to strengthen the SDF’s backup support for the US and other partnering countries outside combat zones; the International Peace Support Law eliminates the need for Japan to enact separate laws for each SDF dispatch providing logistical support to foreign forces in UN-authorized missions, and the revised PKO Law allows the SDF to use weapon besides the defense of SDF personnel, for instance to protect other civilians and the UN personnel. In addition, the law enables the dispatch of the SDF not only in PKO but also in other international peace cooperation activities (Hughes 2016: 143; Akimoto 2016: 143).

²⁶ 1) Self-Defense Forces Law (SDF Law), 2) International Peace Cooperation Law or UN Peacekeeping Operations Cooperation Act (PKO Law), 3) Law Concerning Measures to Ensure Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan, 4) Ship Inspection Operations Law, 5) Legislation for Responses to Armed Attack Situations, 6) Act on Measures Conducted by the Government in Line with U.S. Military Actions in Armed Attack Situations, 7) Law Concerning the Use of Specific Public Facilities, 8) Marine Transport Restriction Act, 9) Prisoner Treatment Act, and 10) National Security Council (NSC) Establishment Act (Akimoto 2016: 143).

However, the revised PKO law retains five PKO principles. The laws thus deny participation in activities involving the use of force and would still not authorize the dispatch in situations such as the Vietnam War and the 2001 Afghanistan War even at the request of the US (Akimoto 2016: 156-157).

4.8 Regionalism, Historical Issues and Japan's Role

Japan's NRC related to the TPP project is linked to its long-term interest in economic growth in the region and the objective of boosting Japanese companies' position. However, the relationship with security concern and, indirectly about the US presence in Asia is closely intertwined with the economic dimension. Abe shares political values with right-wing supporters but cannot implement policies they like without taking international and domestic expectations into account. Thus, his policy related to history is cautious, so as not to become an obstacle to his foreign policy.

4.8.1 Abe's Role as a Free Trade Promoter

Since the 1990s Japan's policymakers have oscillated between East Asia-centered regionalism or regionalism centered on the Pacific Ocean dimension, thus involving the US. Japan's NRC in this respect are characterized by the skillful mix of economy and politics to defend its interests (Watanabe 2011). As pointed out before Abe's intention is to have Japan play more important and responsible roles in the world that he perceives to be foreign countries role expectation of Japan. Under his helm Japan intends to be involved in many economic organizations because it can contribute to economic development but

also because Japan conceives its role as a counterbalance to China's economic and political rise in Asia.

Therefore, Abe's decision to get involved in the TPP talks can be considered in the line of the importance he gives to related to regional agreements in Asia and the Pacific (Sohn 2015: 357). First of all, Japan decided to take part in negotiations over the TTP for economic reason, i.e. to create business opportunities to Japan's companies. They need to retake some ground in a region where regional integration largely developed thanks to their investments since the 1970s but where Japanese presence has been gradually supplanted by Chinese organizations. At the broader institutional level to be a dominant member of the TPP alongside the US would make Japan an economic rule-maker putting emphasis on multilateralism and respect for the law to protect market economy in all areas of trade and investment in the region. The respect for those principles is expected to create differentiation with China that would result in comparative advantage for Japanese companies and also provide political leverage. Other member countries can be expected to relish the possibility to do business in a more predictable and safe business environment where the interest of everybody is respected. Japan can help create such environment while China cannot or is not willing to do so.

Concurrently, the TPP frontiers would coincide with the security and values ones because some of the participants are key allies and strategic partners of both Japan and the US. For Abe, it will impact on the members' cooperation in security-related field. Thus, the economy-security nexus of the agreement is evident and extends much beyond purely trade issue (Huang 2015). The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

that China promotes precludes US membership and its dominance would mean further lowering of the US presence in Asia. It would create a situation running counter the will of Japan to support the continuation of the US-dominated East Asian regional order against China's one (Yachi 2011; Murakami 2015; Zhang 2016). Japan is in a position to enter both the TPP and RCEP. However, even if China cannot completely dominate the RCEP Japan's influence is likely to remain comparatively lower than in the TPP. Moreover, the rules in the RCEP related to trade, investment and legal matters such as protection of intellectual rights can be expected to be much looser than in the TPP. Therefore, Japan would have less opportunity to impose its views and differentiate itself with superior standards of rules and governance at state and company's levels.

For Abe, China's maritime claim in the Western Pacific is a concern because it threatens Japan's strong presence in the region. From military and economy perspectives, Abe needs TPP members' support for his strategy of containing China. So, in a role theory perspective the TPP agreement is a structural factor in the current US - China - Japanese relationship, and it might have a great impact on China's perception of and response to Abe's foreign policy (Zhang, X 2015: 435). However, Abe-led Japan needs to be careful not to be a destabilizing factor in SEA. No SEA countries want to be forced to choose between Japan and China. It could create a role conflict between Japan and them if they perceive Japan's foreign policy as a source of raising tension in the region that could force them to take side (Interview with Professor Fukushima, 19 July, 2017, Aoyama Gakuin University). The fate of the TPP deal was in limbo as the new US administration decided not to enter (BBC 2017) but the situation is changing. In November 2017 11 countries

reached an agreement based on the TPP. The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP, or TPP-11) can be considered a significant step toward recreating the TPP without the US. A number of points must still be agreed upon but ratification by at least 6 countries can be expected in the following years, irrespective of their economic weight (Kimura 2017). The TPP without the US is less politically and economically attractive (but Japan still expects that the US will decide to join one day) but if the CPTPP is eventually ratified - which is very probable - Japan can avoid what would have been a major setback in economic and political terms. It would have furthermore marginalized Japan in shaping the rapidly evolving new economic order because it would have let the country with much less international linkages than South Korea and China (Pempel 2015: 373). Still, Japan cannot ignore the economic reality of the interdependence of Japanese and Chinese economies. China is the largest trade partner of Japan, accounting for 21% of the total of import-export transactions (Tanaka 2017). Therefore, there is a limit to the claim of defense of liberal democratic values. Japan wants to keep politics and economy separated in Japan-China relations. While Japan links the TPP with security and values, it also wants to develop strategic economic reciprocal relations with China concurrently. Abe has tried to develop economic relations with China since the first administration. The agreement between Japanese and Chinese governments at the end of 2006 to realize a ‘mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests’ (MOFA 2008) states that:

‘The two sides recognized that the Japan-China relationship is one of the most important bilateral relationships for each of the two countries and that Japan

and China now have great influence on and bear a solemn responsibility for peace, stability, and development of the Asia-Pacific region and the world’.

The principle was passed on to the second Abe administration (MOFA 2014d). The two parties are willing to come back to the period of normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1972 that was followed by 30 years of fast growing business exchanges.

4.8.2 Historical Role Demand and Abe’s Role Enactment

Historical issues in Northeast Asia, emerging mainly from the Sino-Japanese wars in the late 19th century and in the 1930s and 1940s and Japan’s colonization of Korea, are not entirely new. In the past, the periodic phenomenon of cooling and warming up of relationships between Japan, South Korea and China over historical issues was a common feature that Japan’s leaders accepted as a fact of life. Japanese policymakers began earnestly to tackle the historical issues in the 1990s to settle them for good, with a certain degree of success for a while. By the late 1990s, Japan and South Korea appeared well along the path toward enduring reconciliation. The Kono and Murayama Statements²⁷ seemed to appease the tension. South Korean, Chinese and Japanese policymakers seemed to have succeeded in preventing the issues from overly affecting the diplomatic agenda.

Since the early 2000s, however, historical issues erupted again and threatened to put in jeopardy the long-term attempts of cooperation. The immediate reason for the crisis was

²⁷ The 1993 Kono statement - in which the Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono apologized to Korea for the experiences of the comfort women and admitted the involvement of the Japanese army - as well as the 1995 apology by Prime Minister Murayama for Japan’s wartime colonial rule and aggression across Asia (Pempel 2015: 376)

prime minister Koizumi's repeated visits to the Yasukuni Shrine - the place where tribute is given to the war victims but where are also enshrined 14 convicted war criminals. He visited it every year during his office term from 2001 to 2006. Tensions over the Yasukuni Shrine visits affected territorial disputes and other issues. For both Korea and China, the control over disputed islands came to the fore again with stronger force than before. Korean leadership and media started to link Japan's claim to Takeshima/Dokdo to Japan's colonial annexation of Korea, while China argued that Japan's control over Senkaku/Diaoyu was an extension of the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-1895.

Role conflict dynamics can be difficult to control. Conflicts' evolution is often not predictable and can have unexpected development if they are not kept under control. Abe acknowledges the diplomatic importance of historical issues and takes steps to reduce tension. He recognizes that Japan must show more willingness to come to terms with its history in order to avoid mutually disadvantageous outcomes. To show his goodwill Abe adopted a conciliatory behavior during his first administration and he did not visit the Yasukuni Shrine. However, recent disputes over history, which had been restricted to role behavior focused on the East Asian alter-parts until now, are of broader significance nowadays. Increasingly they are feared to have the potential to disrupt the Japan-US relations as well. The US does not want to put into question the existing international order in the region that resulted from the Second World War, including the territorial status quo and the acceptance of Japan's responsibility in the war damages.

The situation changed during the second term. Abe's historical revisionism exemplified by his efforts in constitutional revision, proactive security policy and his visit to the

Yasukuni Shrine in 2013 came openly to the fore and reignited old wounds. It attracted criticism from the Chinese side because it was perceived as an indication that Japan wants to reconsider the established wisdom of Japan as an aggressor during the war (Zhang, X 2015: 426). The result could be a deterioration of the stability of the mutual role expectation between Japan and China in the East Asian region. Abe's nationalism can lead to what China would consider provocation over the Senkaku Islands and generates a conflict that could run out of hand. Indirectly, it is feared that it could also negatively impact on the perception of Japan's reliability as an ally in the mind of US leaders. Likewise, Abe's position on the Comfort Women issue that denies the fact that those women were victims of forcible conscription²⁸ is undermining the relationship with South Korea (Financial Times 2015). Because of the importance of the US military presence in both countries it makes the task of coordination of military collaboration more complicated. In case of emergency, for example linked to North Korea, it may hinder the attempts to present unified front against the enemy.

In role theory term, proper role enactment usually leads to positive reaction, and negative evaluations are placed on actors who fail to perform appropriate roles from alter-parts viewpoint (Harnisch 2013). By visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, Japan did not conform to its role expectation by China and the US. Its behavior was perceived as an attempt to depart from its role as a non-military pacifist country deeply reflecting on its past behavior, a key component of its meta-role of being a non-military country. Criticized by China and

²⁸ The issue relates to the allegation that Korean (and women from other Asian countries as well) have been forced to serve as sexual partners of military personnel at comfort stations created with the involvement of the Japanese military during the war (Asahi Shimbun 2014).

the US, Abe decided not to behave as if he had wanted to revive Japanese militarism and trivialize Japan's war crimes in East Asia (Zhang, X 2015; Hughes 2015b; Maslow 2016). He made symbolic gestures, for example when he became the second Japanese prime minister next to Kishi in 1957 to express his apologies to the Australian prisoners of war in the Australian Parliament for the abuse they had suffered during their captivity (The Australian 2014), or when he was the first Japanese prime minister to visit the memorial site of the Attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 with the American president to express his condolences for the lost lives in the attack (BBC 2016). Although he has inherently espoused a revisionist historical perspective as mentioned above²⁹ he opposed the attempts by the right to take back or weaken the Kono and Murayama Statements that, respectively, made explicit apology for the invasion and recognized the coercive conscription of women as sex slaves for the Japanese army. Moreover, Abe delivered the so-called 'Abe Statement' that sought to ease China's concern and emphasized Japan changes in a positive way and its contribution to the world peace along with his political idea (Pugliese 2015b: 53). It is argued that Abe's statement represents the general Japanese view on the war (Sahashi 2016). He inherited ego and alter-part critical understanding of Japan's history during the Second World War from his predecessors. His initiatives reflect the difficulties to reconcile different viewpoints in the attempts to define and redefine what Japan did in the past and how this affects Japan's roles in current

²⁹ It is pointed out that flexibility on historical issues does not mean that Japanese conservatives leaders such as Abe abandon their ultimate goals of promoting national pride. Nakasone, one of the most nationalist postwar prime ministers, was the first Japanese leader to recognize that the Second World War was a war of aggression and that Korean people had been oppressed during the Japanese colonial period (Berger 2014: 13).

world affairs. It creates uncertainty concerning Japan's intention concerning the roles it intends to play in the region, might put in question the US legacy of building democratic Japan, and could rekindle feud among US allies, notably China and South Korea. Compromise is needed from Abe's part lest Japan lose its position of main trusted US ally in Asia. However, although Abe understands that he has to appease China, South Korea and the US, he cannot neglect his conservative constituency, i.e. the right-wing groups such as the Japan Conference and Nihon Izokukai (the Japan War-Bereaved Families Association) who support him and still expect revision of Article 9 and the constitution as a whole. They also push for reconsideration of the postwar consensus about war responsibilities. In their view historical interpretation of Japan as a colonial aggressor should be reconsidered because it is seen as a permanent constrain to recover full independence. Concretely, Japan must be given the right to exercise military power to protect its national security interests like any other nations. The current shackles prevent Japan from recovering great power international status (Larsson 2015; Hughes 2016: 133). The heritage from the Second World War is likely to remain constitutive of how Japan thinks of itself and its role in the world. The current political debates center on what historical legacy means, and what they imply in international affairs today, i.e. how and to what extent it could impact the Japanese NRC. Faced with international and domestic pressures that are liable to lead to contradictions, Abe has to keep the balance between them for the moment so as not to cause role conflict. Still, whether Abe emphasizes pacifist and international norms or makes concessions to his right-wing supporters, the question remains how to manage both in a longer perspective, i.e. in which cases, under

what conditions, and to what ends he will have to shift the balance in one direction or another.

CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS OF JAPANESE AND FOREIGN POLITICAL LEADERS (1ST AND 2ND META-ROLES)

The objective of this chapter is to understand Japan's ego-part and alter-part's interaction of NRC through the analysis of foreign policy related statements made by Abe and foreign leaders and role performance conducted by them. This is because expressed NRCs do not necessarily determine outcomes directly and they need verifying with role performance. The four meta-roles that were considered in the previous chapters are utilized as a standard of analysis (the 3rd and 4th meta-roles are discussed in chapter 6 because the former two chapters are interrelated compared to the later ones). Each section (corresponding to a meta-role) exposes the content and the observed characteristics of the text passages of the political leaders' statement that are selected from speeches, interviews, and comments in the press. In proceeding in such manner, chapter 5 and 6 aim to describe the Abe administration's role conception in detail and highlight political leaders' perceptions on particular roles and expectations. This enables us to identify ego-part and alter-part NRC level of consistency and inconsistency in all dimensions covered in the four meta-roles. Some NRCs may evolve overtime and the degree of change can be observed. It has to be noted that the four meta-roles are examined one by one without hierarchy of relative importance among them. The spelling of the statements is not changed and decision-makers' titles are correct at that time.

1 Japan as a Reliable Security Partner

1.1 Japan's Role to the US

The analysis of this first meta-role focuses on the degree of Japan's commitment to play a set of roles as a reliable security partner, and with the understanding of the subsequent reactions of the main alter-parts to Abe's statements (and of other leaders if deemed relevant).

Perception of threat to Japan's security and the willingness to cope with it appear in Abe's statements related to the reliable security partner set of roles. It is reflected in the fast pace of enactment of a bundle of laws which expanded and clarified Japan's security roles.

Feelings of duty to perform roles fitting the perception of threat is shown in the expressed necessity to move from a set of roles associated to 'one-state pacifism' to another one associated to what Abe coined proactive pacifism as mentioned in the previous chapters.

In his statements, Abe stresses his desire to utilize the new latitude the new security-related laws provide to carve out more proactive roles for Japan, in the 'Asia-Pacific and beyond' (MOFA 2015b). However, changing the stance of security-related policies is a sensitive issue as observed in the other meta-roles as well. It is linked to historical viewpoints as observed in China. In some alter-parts the feelings may emerge that Japan is eager to become a strong military power again to utilize this power against its neighbors.

At the same time Japan's public opinion polls may shows fear among the population that Japan's leadership has such military ambitions because it means that Japan could be embroiled again in warfare, causing potential damage to Japanese citizens. In these external and internal contexts, Abe's response to the interrogation concerning the

potential change of interpretation of Article 9 of the constitution that could result from the recognition of the right of collective defense is formulated as such:

‘The measures that the Constitution of Japan permits are only self-defense measures for the purpose of ensuring Japan’s survival and protecting its people. Japan will continue not to engage in the use of force for the purpose of defending foreign countries’ (Abe 2014a).

However, although he makes utmost efforts to downplay the worries and persuade Japan’s ego-part and alter-parts that his initiatives do not mean that Japan will adopt aggressive policies, Abe does not hide his perception that the international security-related climate is deteriorating (Abe 2014b). This requires in priority the reinforcement of the relations with the US. In order to do so, removal of the geographic limitations of the SDF activities and the enlargement of their activities is important.

As far as the 1st meta-role is concerned it is possible to confirm through ego-part and alter-part statements that there is consistency between the set of roles that Japan intends to fulfil and the expectations of the US and other countries in the region and the world. Throughout the time period of the first and second Abe administrations, Abe has perceived the responsibility to meet the expectation of the US. Emphasis on the utmost importance of the US as Japan’s global partner remains at the center of Japan’s foreign policy. Abe had already argued the necessity of expanding Japan’s role in concert with the US policy in 2006 and 2007 during his first administration. Hereunder are quoted examples of his viewpoint in this regard:

‘In order to enable swift decisions under strong political leadership on national security and diplomatic strategies, the headquarters function of the Prime Minister's Office will be reorganized and strengthened, and intelligence gathering functions will also be enhanced. Regarding the Japan-U.S. alliance, I will put in place a framework that ensures constant communication between the Prime Minister's Office and the White House in order to further consolidate the trust, which forms the bedrock of the alliance’ (Abe 2006b).

Moreover, he declared Japan needed to reform its ‘legal basis for security’ to serve the world peace (Abe 2007a). In terms of role performance, it could be said that he concretized during his second administration what he had advocated during the first one through legislations, i.e. setting a National Security Council, the state secrets law and security-related laws. Thus, there is an overwhelming continuity in the perception of the importance of the Japan-US alliance and the roles that Japan should play to respond to the expectations of the US. Abe expressed his commitment to the alliance in the following terms:

‘America is the world's greatest naval power and preeminent economic superpower; Japan is Asia's largest maritime democracy and a liberal capitalist state second only to the United States. It stands to reason that our two nations should be partners. Today the United States is shifting its focus to the confluence of the two oceans, the Indian and the Pacific--this very region where we stand today. At such a time, the Japan-US alliance takes on a more vital significance than ever before’ (Abe 2013a).

This Abe speech concentrates on Japan's responsibility to share the burden with the US. Japan's contribution must be reinforced by making laws and building institutions. The enactment of the law allowing limited exercise of collective self-defense reflects the concern of Abe that the country's continued self-imposed ban on exercising its right to collective self-defense will adversely affect the Japan-US alliance. He warned that the MSDF's failure of protecting US ships under attack in the future would damage the Japan-US alliance immeasurably (Abe 2014c). The strict ban on overseas deployment of the SDF is a source of tension with the US, that could lead to loss of trust from the US. He assumed a case where the Japanese who fled a conflict were rescued by the US in international waters near Japan and questioned current constitutional interpretation:

'Even in such cases, unless the Japanese nationals themselves were attacked, the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) could not defend the U.S. vessels transporting the Japanese nationals' (Abe 2014d).

Because of trust decline, Abe worries that Japan will be abandoned if it does not assist the US. This worry derives from the concept of alliance which consists of two fears of being abandoned by an ally and getting involved in an undesirous war (Suzuki 2014).

Simultaneously, Japan worries that the US and China agree on a mutually constructed regional order according to which the US would come to a strategic accommodation with China that would sideline Japan (Carr and Wallis 2016). The emergence of regional and worldwide conflicts led to declining confidence among the decision-makers including Abe about the prospects for international stability and security. The notion that Japan does not need to take on security burden-sharing is not present in Abe's statements. Rather, he

has consistently expressed his aspiration for Japan to play a leading, global role together with the US and other friendly countries. Abe's statements and those who are close to his viewpoint highlight the necessity for Japan to share security burden if it desires to be regarded as a reliable security partner in the region and the world. For example, one of Abe's security advisers, Isozaki Yosuke, says that changing a decades-old interpretation of the constitution to allow Japan to exercise its right of collective self-defense 'would deepen the U.S.-Japan alliance, which until now, has been too one-sided' (Isozaki 2014). Remarkably, as seen in chapter 4, Abe has focused not only on the cooperation with the US but also on the cooperation with other countries in Asia, including India and Australia as 'Asia's largest maritime democracy and a liberal capitalist state second only to the United States' (Abe 2013a). Its objective is to contribute to the establishment of peaceful and stable order in Asia-Pacific. However, the growing interest in security cooperation with countries other than the US does not hamper the centrality of the Japan-US alliance in Japan's reliable security partner role conception. Although other countries than the US are mentioned as relevant partners, his attention seems to be focused on the relations with the US. Abe never portrayed his security-related initiatives as imposed by the US but his willingness to emphasize US importance clearly appears evident in the speech to the US Congress during his visit to the US:

'In Japan we are working hard to enhance the legislative foundations for our security. [...] These enhanced legislative foundations should make the cooperation between the U.S. military and Japan's Self Defense Forces even stronger, and the alliance still more solid, providing credible deterrence for the

peace in the region. This reform is the first of its kind and a sweeping one in our postwar history. We will achieve this by this coming summer' (Abe 2015a).

This statement was quite unusual because Abe promised the US to have a law enacted before it was discussed and voted on in the Diet. Likewise, in another speech in the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Abe expressed his wish that his policy would not disappoint the US: 'Japan is not, and will never be a second-tier country' (Abe 2013b), i.e. Japan will never fall behind and will do its best to reinforce its security-related might. This was an explicit response to the 2012 Armitage-Nye Report's warning as seen in the previous chapter. In role theory, leaders are supposed to take decision according to the role expectations that they believe are connected with them. In the case of Abe, the roles he perceives entrusted by the US (whether Armitage and Nye are really influential or not in the Obama administration does not matter) operate as a tool to connect him with his subjective interpretation of the environment around Japan. Thus, the above statements indicate the high priority of fulfilling Japan's roles in accordance with the expectations associated with the role of a reliable security partner in regional and global affairs.

1.2 Japan's Role toward Other Like-Minded Countries and China

The importance of sharing common norms in the relations with like-minded countries as well as with the US is a common feature of his statements during his first and second

administrations. As seen in the previous chapter, Abe has sought to promote the arc of freedom and prosperity including India and Australia since the first term. In the second term Abe follows a similar plan which he pursued in his first administration. He uses similar expressions in describing his foreign policy, putting emphasis on the need for Japan to promote regional cooperation. This is exemplified in the article in *Project Syndicate* (Abe 2012a). Abe indicates that he seeks the support of partner countries that share the attachment to universal values. The emphasis on values conforms to what Abe perceives as the expectations of Japan's democratic alter-part regarding Japan's foreign policy. It particularly places importance on India and Australia. Although Australia is technically not in Asia its economic and political influence in Asia, notably through its support of the US, is considered important. In this line of thought Abe suggested the idea of the democratic security diamond in a written text in *Project Syndicate* just before the beginning of his second administration. The plan would establish a strategic framework on which he could base his China rapprochement policies:

‘Japan is a mature maritime democracy, and its choice of close partners should reflect that fact. I envisage a strategy whereby Australia, India, Japan, and the US state of Hawaii form a diamond to safeguard the maritime commons stretching from the Indian Ocean region to the western Pacific. I am prepared to invest, to the greatest possible extent, Japan's capabilities in this security diamond [...] I, for one, admit that Japan's relationship with its biggest neighbor, China, is vital to the well being of many Japanese. Yet, to improve Sino-Japanese relations, Japan must first anchor its ties on the other side of

the Pacific; for, at the end of the day, Japan's diplomacy must always be rooted in democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. These universal values have guided Japan's postwar development. I firmly believe that, in 2013 and beyond, the Asia-Pacific region's future prosperity should rest on them as well' (Abe 2012a).

With respect to security, Abe's NRC is closely related to China. He perceives China as a challenger to Japan for regional leadership because China has the capacity to shake the postwar regional status quo. Subsequently, it can become a threat to the US-led order Japan has supported for a long time. Abe warned that the SCS was becoming a 'Lake of Beijing' (Abe 2012a) in his article, reminding readers that the Sea of Okhotsk became the USSR's sea, equating China with the USSR. Japan's attachment to universal values discourages and restrains policy-makers' orientation from strengthening friendship ties with China. Although Abe rarely acknowledges it in official statements, his administration identifies China as a country that does not share Japan's political values. Abe is concerned about the rise of China in his statements:

'As Prime Minister I intend to demonstrate my resolution to defend fully people's lives, our territory, and our beautiful ocean. Right now, at this very moment, the Japan Coast Guard and members of the Self-Defense Forces are defending Japan's seas and skies off the coast of the Senkaku Islands. The security of Japan is not someone else's problem; it is a crisis that exists right there and now' (Abe 2012b).

His concern is expressed even more frankly in an interview with the Washington Post. Responding to questions about Japan-China relations and maritime dispute in the SCS. Abe warned China that it was important to make it understand any territory could not be taken with a threat. He added he increased Japan's defense budget to let China know Japan's determination to protect its territory (Abe 2013c).

This response reveals his realistic worldview that Japan should increase military power to deter China with the US to tilt the balance of power in favor of Japan. Otherwise, Japan's survival will be in danger. In another statement Abe used an analogy for adopting a certain role. As seen above, at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2014, Abe remarked that Japan and China were like Britain and Germany which clashed in the World War I despite deep economic relations (Reuters 2014a) if the two countries did not prepare for all possible contingencies. It also indicated that economic interdependence did not guarantee peace in Abe's view. Japan has to be prepared for the worst scenario and convey the message that it will always be ready to fight if needed while being ready to engage positively with China under favorable conditions at the same time.

In this connection, an incident in January 2013, when a Chinese frigate directed fire control radar which was used for aiming at a target for missiles on a MSDF's ship near the Senkaku Islands, must have reinforced a sense of crisis of Japan (Envall 2015). As if he wanted to support his idea that China is a threat, the SDF (land, sea and air) has conducted a joint exercise in Nansei Islands, near Okinawa prefecture, since 2014 to simulate that islands are conquered by the enemy and must be retaken (Ono & Fukumoto 2017). This is a clear message that there is no room for discussion about Japan's

sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands and Japan is not complacent in this regard. Subsequently, as the Chinese government's spokesperson Hua Chunying said in a regular press conference in April 2013, China considers the islands 'core interests' (Hua 2013), which elevated the sense of crisis even more.

Abe's statement at the occasion of the memorial celebration of the end of war in August 2015 shows clear indication of his viewpoint in this regard. Abe sought to identify prewar Japan with contemporary China by using another historical analogy, i.e. it is China that is pursuing an aggressive posture reminiscent of the Japanese Empire attempt to build the so-called Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere in the early 1940s:

'We will engrave in our hearts the past, when Japan ended up becoming a challenger to the international order. Upon this reflection, Japan will firmly uphold basic values such as freedom, democracy, and human rights as unyielding values and, by working hand in hand with countries that share such values, hoist the flag of 'Proactive Contribution to Peace,' and contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world more than ever before' (Abe 2015b).

Abe wanted to demonstrate to the world that this time, China is building new islands in the SCS to increasingly extend its military reach and in contrast, Japan changed to support universal values, indicating it is different from China.

In this connection, Abe proposed the following principles to deal with maritime disputes:

1) states shall make and clarify their claims based on international law, 2) states shall not use force or coercion in trying to drive their claims, and 3) states shall seek to settle disputes by peaceful means (Abe 2014e). In stating those traditional principles Abe

wanted to reiterate claims that Japan is faithful to international law and puts weight on non-military means in foreign policy. Every exposed principle can discourage China from expanding its action, both in the SCS and ECS where Japanese merchant ships pass by and it is vital for Japan to secure the sea lane. It indicates Abe's desire that China, which does not share values with Japan, will not become a regional hegemon in Asia-Pacific. Thus, Abe wants Japan to play the role of pressuring China to abide by international law and dissuade it from resorting to coercion to address maritime disputes in the ECS and SCS. Although one can clearly see elements of a potential confrontational policy toward China in this statement, it is likely that Abe is pursuing a similar policy toward China that he did in the first administration. Therefore, on the one hand, he puts strong emphasis on the role of guardian of the democratic international order, but on the other hand, he has consistently aimed to avoid exacerbating the relations furthermore. He is aware that drastic deterioration of those relations would go against US expectations of avoiding accidental conflicts in East Asia and SEA, especially between China and Japan, a point that will be examined later. In the first term, as a strong gesture of goodwill, China was the first country for Abe to visit as prime minister in October 2006 and he met Chinese president Hu Jintao at that time. It was the first Japan's prime minister's visit to China since prime minister Obuchi's visit in 1999. As stated before, he argued that he wanted to improve the relations with China, which had been cold during the Koizumi administration. In April 2007, Abe agreed with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to begin discussions for a direct communications link between the SDF and the Chinese military to avoid a clash in the waters and over the airspace of the ECS. This spirit is carried

forward in the second term. In the beginning of his second term, he emphasized the importance of China and this would not change in the CSIS, saying ‘I have never ceased to pursue what I called a ‘Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests’ with China. The doors are always open on my side for the Chinese leaders’ (Abe 2013b).

One of the serious issues that Japan may have to deal with in its relations with China is contingencies in the ECS because the two countries claim sovereignty over the same islands. Thus, one of Abe’s important roles is to avoid contingencies as he said after his first meeting with Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, on 10 November 2014 on the sidelines of the APEC summit. They agreed to form a ‘maritime communication mechanism’ (Abe 2014f) including a hotline linking their respective defense authorities to prevent contingencies in the EAS so that both countries could avoid them.

Despite the fact that Abe put emphasis on the rule of law and freedom of navigation in the SCS and shows concern about China’s behavior, his declarations are not followed by direct action because he is aware that such involvement is not risk-free. While defense engagement may enhance Japanese credibility in maritime issue among its allies, it is bound to irritate China. With regard to the activity of the MSDF in the SCS, Abe does not show his concrete plan to deter China in a serious way. His stance is explicitly expressed in the following statement:

‘The Self-Defense Forces are not conducting continuous surveillance and reconnaissance activities in the South China Sea, nor do we have any concrete

plans to do so. While Japan supports the ‘freedom of navigation’ operations by the U.S., such operations are being carried out independently by the U.S. [...]. Japan will not participate in them’ (Abe 2015c).

So, it can be thought through Abe’s repeated statements that no side should seek to change the status quo by force. His appeal to peaceful resolution to China means Japan will also not change existing situation by force in order to seek stable foreign relations with China. During the Asian-African Conference in Jakarta in April 2015, Abe held talks with Xi. Abe told reporters after they met that they agreed to make better relations for regional stability on the basis of ‘mutually beneficial strategic ties’. Noting that Sino-Japanese ties had begun to improve since he met Xi for the first time in November 2014 and being eager to signal Japan’s desire to mend the rift and promote a cautious rapprochement, Abe declared ‘We want to make the improving trend in the bilateral relations solid’ (Abe 2015d). Therefore, it can be assumed that Abe builds on its Chinese strategy on dual pillars, i.e. containing China as well as making use of China’s growth although they seem to be contradictory at first glance.

1.3 US Expectation of Japan

The Obama administration welcomed Abe’s approach and the changes that he has made. The US perceived that Japan was ready to play more active roles in promoting peace and stability in the broader Asia-Pacific region. It looks like the US raised its expectation of Japan as a reliable security partner on the basis that collective self-defense would enable Japanese forces to assist the US military forces. No US statements were made that were

in opposition to Abe's security policy. US ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy made the following statement in support of Abe's promotion of collective self-defense in an interview with the Japanese press. Because ambassadors are usually assigned by the countries' top political leaders and represent the government in the place of work, it is fair to believe that their statements do not represent individual initiative but are probably an authoritative indicator of the administration's (the Obama administration in this case) preferences:

‘Whether Japan should reinterpret its Constitution is an issue for the Japanese people and their elected representatives to decide, after genuine and informed debate. However, the U.S. understands why some in Japan would like to revise some of the restrictions. Japan will be a more effective alliance partner if its Self-Defense Forces are able to help defend American soldiers or sailors if they are attacked while, for example, participating in a peacekeeping operation, or if they are targeted by a hostile missile strike’ (Kennedy 2014).

Thus, the US thinks that changing a decades-old interpretation of the constitution to allow Japan to exercise its right of collective self-defense is the right decision. As for a change in Japan's three principles of arms exports to defense equipment transfer in April 2014, the US welcomed the decision. The US State Department spokesperson Marie Harf made a positive comment on the move in terms of development of defense industry and participation in the global market (Harf 2014). This indicates once again that the US is pleased to see Abe's concrete proposals and ideas regarding legal, institutional cooperation.

To achieve these objectives, the Obama administration also welcomed the Abe administration's establishment of NSC, an important initiative to reinforce institutional bonds and global cooperation as Evan Medeiros, US NSC Senior Director for Asian Affairs, said (Medeiros 2015).

Considering a revision of the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, after the 2+2 meeting of Japanese and US foreign and defense ministers during Abe's visit to the US in April 2015, Obama put emphasis on the importance of Japan as one of the US' global partners. His 2015 remark in the joint press conference at the time of the visit reflected on the strong relations between Japan and the US:

‘Together, our forces will be more flexible and better prepared to cooperate on a range of challenges, from maritime security to disaster response. Our forces will plan, train and operate even more closely. We'll expand our cooperation, including on cyber threats and in space. And Japan will take on greater roles and responsibilities in the Asia Pacific and around the world’ (Obama 2015a).

He also welcomed the enactment of the security-related laws in September 2015: ‘I want to congratulate Prime Minister Abe on his recent legislation related to bolstering Japanese capabilities and it will give us a chance to talk about a wide range of threats, both regionally and internationally’ (Obama 2015b).

From the US perspective, the Abe administration's practical, technical and legal efforts which allow Japan to exercise collective self-defense is important to adapt to the changed environment in Asia-Pacific (Purnendra & Horimoto 2016). It reveals that the

US expects Japan to cooperate globally more than ever both in military and non-military fields. As for Japan's expansion of security cooperation with partner countries, the Obama administration acknowledged the need to cooperate with Japan and other Asian countries to keep regional stability. Ben Rhodes, member of the staff of the Obama administration as Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications, declared that the development of cooperative security with Australia, India and SEA countries serves US interests (Rhodes 2015).

The content analysis reveals that the US has more or less accepted all of the actions Japan has taken in the security field because they correspond to Obama's desire to move the weight of US foreign policy to Asia-pacific. This appeared in Obama's statement at the University of Queensland in Australia:

'Our rebalance is not only about the United States doing more in Asia, it's also about the Asia Pacific region doing more with us around the world' (Obama 2014a). The analysis so far does not support the assumption that the US considers Japan a free rider. While insisting on the fact that they do not intend to meddle in the Japan's democratic decision-making process - and giving signals showing that they understand the delicate nature of the change process - the US wants to convey the message that changing a decades-old interpretation of the constitution to allow Japan to exercise its right of collective self-defense is a first step in the right direction. In terms of change management Abe just started the 'unfreezing' process, i.e. he is gradually creating the conditions of acceptance of a discussion among all Japanese constituencies about changes of the traditional pacifism stance. Afterward, the terms of 'refreezing', i.e. of

the creation of a stable new stance on security issues will have to be aired and discussed. The US is aware of the difficulty of the task. Abe (and his successors) will have to build on stable constituencies in Japan and abroad, not only accepting the changes but promoting them. The US indicates it is ready to help Abe reinforce his position among specific segments of the ego-part beyond the traditional conservative groups. The objective is to counterbalance the expected resistance from the tenant of the traditional pacific stance. Without enlarging his constituency to moderate segments of the ego-part, it will be hard to have his projects accepted in the Diet. As far as international security cooperation is concerned, regardless of US expectation expressed in the statements, the Abe administration did not adopt a high-profile position in international security issues such as in Iraq or Afghanistan. This is despite the fact that the Obama administration was struggling in both places. This indicates Japan lacks eagerness for military commitment in the Middle East that put in practice the right to collective self-defense in operations beyond the defense of Japanese territory. The Abe administration did not participate at all in military operations against the Islamic State taken by the US and its allies (Tatsumi 2015a). This attitude does not suit his remark that: 'My mental globe also told me that Japan must remain a robust partner in the fight against terrorism' to describe his determination of anti-terrorism after the Amenas hostage crisis in which some Japanese citizens died in Algeria in January 2013 (Abe 2013b).

In terms of the relations with China, the Obama administration is more conciliatory than Abe. A hardline position would go against Obama's rebalance policy that includes 'forging deeper partnerships with emerging powers, pursuing a stable and constructive

relationship' with China (The White House 2013). He did not denounce China as Abe did, for example in comparing contemporary China to the USSR or prewar Japan. In November 2013, National Security Adviser Susan Rice expressed the US intention to work toward 'a new model of major power relations' (Rice 2013) during a speech at Georgetown University.

Making such a statement was like the response to Xi's when he declared that relations between China and the US were at a 'new historical starting point' and when he made the proposal for a 'new model of major country relationships (Xi 2013)' during the US-China presidential summit at the US in June 2013. In fact, while Obama reaffirmed the commitment to Japan over the Senkaku Islands under Article V of the security treaty when he discussed with Abe in 24 April 2014, he refused to draw a red line and refrained from explicitly promising that the US would fight with Japan to the end to protect Japanese territory (Obama 2014b). The message is that the US seeks positive and stable relations with China and encourages Japan to do the same because the US does not want to sacrifice the relations for Japan's sake.

This line of thought appeared explicitly in the same joint conference where Obama expected Abe to be 'not escalating the situation, keeping the rhetoric low, not taking provocative actions, and trying to determine how both Japan and China can work cooperatively together' (Obama 2014b).

In questions and answers after the discussion, he also noted that: 'At the same time, as I have said directly to the Prime Minister that it would be a profound mistake to continue to see escalation around this issue rather than dialogue and confidence-building

measures between Japan and China' (Obama 2014b). These comments reveal that Obama did not say a word to keep China in check and Abe was strongly advised to adopt a policy of dialogue instead of confrontation with China, whether he liked it or not. Although Obama put emphasis on the mutual security treaty, he did not hide that the US wanted to deepen the relations with China economically and politically. Also, he did not consider as seriously as Abe the issue of Japanese territorial integrity. In this respect, it could be said that there is emergence of potential role inconsistency between Japan and the US on the point of the political relations with China, at least concerning the specific issue of the Senkaku Islands.

1.4 Australia's Expectation of Japan

Australian statements indicate that political leaders regard Japan as a very important partner in Asia, which share democratic values and common interests. At the joint ASEAN EAS in Brunei, prime minister Abbott described Japan as Australia's 'closest friend in Asia' (Abbott 2013). 'Closest friend in Asia' refers to Australia's signal to work and act together. Joint military training has also continued to increase, particularly in naval exercises, as symbolized in the participation of the MSDF in the naval centenary celebrations in Sydney Harbor in April 2016. This growing security cooperation has been formalized in higher levels of diplomatic agreements. After a joint declaration on security cooperation in 2007, Japan-Australia security ties have advanced steadily. There have been bilateral 2+2 foreign and defense ministers' meetings and Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) meetings with the US in a regular basis. Japan and Australia signed an

Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement in 2010 which enables the two countries' troops to accommodate each other's materials and relations, and an Information Security Agreement in 2012 (The Conversation 2013; Sneider 2017). Both countries' decision-makers show their determination that by acting together, Japan and Australia will reinforce the stability of the region, reminding their support of US presence in the region to have it play a role of stabilizer. For example, foreign minister Julie Bishop said in 2016 that continuing to cooperate with Japan in the security policy field is 'a vital and necessary complement to the United States' rebalance to Asia. In this context, the value of closer trilateral Australia-Japan-United States cooperation has never been greater' (Bishop 2016). In the same speech, she concretely referred to the content of the cooperation, reflecting what Australia expects from Japan in the field, for example, the 'development of an amphibious capability, and our working together to enhance maritime security, counter-terrorism, space and cyber security, piracy and maritime security'. She expressed devotion to development cooperation in new areas, saying that Australia and Japan are 'outward-looking, energetic, innovative democracies, and as friends and partners - are well-placed to address the challenges and seize the opportunities to build a more stable, prosperous region'. So, it is unrealistic for Australia to achieve security policy objectives alone in 'a significantly changed regional security environment' (Bishop 2016) although Australia does not explicitly draw a connection between the changed environment and China. Bishop expressed the view in the same speech that Australia welcomes US rebalance policy because it would guarantee US presence. Australia perceives that a stable regional balance of power organized around American pre-eminence is indispensable for

Australia's interests and the region more generally. She justified this viewpoint in pointing to the changed security environment caused by arms race, nationalism and territorial disputes, with whom Australia has to deal with (Bishop 2016). So, Australia acknowledges the need to cooperate with Japan and the US to confront international security problems. Japan's position as a US ally is considered a key aspect from an Australian perspective. In this way Abe's security policy suits Australia's expectation. Australia has supported Abe's drive to expand the use of Japan's military, including collective self-defense. Just after Abe promoted the reinterpretation of Japan's strict pacifist constitution to allow its well-equipped armed forces to fight in defense of an ally, Bishop said: 'Australia can see great benefits to our country and to our region, should Japan continue to play a greater constructive role in global and regional peace and security' (Bishop 2014a), supporting Abe's role performance to act jointly with other countries in confronting transnational challenges. These statements meant that the Australian government is expecting a good relationship with Japan that is based on significant transformation of Japan's security policy to become a more active player in regional defense and security affairs. Still, Defense Minister David Johnston denied that forging closer security relations with Japan could alienate China.

By emphasizing fostering harmonious relations with either partner, Australia wants to avoid antagonizing China. Australia intends to maintain its militarily important alliance with the US, and making its security partnership with Japan deeper while taking care not to estrange China, a crucial economic partner. In this line of thought, Johnston declared

that: ‘We have a very close and productive relationship with China’ and ‘The relationship between China and Australia is not mutually exclusive’ (Johnston 2014a).

It is clear that Australia is one of the strong allies of the US but there is considerable uncertainty about how it should position itself in a relationship between Japan and China. China warned Australia and the US after the Bali TSD meeting in October 2013 not to interfere with Chinese territorial disputes in the SCS and EAS with Japan and some SEA countries (The Conversation 2013). Actually, US-Australia-Japan joint patrolling activity was not realized until the end of 2016.

Australia regards Japan and China as two equally important partners. For the territorial dispute, Australia expects them to solve the issue with international law. When China set Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) unilaterally, Bishop described it as exacerbating relations with neighboring countries and argued her opposition to the one-sided action which destabilized current situation in the ECS (Bishop 2013a). Australia is aware of complicated and sensitive Japan-China relations and tries not to champion either of them. Johnston asked countries concerned to solve the Senkaku Islands territorial dispute with ‘negotiation’ and ‘international law’ (Johnston 2014b) when he met with Abe in Japan. Thus, Australia does not have an intention to side with any country on the issue. While admitting that Japan and Australia share values and positions on regional and global issues Australian policymakers think that partnership with Japan and China is compatible unless China destabilizes the region. In fact, Australia decided to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in opposition to the US (Khilji 2015: 437). In 2016, Bishop supported the rise of China from an economic perspective. She clarified this point as

follows: ‘In this environment, Australia also welcomes the emergence, or reemergence, of China as a driver of economic growth and prosperity. China has every right to enjoy greater strategic influence consistent with its economic weight’ (Bishop 2016). Australia makes efforts to cement strategic relations with Japan but there are limits to the extent of the depth of the relations from the Australian side even regardless of the China issue. Japan wanted to make a deal with Australia to build a new submarine fleet as a joint developer. It shared classified data with Australia to obtain the contract that would have been the second case for Japan to do a joint development of submarines next to the US. If the deal had been concluded, it would have been the first Japanese export of a combat weapons system after the postwar period (Craig 2016). However, in the end, a French company was chosen in April 2016 (Reuters 2016b). It seems nevertheless that Australia thinks security and economy are interconnected and maintaining the region stable with Japan benefits Australia, as Bishop and her counterpart Kishida agreed on a ‘Australia-Japan Strategy for Cooperation in the Pacific’ in February 2016. This aimed at promoting maritime security cooperation such as capacity building assistance, training and joint exercises (MOFA 2016b).

Even though China has replaced Japan as Australia’s number one trading partner, Australia holds serious concerns about China’s military behavior and assertiveness, as reflected in Australian decision-makers’ statements and the fact that Australia and Japan have continued annual meetings between the defense and foreign ministers since the Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in March 2007. The analysis reveals that Australian leaders share viewpoints with Japan concerning the changed

geostrategic landscape. Thus, they expect the Abe administration to strengthen and deepen security and defense ties with Australia.

1.5 India's Expectation of Japan

India considers Japan a perfect match as a reliable security partner in the Indo-Pacific region. India often refers to Japan as such, expecting Japan to cooperate in a wide range of issues including maritime security and anti-terrorism (Yuasa 2008). It means that India is committed to freedom of navigation and unimpeded commerce and agrees to promote cooperation on maritime issues with Japan. As seen above, India has concluded a strategic and global partnership with Japan during Abe's first term. Indian prime minister Singh emphasized the importance of the partnership in an interview with the Japanese media: 'This partnership is indispensable for promoting deeper regional economic integration, cooperation and connectivity, maritime security and the emergence of a rule-based, open and balanced regional architecture' (Singh 2013a). Indian political leaders focus on the global scope of Japan's role as a reliable security partner that would contribute to the establishment of a stable international/regional order. It can be done by expanding defense cooperation and holding regular joint naval exercises between Indian Navy and the MSDF, for example, the Malabar exercise³⁰. China is actively concluding agreements one after another with India's neighbors such as Pakistan and Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Maldives one after another that may be part of their military objective. This makes India

³⁰ The Malabar exercise is a traditional military exercise that has been conducted by the US and India since 1992. Japan participated in the drill in 2007, 2009 and 2014 respectively as a guest. In 2015, Japan became a permanent member and participated in a joint drill off the coast of India (Gafy 2015).

nervous (Reuters 2013). India's concern for China's expansionism was expressed in an indirect way in prime minister Narendra Modi's speech to business leaders in Tokyo in the beginning of September 2014:

'The world is divided in two camps. One camp believes in expansionist policies, while the other believes in development. We have to decide whether the world should get caught in the grip of expansionist policies or we should lead it on the path of development and create opportunities that take it to greater heights' (Modi 2014a).

Traditionally, India adopted a non-alliance policy and had close relationships with communist or authoritarian countries as they were opposed to Western imperialism. However, in recent years Indian leaders have begun to make use of the rhetoric of universal values as justification for cooperation with Japan and other democracies to contain Chinese expansion. Until recently, Japan and India did not try to have a close relationship. Now it seems they share apprehension about China and Japan looks more and more attractive in terms of security to counter the growing China's influence because, contrary to China, Japan is not considered a threat (Brewster 2011). In response to Abe's legislation and proclamation of new principles related to Japan's roles, India expects Japan to be able to play a more extensive role.

India perceives new opportunities from the partnership with Japan and welcomes regular participation in the Malabar exercise. While interacting with the Japanese media, prime minister Modi voiced support for Japan as a promising security partner and praised Japan's efforts:

Defence relations constitute a strong underpinning of our Strategic and Global Partnership. We have a shared interest in working together with Japan and with other countries, to foster peace and stability in Asia and beyond. [...] The two sides will strengthen defence exchanges at all levels and continue to hold naval exercises with regular frequency' (Modi 2014b).

2016 saw Japan and India proceeded with defense cooperation to take part in a regular joint exercise, and Modi expected it to be effective: 'The successful Malabar naval exercise has underscored the convergence in Japanese-Indian strategic interests in the broad expanse of the waters of the Indo-Pacific' (Modi 2016a). Because defense cooperation, especially technology transfer and access to latest weaponry, is a crucial aspect in the strategic and global partnership (Lee, L and Lee, J 2016: 297), the emphasis on technology and equipment in the cooperation was evident in the subsequent statements of prime minister Modi and a spokesperson in his cabinet. As mentioned earlier the Abe administration opened the way to export weapons when it loosened the rules related to the three principles on transfer of defense equipment and technology in April 2014. As Japanese patrol ships and War-related electronic devices is of great interest for the Indian navy (Reuters 2014b), and it is natural that India welcomes this move too. In addition, India and Japan created a 2 + 2 bilateral framework on the model of the Japan-Australia one (Clint 2014). Considering China's expansionism in the SCS and the Indian Ocean, India and Japan expect to be able to discuss security issues at a higher level along with an official of vice-minister level. In this connection, Indian prime minister Modi explicitly declared the following about the deepening and widening of security-related cooperation:

‘Our relations are not confined to economic cooperation, but it is comprehensive and broad-based. We have agreed today to intensify our political dialogue and cooperation. We intend to give a new thrust and direction to our defence cooperation, including collaboration in defence technology and equipment, given our shared interest in peace and stability and maritime security’ (Modi 2014c).

For example, the defense cooperation included US-2 aircraft (Ministry of External Affairs 2014). By deregulating arms export, Japan hoped to push the sale of the ShinMaywa US-2 planes, which are amphibious and designed for air-sea rescue work (The Hindu Business Line 2017). In order to comply with the constitutional restraint, the planes would have been unarmed, so as not to break Japan's self-imposed prohibition on military exports with offensive purpose. In using such equipment India can increase its presence in the Indian Ocean and beyond to address Chinese expansionism without raising concern among other countries because the plane’s aim is to rescue people and to be used for disaster management outside India (Nagao 2016). The following year, Japan and India signed two defense pacts in December 2015: one was a Japan-India agreement on defense equipment and technology transfer and the other was the Agreement Concerning the Security Measures for the Protection of Classified Military Information, leading the two countries to produce and share technology, equipment and military information (Tatsumi 2015b). However, defining the object of the security cooperation is a sensitive task, particularly because of the repercussions on China. When leaving for Japan, Singh told the Japanese media in May 2013 that India put importance on peaceful order of the sea

and peaceful means to solve territorial disputes for regional stability: ‘We believe that where disputes exist, they should be peacefully resolved by concerned parties through negotiations’ (Singh 2013a). Thus, India does not want to arouse China militarily, let alone mentions the security cooperation aims to counter China’s maritime expansion. In a similar vein, he emphasized the point that the development of stronger Japan-India relations does not occur with having China in mind. Singh emphasized this point as he denied Japan-India maritime cooperation is targeting China. He said that its objective is to police piracy and guard commercial ships in the Gulf of Aden, for example. Thus, the cooperation is not targeting China (Singh 2013a). Abe suggested during his first term the development of ‘the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (a high-level security dialogue among Japan, India, the US and Australia)’ to add a new element to regional security on top of the existing US role to balance Chinese power and complement the naval exercise. However, as China reacted negatively to the dialogue and the Malabar 2007 naval exercise among India, the US, Australia and Singapore, they rejected the initiative (Brewster 2016).

Nevertheless, when Abe returned to office he revived the idea in launching the concept of the democratic security diamond. However, although the dialogue between Japan, the US and Australia and the other one between Japan, the US and India at foreign minister and vice-minister level became periodic, the four top leaders’ dialogue has not been realized yet because of fear of causing friction with China. Such worry of upsetting China can also be seen in the decision of India not to invite Australia to participate in the Malabar exercise in 2015 although it took part in 2007 (Parameswaran 2015a). India is worried of

possible security dilemma that could occur because of rising military activities in the region. For example, China and Russia did joint naval exercises on a large scale in the Sea of Japan and the SCS in 2015 and 2016 in succession. It was a first for China to have a joint drill with Russia in the SCS (Singh, A 2016). Such worry could be thought of influencing India's attitude. Eventually, Japan also failed in its attempt to export US-2s when Modi visited Japan in November 2016 although former prime minister Singh had announced in 2012 that India would purchase them. Although there is no clear connection between Indian policy not to arouse China and the unwillingness of the purchase, it is possible to believe that India does not like Japan to play roles in policies that could be thought of having the objective of containing China. For example, statements could not be found that indicate India expected Japan to play a role of providing maritime security in the SCS.

It seems that India prioritizes stability in Asia. If the region became unstable as China continued maritime expansionism, that would have a major impact on India. Thus, the active involvement of Japan and the US in the Indian and Pacific Ocean regions would contribute to the balance of power in the region as well as to the stability and prosperity of neighboring countries. Nevertheless, India attaches much importance to peaceful means, suggesting a certain degree of a moderate view on the rise of China in the hope of establishing a peaceful regional order. Furthermore, the attitude signals that Indian political leaders seek to minimize risk posed by potential security dilemma.

India will find Japan a perfect match as a 'special strategic and global partner' in the Indo-Pacific region as India often refers to Japan as such, expecting Japan to cooperate in a

wide range of issues including maritime security and anti-terrorism. On this point, India has put importance on the commonalities and links between the two countries until the end of 2016 as Modi declared during his visit to Japan: ‘Our relations are strengthened by common values of openness, democracy and respect for the rule of law’ (Modi 2016b). It means that India is committed to freedom of navigation and free trade, and it agrees to promote cooperation on maritime issues with Japan. Overall, the Indian expectation thus seems to be based on a mixture of hawkish and dovish thinking.

1.6 China’s Expectation of Japan

China cannot easily accept Abe’s presentation of Japan playing the reliable security partner meta-role whose behavior would be based on value-oriented diplomacy and proactive pacifism. For China it is just merely a new attempt to minimize wartime atrocities and find a pretext to rearm. In a 2014 interview with Lesotho Times, Chinese ambassador to Lesotho Hu Dingxian stated: ‘On the one hand, Abe preaches peace and democracy but on the other hand lobbies for militarism by pushing to change its pacifist constitution and text books to increase the military budget and war capability in Japan’ (Hu 2014). This statement reflects China’s impression that Abe adopts a double standard position. China does not want Japan to have a strong military capability, or to emphasize universal values that may be used as a pretext to intervene in China’s territorial dispute in the SCS (Zhang, X 2015: 431). From China’s point of view, Japan’s restraint in the use of force is necessary. China voices resentment against Japan’s interference in the SCS and proscribes it. This stance appears clearly in the statement of Xi who discouraged

Japan from intervening in the issue. He says Japan should ‘exercise caution in its words and deeds’ in the SCS issue, so as not to disrupt the improvement of Sino-Japanese ties (Xi 2016). Nevertheless, China does not want to quarrel with Japan. Xi emphasized his willingness to improve relations with Japan. He sent a signal that China wants to avoid regional conflict and wishes that Japan and China become ‘partners that do not impose a threat to each other’ (Xi 2015a). While keeping Japan in check, China puts emphasis on a dialogue and communication as instruments for building up trust and reducing misunderstanding. This is also reflected in an interview with Asahi Shimbun newspaper, in which Chinese ambassador to Japan Cheng Yonghua declared that: ‘The two sides should enhance dialogues to prevent unpredictable situation from emerging’ (Cheng 2013), referring to the necessity of a communication mechanism to establish a relationship of trust. Chinese setting of the ADIZ in the EAS including the Senkakus in November 2013, has created tensions in Japan-China relations because the ADIZ overlaps the territorial lines that Japan has also set, reinforcing the two countries to establish deeper communications.

China views Japan as an important country although not a security partner. The Chinese ambassador to the UK Liu Xiaoming appeared on a British news program and argued that having good relations would contribute to the stability of East Asia and this would not be realized ‘without good relations between China and Japan’. That is why China asked the Abe administration to ‘stop it [the militarism in Japan] before it’s too late’ (Liu, X 2014). Therefore, Chinese decision-makers seek to overcome division and confrontation by promoting a dialogue and trust-building. Still, it should be noted that China is not satisfied

with Abe's role performance because fundamentally, Abe's security policy, which aims to involve non-Asian countries such as the US and Australia for Asian security stands in direct opposition to Xi's perspective on regional security: 'It is for the people of Asia to run the affairs of Asia, solve the problems of Asia and uphold the security of Asia'(Xi 2014). Abe and Xi did not conduct bilateral summits in Tokyo and Beijing, i.e. each country's capitals, in the same year until the end of 2016. Until the end of that year, they had only used several occasions to meet briefly during multilateral forums and conferences (Lam 2017). Moreover, the continuing sensitivity of the Senkaku issue is still evident because Chinese law enforcement vessels have repeatedly entered the contiguous zone adjacent to 12 nautical miles Japanese territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands (South China Morning Post 2017). Although Abe postponed his plan to station official workers in the Senkaku Islands that he had suggested in the 2012 general election (The Japan Times 2012a), he, like previous administrations, refused to acknowledge the existence of any issue of sovereignty over those islands. In China's view, Abe has refused to recognize the so-called tacit agreement reached by previous Japanese and Chinese political leaders in the 1970s, i.e. shelving the territorial dispute until time is considered ripe by both countries to discuss about it. In virtue of this agreement the issue has been successfully managed up until now (Zhang, X 2015: 429; Berger 2014: 10). The lack of top leaders' reciprocal visits may be a Chinese signal that it does not believe that Japan creates a favorable environment for holding such meetings. The gap between the two countries is still evident today.

1.7 The Philippines' Expectation of Japan

The escalation of dispute in the SCS where China was reclaiming land around seven reefs in the Spratly Islands led to concern in the Philippines about regional stability. The relations with China deteriorated further after the ruling in favor of the Philippines at the Hague Tribunal about territorial rights. China decided to ignore the ruling and pursued its expansionist policy (Independent 2016). That is why the Philippines expects support from Japan. In December 2012, Philippine foreign minister Albert Del Rosario expressed his aspiration for Abe, who was about to become prime minister in the month, to play an important role in an interview with the Financial Times: 'We are looking for balancing factors in the region and Japan could be a significant balancing factor'. He also says that 'the nine-dash claim³¹ is an excessive claim that violates international law' (Del Rosario 2012). In May 2015, Japanese and Philippine coastguard boats held their first joint naval anti-piracy drill in the SCS near a disputed area (Heng 2017). This was also a maritime safety exercise to prepare for emergency situations at sea, based on an agreement between Japan and the Philippines in January 2015 (Reuters 2015a).

In July 2015, Abe unveiled a plan to provide the Philippines with 10 patrol ships through a yen loan as part of four diplomatic initiatives: 1) the nurturing of vibrant economies together, 2) the promotion of cooperation in maritime affairs, 3) the strengthening of the assistance for the Mindanao Peace Process, and 4) the promotion of people-to-people exchanges (MOFA 2013). In taking this initiative Abe wanted to perform in accordance with the role expectation. The ten patrol ships are expected to be delivered provided by

³¹ The entire SCS which China claims to be its maritime boundary (Pempel 2015: 377).

the middle of 2018. In referring to the importance of freedom for economic activity and a threat of China, president Benigno Aquino III emphasized Japan's role: 'It is no wonder, then, that our two countries have become the most vocal defenders of that stability, which has recently come under threat' (Aquino III 2015a). Thus, the Philippines supported Abe's efforts of security-related laws as the president said in the Japanese Diet: 'My nation is following with utmost interest and great respect this honorable Diet's ongoing deliberations, particularly in view of Japan taking a more proactive stance in fulfilling its responsibilities to the international community for the maintenance of peace' (Aquino III 2015a). Even though he did not use the word 'deterrence', Aquino III expected Japan to cooperate in security in the face of China's strong territorial claim. It places particular importance of Japan as a country which does not conduct a unilateral foreign policy as shown in the following statement:

'Japan is one of only two countries [another is the US] with whom we currently have a Strategic Partnership, and we thus view our relationship as being at the forefront of ensuring freedom in our regional commons. [...] For both our nations, we know that harmony is a collective achievement, and not one that can be dictated through coercion' (Aquino III 2015a).

The Philippines stressed continued commitment from Japan in this regard, expecting Japan's further support: 'There is much to look forward to, as our continued positive engagement provides anchorage for stability, prosperity, and inclusiveness in the region' (Aquino III 2015a). In this way, the Philippines supports Abe's security policy which

enables the SDF to operate more freely, as Aquino III said in a meeting held by the Japan National Press:

‘In the sector of security, the Philippines and Japan’s respective evaluation of ongoing developments in our region very closely adhere to each other. The Philippines follows with interest Japan’s ongoing review of its security policy and legislation, with a view to allowing Japan to play a more proactive role in securing peace and security in our region and the world. [...] Japan is an ally and partner to many nations, and Japan should be able to cooperate in the fullest and most effective way to promote and protect peace’ (Aquino III 2015b).

The Philippines does not oppose Japan’s reinterpretation of its constitution to allow for collective self-defense and it is evident that the statements did not reveal any concern about possible reemergence of Japan’s militarism. The cooperation is like a transfer of defense technology and a visiting forces agreement in the future (Aquino III 2015b). In February 2016, both leaders signed an agreement and realized cooperation in defense equipment. Japan is one of a few countries with which the Philippines has relations of strategic partnership³². Thus, in 2013, Aquino III argued the need to have US and Japanese aircrafts and naval vessels receive access to Philippine military bases to

³²Noda who led the DPJ government and Aquino III rose the bilateral relations to a more important level to make a strategic partnership with the Japan-Philippines Joint statement on the Comprehensive Promotion of the strategic partnership in September 2011 (The Japan Times 2012b).

refuel them so that these troops can greatly expand their activity field in the SCS: ‘They need to know our terrain. We need to practice inter-operability’ (Aquino III 2013).

Through the agreement on defense equipment Japan started to sell and donate defense-related equipment and transfer technology and train Philippine armed forces (The Japan Times 2016b). The Philippines became the first SEA country to have such a defense deal with Japan (Tatsumi 2016).

This relationship did not change fundamentally even after Rodrigo Duterte became president from June 2016. Foreign minister Perfecto Yasay emphasized that both countries had a similar territorial dispute in the SCS and ECS as he pointed to the complex issues that Japan and the Philippines faced today: ‘We had the same experience in the East China Sea and the South China Sea for that matter’ (Yasay 2016). In September 2016, Abe and Duterte met for the first time in the Philippines and agreed that Japan would provide two large patrol boats to the Philippines with a yen loan, along with ten patrol ships (Prashanth 2016). This comes with leasing of aircrafts for relief and security missions (Purnendra 2017). The next month, when both top leaders met in Japan, Duterte said: ‘The Philippines will continue to work closely with Japan on issues of common concern in the region and uphold shared values of democracy, adherence to the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes, including the South China Sea’ (Duterte 2016a), indicating that Philippine decision-makers acknowledge the need to cooperate with others to confront its security problem in the region.

Duterte minimized the US-Philippines Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement concluded in 2014 and even said that the Philippines could get out of it (Mazza 2017).

Japan feared that it could result in moving his country's relationship away from the US toward China. However, Duterte reassured Japan that the Philippines was to prioritize Japan in its security policy over its relations with China, making sure that the relations with China focuses on economy after Duterte's visit to China (Financial Times 2016). Subsequently, he described Japan as a 'special friend who is closer than a brother' (Duterte 2016a).

At the same time, it seems that the Philippines does not expect Japan to commit to maritime and air patrols in the SCS. It has consistently refused to complicate the SCS issue and showed its intention to stabilize the region. As Aquino III clearly said: 'I would hope that all of us are students of history and I don't think anybody has been espousing going into violent actions with anybody' (Aquino III 2015b). This is all the more so with the warning expressed by the Chinese government's spokesperson after the Abe-Aquino meeting in June 2014 when Aquino III indicated approval of the reinterpretation of the Japanese Constitution (GMA News Online 2014) that 'not stir up tension and bring additional complicated factors to the regional situation'.

Likewise, Duterte made clear that he intends to treat all countries equally and that the Philippines does not prioritize any country in a statement delivered in Panacan, Davao City in the Philippines (Duterte 2016b).

Finally, although it will also be referred to in the 3rd meta-role, the Philippines' wish to solve the territorial dispute without force was also expressed in the following statement which indicated support for Abe's security policy - because Abe clarified Japan would continue to respect Article 9 of the constitution, as Communications Secretary Herminio

Coloma said: ‘Japan’s reflection upon the lessons of war is linked with its determination to renounce violence, threat or force as means of settling international disputes, and to pursue peace as the path to long-term global prosperity’ (Coloma 2015).

Overall, the preceding statements show that the Philippines seeks to stabilize the region and expect Japan’s cooperation to achieve regional stability through peaceful approaches in accordance with Japan’s two role conceptions of reliable security partner and non-military pacifist state. Despite adjustments, the Philippines’ expectation of Japan that is expressed in Aquino III and Duterte’s statements reflect general continuity in its core elements.

1.8 The NKP’s Expectation of the Abe Administration

The analysis related to the NKP focuses on the statements of Yamaguchi Natsuo, its Chief Representative since September 2009. As exemplified by his following declaration, the NKP seeks to maintain the constitution based on the concept of the defense-only policy: ‘The constitution only allows the exercise of the minimum necessary force for self-defense’ (Yamaguchi 2012). Yamaguchi shared with the Abe administration the conviction that the security environment Japan faces is ‘becoming increasingly challenging’ because of North Korea’s missile development. He agreed with the notion that deterrent force by security-related laws gives ‘material weight to Japan’s peace diplomacy, serving to drive it forward’ (Yamaguchi 2015a). However, the NKP has consistently demanded that Japanese international contribution remain based on non-military means. The legislation must continue to uphold the pacifist

principles of the constitution based on the longstanding constitutional interpretation of the government to alleviate the concern of neighboring countries. Therefore, the NKP opposes reinterpretation of Article 9 and an amendment to the constitution, which would lead to change in war-renouncing Article 9. Yamaguchi warned against moves by the LDP which pursues amendments in that direction, hinting at dissolution of the coalition: ‘The Constitution is an extremely important law of the state. In discussions of this issue, the future of the coalition government should be taken into account’ (Yamaguchi 2013a). This role inconsistency occurred because while Abe perceives amending Article 9 of primary importance, Yamaguchi believes it is not a priority. If the NKP leaves the ruling coalition, the LDP would lose the powerful electoral support from the Soka Gakkai (Yakushiji 2014). Perhaps because of that, the second Abe administration seems to have toned down its push for constitutional revisions and instead, the administration went to the direction of reinterpretation of Article 9. Even though Yamaguchi opposed reinterpretation, saying: ‘If we suddenly change the interpretation, it would harm the domestic and international trust which Japan has forged over the years’ (Yamaguchi 2013b), the NKP compromised with the LDP on the reinterpretation in the end. At first glance, it seems that the Abe government overcame the opposition of the NKP, but it put the brakes on the exercise of collective self-defense to firmly maintain the role of Japanese forces focused exclusively on the defense of Japan. As seen in chapter 4, collective self-defense cannot yet be exercised to defend another country. This is the outcome of the NKP’s proscription after consultations with the LDP and Diet deliberations. After the cabinet decision, Yamaguchi indicated

how he was proud of his success in preventing Abe from deviating from previous administrations in terms of the interpretation of Article 9 at a NKP convention in Kumamoto prefecture (Yamaguchi 2014a). Security-related laws legislated in September 2015 did not only specify collective self-defense but also the deployment of the SDF overseas to support multinational forces, either inside and outside PKO without making a special law each time. With respect to it, Yamaguchi assured in an interview with the party organ newspaper Komei Shimbun that in addition to five PKO principles³³, the SDF could only be sent overseas if their deployment was justified ‘under international law’ and the dispatch will only be ‘validated through a UN resolution’ with ‘prior Diet authorization’ every time. In addition, the safety of SDF personnel must be ensured as Yamaguchi said:

‘The support activities of Japanese forces must remain separate and distinct from multinational troops engaged in the use of force as that would be unconstitutional, which is why the former will not be permitted to operate in areas in which fighting is currently taking place’ (Yamaguchi 2015a).

In this way, the NKP helped the government establish a framework based on the constitution that the SDF is not permitted to provide logistic support, or reconstruction and humanitarian support in places where combat activities are actually being conducted. If fighting were to break out, the SDF would have to halt their activities and withdraw. The position of the NKP is that the new legislation has not fundamentally changed Japan’s

³³ In fact, the NKP also influenced the creation of five PKO principles in 1992 (Dobson 2003).

renunciation of war and exclusively defensive security policy remains intact (Fisker-Nielsen 2016).

With respect to the government's decision to ease previous restrictions on weapon exports, the NKP demanded a fixed limit on the policy by ensuring transparency with an annual report which contained information about what kind of defense equipment was approved for exporting (Komeito 2014a). Yamaguchi questioned the government on 3 March 2014 about the revision of three principles of arms exports when he declared that: 'I want the government to uphold the ideal of a peace-loving nation and make a fixed limit on the exports so that it will not be unrestricted. [...] I also want the government to consider providing structures such as making decision-making mechanism for [arms export] to serve to decide and explain its security policy transparency' (Yamaguchi 2014b). As is the case with collective self-defense, it can be said that the NKP's demand was consistently taken into account as Abe promised in his speech that the defense equipment Japan would export were not for war but for non-military purposes, such as 'rescue, transportation, vigilance, surveillance, and minesweeping' (Abe 2014e) under scrutiny.

1.8.1 The NKP's Expectation of the Relations with China

The NKP is backed by the Soka Gakkai which has engaged for decades in building civil ties and diplomatic connections with counterparts in China (Fisker-Nielsen 2016). The NKP itself played an important role in the course of negotiations for the Japan-China normalization prior to the LDP government (Togo 2005). Yamaguchi expects

the government to stabilize and improve Japan-China relations. In fact, he is even ready to have the NKP assume a mediator role between Japan and China (Yamaguchi 2013c). To this effect, Yamaguchi met with Xi in January 2013 to discuss ways to resolve the bilateral dispute over the territoriality of the Senkaku Islands, over which China also asserts sovereignty (BBC 2013).

Overall, he supports a dialogue and communication to ease escalating tensions in order to head off any worst-case contingency. Yamaguchi suggested in a conference about Japanese foreign policy in September 2013 the creation of a 'crisis management system' to avert maritime clashes between China and Japan over the islands and argued that the two countries should cooperate in fields where they can agree, for example on something such as an environmental issue, in order to build trust (Yamaguchi 2013d). In this way, Yamaguchi suggested solutions of regional issues while refusing to yield to diatribe or intimidation. In fact, Yamaguchi does not support to strengthen control over the islands. He was opposed to Abe's campaign pledge in the December 2012 general election to dispatch Japanese official workers in the islands. His viewpoint on this issue appears clearly from his declaration in a meeting in the US: 'Having Japanese government employees stationed on the Senkaku Islands for the moment is not something we think that we ought to do' (Yamaguchi 2013d). Prior to this, Yamaguchi was interviewed by Hong Kong's Phoenix TV in Tokyo and he suggested shelving the issue for a while to leave the solution to a future generation (Yamaguchi 2013e). This viewpoint is close to what China considers the basis of the tacit agreement since the normalization of diplomatic relations.

1.9 The Japan Conference's Expectation of the Abe Administration

In the case of the Japan Conference, statements by Miyoshi Toru, president of the Japan Conference (2001-2015) and ex-Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and Takubo Tadae, president since April 2015 and professor emeritus of international politics at Kyorin University, are analyzed. Because there are few Miyoshi's statements and Takubo is an expert on International Relations, statements of Takubo before April 2015 are also examined.

The Japan Conference, which was established in 1997, is often referred to as the largest right-wing group in Japan (Tawara 2017a). It expressed itself as a 'national movement organization with a nationwide grassroots networks'³⁴ (The Japan Conference 1997). The organization is a major supporter of the Abe administration. It also has a non-partisan parliamentary league to support itself as seen above (Tawara 2017a). The Japan Conference considers that the constitutional revision is necessary to enable a more active military to defend the nation against threats from China and North Korea, in the case the US were adopting an isolationist policy again. The Japan Conference questions the preamble of the constitution:

‘We, the Japanese people, desire peace for all time and are deeply conscious of the high ideals controlling human relationship, and we have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the

³⁴ Translated by Tawara (2017a)

peace-loving peoples of the world' (The Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 1946).

According to Miyoshi and Takubo, it is unrealistic to believe that peace can be achieved with this spirit in their perceived dog-eat-dog world. For Miyoshi, it is too optimistic to rely on goodwill, citing Russian's annexation of Crimea (Miyoshi 2014b: 3-4). Miyoshi regrets that the government renounced its ultimate mission to protect the people from the threat of foreign countries and if this continues, the government will be worthless (Miyoshi 2014a: 3). Takubo also refused the constitution preamble for the reason that Japan had to secure its safety. He stated that because peace-loving peoples do not exist, 'we have to conclude that a nation falls unless we make efforts to secure our safety and existence' (Takubo 2015a: 162). Miyoshi and Takubo perceive that the power balance is changing because of the US' inward-looking orientation and China's expansionism. Miyoshi sounded an alarm bell on China's territorial ambition: 'It is clear that China has the ambition to take control of the Senkaku Islands' (Miyoshi 2013: 26-27). Takubo regarded the Obama administration as inward-looking, referring to Obama's remark: 'America is not the world's policeman' (Obama 2014c) and his policy toward China as conciliatory, lamenting that the Obama administration did not use power to deter the Chinese landfill operation in the Spratly Islands. Takubo is concerned about what Japan should do while being between the two big countries, the US and China (Takubo et al 2016: 174). Miyoshi and Takubo's answer is not autonomous defense because most countries cannot do that, and instead they argued Japan have no choice but to rely on the US (Miyoshi 2014b: 5). Likewise, Takubo also acknowledged the need to cooperate with

others to confront Japanese security problems. Instead of autonomous defense, he argued Japan should ‘strengthen the alliance with the US and take a course which enables Japan to make the maximum use of defense measures under constraint of the constitution’ (Takubo 2015b: 48), i.e. supporting Obama’s rebalance policy to repel Chinese threat. Therefore, Takubo appreciated a series of Abe’s security policy, such as the establishment of the NSC and the security-related legislation to exercise collective self-defense to develop Japan-US relations. He appreciated as well Abe’s statement at a joint meeting of the US Congress that Japan would support US rebalance policy thoroughly because it served Asia-Pacific regional peace and stability (Abe 2015a). Takubo assumes Abe’s support could change US inward-looking orientation to a more outward-looking one by asking Japan to increase its security burden, for example through an amendment to the constitution (Takubo 2015b: 48-49).

The Japanese Conference considers Japan needs to boost up its defense capacity in order to survive. It means revising the 2nd clause of Article 9 and stipulating Japanese armed forces in the constitution. Miyoshi even said: ‘The existence of armed forces can be a big deterrent’ (Miyoshi 2013: 27) because the biggest obstacle is a lack of a specified armed forces for self-defense. Takubo also criticized the utopian constitution because it became an obstacle of Japan’s survival. In other words, Japanese armed forces can deter a foreign country’s invasion.

Japan’s defense is defective as Takubo said: ‘The state is based on the three main pillars of the economy, politics and the military. However, in the case of Japan, one of these three pillars - the military - is missing and the situation is one of a completely abnormal

country' (Takubo 2016a). Takubo laments that successive administrations have been 'double-tongued' in explaining the SDF is not an armed force under the constitution but it is an armed force from an international law perspective. The gap between Article 9 and the reality of the SDF has become apparent during the postwar period. The SDF is professional and the appearance and behavior are like an army and regarded as so abroad (Tatsumi 2017a). Due to this attitude, if the SDF is not an army, the personnel cannot be protected by international law. So, he proposed Japan should be a 'normal country which has armed forces by revising the constitution' (Takubo et al 2016: 178-179). Then, he specified an armed force in the private constitution 'National Constitution of Japan' proposed by a drafting committee managed by a conservative newspaper Sankei Shimbun composed of five members including Takubo. In this constitution, the armed force exists 'in order to defend its independence and national security, safeguard its people, and contribute to international peace' (Sankei Shimbun 2017). Although the exercise of collective self-defense was legalized, the Japan Conference thinks it is not enough because the SDF is still constrained and the collective self-defense is 'very limited' (Takubo et al 2016: 178-179). Therefore, a security justification is one of two important reasons for an amendment to the constitution for the Japanese Conference (the other reason is because it was imposed by the occupation authorities).

As another way of securing Japan, the Japan Conference favors not only revising the constitution to acknowledge the legality of Japan's military forces but also strengthening the power of the state. Takubo proposed an 'Emergency Powers Act' be stipulated in the constitution which would revoke the constitution in emergency conditions to constrain

private rights. It would address a civil war, a massive terrorist attack, a natural disaster such as an expected earthquake in a populated area, or a massive cyberattack (Takubo 2015c).

Finally, it should be noted that the Japan Conference is not anti-Western. It accepts Abe's value-oriented diplomacy to strengthen friendship with like-minded countries such as Australia and India. It is what Miyoshi argued when he wished Japan to 'having a good relationship with friendly countries' (Miyoshi 2014b: 4). Takubo went further to suggest Japan form a 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in Heisei [1989-now] era' consisting of Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Myanmar, ASEAN states, Australia, and India with a central focus on the US (Takubo & Sakurai 2014: 145) based on universal values of human rights and the rule of law (Takubo 2016a). Therefore, for the Japan Conference, the combination of an armed force and acting together with friendly countries is the best and perhaps only chance for Japan to secure its survival.

2 Japan as a Country that Puts Emphasis on Multilateralism

References

2.1 Japan's Role about Multilateral Security Cooperation

The role concept of the multilateral state refers to Japan's willingness to cooperate with other countries in international organizations. The content analysis of statements gives the opportunity to investigate Abe's willingness to use the mechanisms of the UN to address international issues and shed light on the liberal aspect of his policies. In this point, proactive pacifism is one of the important concepts of the Abe administration in the other

meta-roles. Abe referred to the constitutional preamble to justify his desire to see Japan play larger roles in respect of multilateralism:

‘The spirit of the Constitution, which desires peace for all time and for Japan to occupy an honored place in an international society, forms the cornerstone of Japan's diplomacy and ties in with Japan's active contributions to the peace and prosperity of the world, such as the implementation of United Nations (U.N.) peacekeeping operations (PKO)’ (Abe 2007b).

The attachment to multilateralism justifies the extension of the SDF’s security role in PKO as well as other activities based on the human security concept. It also justifies Japan’s important contribution to the UN budget. Like in the case of the Japan-US alliance, Abe pointed to the insufficiency of the Japanese legal arrangement in PKO activity in his speech in the North Atlantic Council:

‘Our Self-Defense Forces, which participate in peacekeeping operations together with forces from the member states of NATO, are unable to come to the aid of these other countries’ forces even should they come under attack by guerrillas. We are unable to do so even though these forces of NATO can and would protect the Self-Defense Forces. Again I ask you, is that an appropriate response?’ (Abe 2014b).

Abe admits clearly in his speeches that his aims to expand the SDF’s role has multilateral dimension. One of the aims of the security-related laws was motivated by the perceived responsibility of Japan for the multilateral security cooperation in the UN framework. He put emphasis on this point in a declaration in the UN Headquarters in New York:

‘First, Japan enacted a series of Peace and Security legislations. Our International Peace Cooperation Act was revised to allow Japanese Peace Cooperation personnel to adapt to diversifying U.N. PKOs, thus broadening the range of activities in which Japan could participate. Under this new legal framework, Japan can and will further expand its contributions to U.N. PKOs. [...] Second, Japan is expanding cooperation with diverse partners. Last year, we announced support for the U.N. Project for African Rapid Deployment of Engineering Capabilities (ARDEC), a pioneering project of the triangular partnership model. [...] Third, Japan will further support various training programs to enhance the capacity of Peacekeepers. In October, Japan is co-hosting with the U.N., for the first time in Tokyo, a U.N. Training of Trainers Course’ (Abe 2015e).

Therefore, the role conceptions of a reliable security partner and Japan as a country that puts emphasis on multilateralism are similar in terms of Japan’s willingness to contribute to international security, encompassing both regional and global security. The security-related legislation was enacted for Japan to become a reliable partner of the US and other like-minded countries more than ever outside the UN framework, and strengthen multilateral cooperation in the UN framework. In Abe’s view, Japan’s roles should adapt to changed circumstances as a responsible member state of the UN. However, although Abe enacted the security-related laws in September 2015 to enable the SDP to help civilians, NGO members and UN staff, it is said that there is little possibility that the UN entrusts the SDF with such a rescue operation because the UN command considers that

the SDF is not a constitutionally armed force. Thus, Japan does not have a legal system to assume any responsibility if the SDF personnel commits an offense during military operation. In addition, as long as the SDF observes five PKO principles, it is unlikely that it becomes involved in combat where the personnel have to use a weapon to protect civilians. For example, when defense minister Inada visited Juba, capital of South Sudan, the SDF could only show her a civilian shelter dug by the personnel in the UN camp where it was stationed because public safety was too bad for the SDF to leave the UN compound (Isezaki 2016). After all, civil war occurred in South Sudan, which violated one of five PKO principles ‘a cease-fire must be in place’ to allow SDF presence and they withdrew in March 2017 (Asahi Shimbun 2017a). The retreat clarified that the SDF still had a limitation in its military missions even under the Abe administration which proclaimed proactive pacifism. Therefore, Japan may become once again an object of criticism from countries because it does not want to share risks with them. International contribution focused on humanitarian assistance and post-conflict/disaster reconstruction is not different from his predecessors (Tatsumi 2017b).

2.2 International Contribution other than the SDF

In terms of multilateral contribution to peace, Abe hopes to contribute to international stability and peace in human security. In a 2016 speech at a refugee summit organized by Obama, Abe stressed that it was the duty of Japan to ensure international peace and stability and address international problems with the US. Referring to human security he declared:

‘In order to realize ‘Human Security’, Japan will make efforts to ensure regional peace and stability by providing assistance to vulnerable refugees and supporting the development of refugee-hosting countries. Specifically, Japan commits to provide an assistance package of about 2.8 billion US dollars between 2016 and 2018 as humanitarian and self-reliance assistance to refugees and migrants, and assistance to host countries and communities’ (Abe 2016a).

In financial terms, Abe indicated his pride about Japan’s contribution in the following statement:

‘The cumulative total of the assessed contributions to the UN and assessed contributions to peacekeeping operations that Japan has paid in, as a simple tally of the book value of those contributions, easily exceeds 20 billion U.S. dollars. The one and only country whose total amount of financial contributions surpass those of Japan over the past 30 years is the United States’ (Abe 2016b).

Japanese financial contribution to the UN under the second Abe administration does not change compared to the previous administrations as Japan remained the second biggest financial contributor from 2015 to 2017 (MOFA 2017b). With respect to human security, although the Obama administration did not use the term, the US addresses the issue considerably with financial means (Earnest 2015). As a corollary, Abe’s efforts can be said to derive from impulse of the US and the NKP as seen below.

2.3 Support of Free Trade through Market Liberalization and Multilateral Cooperation

Japan's meta-role of multilateralism is neither confined to the UN nor security but also includes support of global and regional economic regime that favor free trade through market liberalization and multilateral cooperation. Opening to the world is particularly important in Asia because most countries, including China, are exported-oriented and thus are more dependent on global integration than countries in other places in the world (Posen 2018). Abe is defending the stance that national wealth and power can only be based on a rule-based and market-oriented international order. In a speech delivered in 2013, he declared that Japanese national interests are in 'keeping Asia's seas unequivocally open, free, and peaceful - in maintaining them as the commons for all the people of the world, where the rule of law is fully realized' (Abe 2013a). In his speech he rejected prewar protectionism and confirmed Japan's postwar way of living as a trading nation and its eagerness to have Japan playing a role to maintain the rule-based international free trade system.

Japan's confidence was built around collective commitment to the GATT and then WTO rules-based regime. In his perspective, Abe defends the position that Japan's recovery from ruins after the war was due to its integration in the international free trade system.

He is proud to remind that Japan took a good decision by becoming part of it. He expressed his viewpoint as such in a speech in 2013:

‘Our country chose the path to achieve prosperity under the free trade system.

In 1955, Japan joined the GATT, which promoted free trade around the world,

as the first Asian country to do so. Expanding its exports, the Japanese economy achieved an astounding twenty-fold growth in twenty years. In 1968, Japan became the second largest economic power in the world after the United States' (Abe 2013d).

In this line of thought Japan also wants to promote regional economic integration. Japan is an integral part of the Asian economy, not least through its export flows of goods and services to the region. It is also an important destination for energy and agriculture originating from Asian countries and Australia. The Abe administration specifically focuses on two organizations, APEC and the TPP, that are not exclusively composed from Asian countries because they also include the US, Australia and other democratic allies of Japan. This very fact of including the US is important to justify the focus Abe gives to them. First of all, Abe justifies Japan's participation in those organizations for economic reasons: 'Asia' is a 'synonym for 'growth' and another name for 'achievement' (Abe 2014e). Adopting such a stance means that he recognizes the gradual economic power shift in the region. According to the IMF, the economic weight of Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam will be higher than that of Japan by the year 2024 (Jimbo 2013). In such an economic context, APEC but especially the TPP can strengthen Japan's position. If the TPP project can be finalized, it is expected that a new impetus to liberalize global trade through the WTO will also emerge. This is why Abe seeks to convince domestic actors and SEA countries that to enter the TPP benefits member states by emphasizing positive effect of free trade. Concurrently Abe does not forget the security guarantee. His intention in attracting SEA countries in the TPP is also

to dispel skepticism among them about Japan's remilitarization, counter China's political and economic influence, and create the right trade environment in order to induce the US' stronger engagement in the region.

Japan's core objective has always been to seek an Asian-Pacific integration through the Japan-US alliance. In the 1980s Japan refused to take part in initiatives such as the East Asia Economic Caucus launched by Malaysian former Prime Minister Mahathir. The key reason was that they did not include the US' participation. Nowadays, the support Japan - especially under Abe leadership - gives to APEC and the TPP is justified by the presence of the US (Funabashi 2018), for business reasons but also because a dominant US military presence is considered essential for stability in Asia (Blumenthal 2014).

Then, in the line of the regional fusion orchestrated by the Japan-US alliance, he is determined to make the region respect 'freedom and transparency' (Abe 2013e). He insists so much on the importance of international norms to support free trade in reiterating that countries 'must observe international law' (Abe 2014e) because this is an essential element for a peaceful environment to trade, resulting in strong ties between Japan and member states.

In a period of uncertainties concerning the level of US commitment in Asia there is no simple choice but risky, complex and high-stake challenges between security and economic interests for countries such as Japan which is trying to manage them. Strategic policy has to encompass economic engagement and security-related initiatives at the same time in order to be broad enough to cover the whole range of strategic options. This makes the TPP all the more important in all its dimensions. Both economic and security elements

are central to strategic interests. Neither military power nor alliance structures are sufficient to protect this system. In other words, Abe describes the TPP as an attempt to establish an ‘international order suitable to the 21st century’ based on the common norms (Abe 2015f). He is convinced that universal values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and rule of law are catalysts for effective economic and security cooperation between Japan and member states. That is all the more why Abe considers crucial the Japan-US alliance. A kind of regional fusion orchestrated by the Japan-US alliance can make the region respect ‘freedom and transparency’ (Abe 2013e).

Thanks to the US, in postwar Asia, allies were able to count on security guarantees and nuclear deterrence. Freedom of navigation in the seas and airspace for business was ensured, provided that rules largely set by the US were respected. However, continuing to ensure the necessary economic order in Asia is difficult for the US if it is not ready to spend more on military and show more clearly its commitment to the TPP (Blumenthal 2014).

The analysis of the economic side of the meta-role of multilateralism revealed the similarity between Japan’s attachment to free trade regional organization and expanding security role with the US and other like-minded countries already observed in the 1st meta-role. Abe’s foreign policy is marked by his strategic perspective on Japan’s economic activity. Abe expressed his duty to live up to US expectation so that the US presence continues in the region by emphasizing the commonalities and links characterized by a similar desire. This viewpoint can be seen in Abe’s security-related statements that translated into congruent role performance through the security-related laws and new

institutions but also in the readiness to make trade compromise in order to have the US participate in the TPP.

However, Japan has to manage correctly the complex risks that it has to make in this new environment. Close alliance with the US goes along with important economic partnership with China. Japan cannot afford to only opt for security with the US by downgrading its economic relationships with China. An economically weaker Japan because of a worsening of its trade relationship with China will also be weaker in terms of security. So, it seems that reinforcement of economic linkage with the US and other Asia-Pacific countries in addition to security relationship is considered an appropriate option to the Abe administration in his view. The risk is that it can antagonize China but the previous mention of the RCEP project in a positive manner indicates that Abe seems to be aware of the need for continuing the tradition to keep separated security matters from economic engagement with China at bilateral and regional level.

2.4 US Expectation of Japan about International Contribution

Aside from the security dimension, the US also welcomes the fact that Japan commits itself to providing humanitarian aid such as activities with other countries to rebuild peace in areas that have been destroyed. In 2013, Japan decided to donate \$ 800 million to the Global Fund, and afterward in 2014 for the global fight against infectious diseases (MOFA 2016c). The US welcomed those gestures because it showed Japan's involvement in humanitarian issues in the world. For instance, Vice-President Joseph Biden expressed favorable comments: 'And lastly and consequentially, an \$800 million contribution from

Japan, unlocking an additional \$400 million from the United States to combat the worldwide spread of infectious diseases such as AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis' (Biden 2013).

The US does not clearly distinguish between conventional security and non-conventional security. It has helped developing countries struggling to adapt to clean energy to address climate change through multilateralism. That is why the US is grateful to Japan as a multilateral country helping to reduce tension through financial support. Biden refers to regional multilateral cooperation in the fields such as 'disaster relief and recovery, training in Southeast Asia, building on the work that we've done together in the Philippines to respond to the deadly typhoon, stronger cooperation on maritime security throughout the Asia Pacific' (Biden 2013). Japan's experience and expertise in peace-building activities and humanitarian relief efforts can become important assets for its foreign policy in helping boost US commitment in Asia Pacific indirectly (Nakanishi 2015: 418).

2.4.1 US Expectation of Japan about the Economic Policy

The US similarly describes Japan as one of its most important economic partners. It is aware of the dynamic shift of power and wealth in the following decades from the US and Europe to Asia (Jimbo 2013). In this connection Obama contended in 2014 that:

'Of course, the bonds between our countries are not restricted to a military alliance. We represent two of the three largest economies in the world, and we have the opportunity by working together to help shape an open and

innovative and dynamic economy throughout the Asia Pacific region’ (Obama 2014d).

In the same speech, Japan is described as an economic power along with the US, reflecting its economic importance with expressions describing the alliance relationship such as: ‘working together to help shape an open and innovative and dynamic economy throughout the Asia Pacific region’, for example.

As the statement shows, the US sees Japan as an economic partner to maintain US presence in Asia, but it expects Japan to build up an environment where the US can make profits in the TPP. Japan’s promotion of multilateralism in the economy must be in line with US national interests as Obama points out: ‘There are many Japanese cars in America. I want to see more American cars in Japan, as well. The TPP will help level the playing field. It will be good for the workers of both our countries’ (Obama 2015a). This statement indicates that the US expects Japan to tackle economic barriers within the framework of the TPP, especially in removing tariffs in key sectors for US economy. The US also understands the link between the TPP and security. Such a viewpoint was clearly expressed by Michale Froman, chief US negotiator of the TPP:

‘You know, also, you—people like Prime Minister Lee [of Singapore], who has said, if you can’t deal with us on cars and services and agriculture, can we depend on you when it comes to security and military matters? And I think that’s a very important sentiment. These countries very much want to be embedded with us, or want us embedded with them in the region, both for economic purposes—so that they can diversify their

partnerships, diversify their markets—but also, very importantly, from a strategic perspective. And they see this partnership as having broader political and strategic ramifications’ (Froman 2016).

In the same speech, Froman also expressed the familiar US stance on this issue, i.e. the TPP does not aim at containing China but it imposes standards that are different and higher than those that China promotes in the region. It is being based on democratic values, thus demarking from China’s economic and political philosophy. Therefore, it would go against US strategic interest to let China impose its rule principles.

2.5 Australia’s Expectation of Japan about Multilateral Security Cooperation

As seen in the meta-role of reliable security partner, Australia supports Abe’s security policy but emphasized Japan’s peaceful, non-military roles, so as not to incur hostility from China. Australia has built cooperative relations with Japan to do humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as well as participating in PKO such as in Cambodia and East Timor (Sneider 2017). They also shared security-related activities during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and participated in UN-sponsored patrols off the Horn of Africa (The Conversation 2013). Recently, they cooperated in PKO in South Sudan. The two governments agreed on dispatching Australian army staff to the SDF to assist them in information gathering (Ishihara 2014). Bishop said: ‘In 2015 Australian Navy personnel worked in support of the first Japanese commander of the multi-national task force

responsible for countering piracy in the Gulf region' (Bishop 2016). This statement indicated that Australia welcomed the security-related laws that allowed the SDF to take a greater role in peacekeeping operations. Australia notably welcomes Japan's peace and security legislation because it is connected to multilateral cooperation in the UN. In a 2016 media release, Bishop explicitly welcomes Abe's efforts of contributing to international stability to be a country which puts importance on multilateralism:

'The passage of Japan's legislation for Peace and Security means that Japan is now able to exercise in a limited way its UN Charter right of collective self-defence. This will create even more opportunities for practical defence cooperation. I am particularly keen to further enhance our defence training and joint exercises and - over the longer term - achieve an even higher level of interoperability in the fields of peace keeping operations and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief' (Bishop 2016).

These statements confirm the concern of Australia about China's reaction. As a result, security cooperation with Japan is emphasized in broader terms than military-related activities.

2.5.1 Australia and India's Expectation of Japan about the Economic Policy

Australia wants to advance economic integration with Japan through the TPP. Bishop welcomes Japan's entry into the TPP because it is one of Australia's most important partners to whom energy and agricultural products are exported. Japan's participation

plays an important role of reinforcing free trade in the world. Australia emphasizes the significant potential benefits of the high-standard TPP agreement in cutting trade barriers and harmonizing trade rules across the region. She goes on to say:

‘So Japan's participation in the TPP will only strengthen that agreement. Indeed, if the TPP can be finalised, it will provide new impetus to stalled efforts to liberalise global trade through the WTO. The Doha Round has more than stalled; I guess it's on life support. But other countries are not standing still in building networks of bilateral and regional Free Trade Agreements and Australia and Japan need to be part of that effort’ (Bishop 2013b).

In a speech at the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2015 prime minister Turnbull utilized the same arguments:

‘We are both founding members of the world’s most ambitious regional trade agreement, the Trans Pacific Partnership, which promises to drive further economic integration, growth and opportunity across the Asia-Pacific. [...] Just as we promote the right of free movement across the skies, and across the open seas, both our countries are working to preserve the freedom to explore, share and capitalise on new ideas. It is about fostering a culture of optimism, dynamism and entrepreneurship to drive new jobs, higher wages and growth’ (Turnbull 2015).

Japan and Australia concluded an Economic Partnership Agreement in June 2014, agreeing to promote the TPP agreement because both agreements deal with similar

sensitive products for both countries, namely agricultural products for Australia and electronic products, automobiles and white goods for Japan (BBC 2014). However, Australian leaders do not make statements linking the TPP with the geopolitical implications. They just make some comments on the share of universal values. This attitude confirms the view that Japan is more interested in the strategic aspect of the TPP than any other member countries (Sahashi 2016).

India's position on the TPP is somewhat different from that adopted by Australia. For the time being India does not participate in the project. It worries that the TPP might become protectionist but does not have a negative opinion on the agreement as long as it fosters free trade. Prime minister Singh showed his stance on the TPP when asked by the Japanese media about what he thought of the TPP:

‘Trade liberalization and economic integration can make a major contribution to advancing prosperity and economic development across the entire Asia-Pacific region. [...] We are not a part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and we are studying its implications (Singh 2013a).

The TPP could help Indian small and medium-sized enterprises enter global market and encourage FDI to India from member countries. So, it is necessary to join it if India wants to achieve economic growth. However, India considers the conditions to take part in the TPP too strict. It is especially the case of the conflict resolution mechanisms - such as international private arbitration system and strict control of intellectual property rights - that India considers infringement on national sovereignty (Nataraj 2015). It makes the

less demanding RCEP more attractive to India for those reasons. Secretary (East) Shri Anil Wadhwa explained India's preference as such:

‘A number of countries who are part of the TPP are also negotiating the RCEP. So, those who are not part of TPP, would certainly like to enter into an arrangement like the RCEP because that brings up your standards and also liberalise trade, investments and services and that makes that particular country that much more competitive in order to cope up with the challenges that TPP would throw up because those who are part of TPP, obviously their standards would be raised much higher earlier than the others. So, if they both proceed simultaneously, then there is a benefit that will accrue to everybody through that arrangement’ (Wadhwa 2015).

2.6 China's Expectation of Japan

Referring to the importance of Japan, China and South Korea, China shows its willingness to deepen the international cooperation based on the economy. The analysis of statements demonstrates that even though the political relations are cold East Asian countries' leaders are increasingly eager to assume regional and international responsibility. Liu Jianchao, on behalf of the Foreign Ministry of China, made a speech in the 9th Northeast Asia Trilateral Forum in April 2014 to the effect that the combined economic weight of China, Japan and South-Korea accounts for 90% of East Asia's GDP, 70% of the whole of Asia and 20% of the world economy. He added that deeper relations among them would contribute to their own growth but would also contribute to Asian and world economic

development (Liu, J 2014). So, Liu perceives new opportunity for his country to actively advance regionalism.

China generally stresses its desire to utilize regional platforms to develop the economy and does not necessarily oppose free trade. This is exemplified in the following Xi's statement:

We should actively build a free trade cooperation network in Asia and strive to conclude negotiations on an upgraded China-ASEAN FTA and on Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2015. In advancing economic integration in Asia, we need to stay committed to open regionalism and move forward trans-regional cooperation, including APEC, in a coordinated manner (Xi 2015b).

Nevertheless, China adopts a different position from Japan and the US with respect to the process and direction of Asia-Pacific economic integration. According to Swaine (2012: 11) it is open to policies that promotes regional economic integration but is skeptical about initiatives that do not reflect international community agreements because it can lead to division in the region. Also it is expressed only indirectly, China indicates that this could apply to the TPP because it was created by a relatively small number of countries and is open only to those countries that meet its requirements. Zhang Jun, Director-General of the Department of International Economic Affairs at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, implicitly criticizes the TPP as not only exclusive and unfair to developing countries but also aiming at China's containment. It aims to reduce economic dependence of SEA countries on China (Zhang, J 2015). For Li Xiangyang (2012), Director of the Institute of

Asia-Pacific Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the TPP is an important component of the US strategy in Asia.

China still supports multilateralism at the WTO level, and in the region, giving priority to the existing mechanisms and structures such as the East Asia Free Trade Area (10+3), the East Asia Comprehensive Economic Partnership (10+6), and the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement. At the same time, it promotes the RCEP as the best project to build the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) because it is inclusive by nature contrary to the TPP. China claims separation of politics and economy not only in Japan-China relations but also in regard to regional trade agreements. Otherwise, it 'will only lead to abnormal competition and rivalry among economies' (Li 2015). It could undermine the APEC framework and hinder the East Asian regional integration process. In this sense the TPP is posing a real challenge to China's regional ambitions.

Although entering the TPP may be difficult because of the rules on intellectual property laws and state-owned enterprises China is not opposed to the TPP itself, provided that Japan also commit to the FTAAP in the future. Chinese ministry of commerce declared in this regard: 'China hopes the TPP pact and other free trade arrangements in the region can boost each other and contribute to the Asia-Pacific's trade, investment and economic growth' (BBC 2015a). China recognizes Japan and the US have a different perspective on regional integration, although they share the same common goal of closer integration. It means that the RCEP and the TPP are different but not incompatible projects which contribute to the creation of a free trade area of Asia-Pacific, as vice foreign minister of China Liu Zhenmin clarifies (Liu 2015). China's position is not fundamentally different

from Abe's opinion in this regard although both countries acknowledge that very sharp differences separate the TPP and RCEP projects in some important respects (Huang 2015).

2.7 The Philippines's Expectation of Japan about Multilateral Security Cooperation and Change of the Attitude toward the TPP

The Philippines supports Japanese security policy not only because it needs to keep China's growing assertiveness in check but also because it could gain from Japan's bigger contribution to international security cooperation. The following statement proves that the Philippines has no concern about Japan's militarization not only from a regional perspective but also from a multilateral cooperative perspective. Aquino III even indicates the less constraint the SDF has, the better for Japan's partners. This is all the more true because of the experience of the Philippine troops, who were under attack several times during the PKO activities in Syria. So, the Philippines expects Japan to exercise a collective self-defense to assist such PKO units when there is combat. When Aquino III met with Abe in Tokyo, he welcomed Japan's eagerness to boost its international peace-related contribution:

‘We therefore do not view with alarm any proposal to revisit the Japanese Constitution if the Japanese people so desire, especially if this enhances Japan's ability to address international obligations and bring us closer to the attainment of our shared goal of peace, stability and mutual prosperity’
(Aquino III 2014).

Since entering the WTO in 1995, the Philippines has preferred multilateralism to bilateralism in trade agreements (Greitens 2014). The Philippines has a bilateral FTA with Japan which took into force in 2008. Since its implementation, Japan has become the Philippines' largest trade partner (Republic of the Philippines Department of Trade and Industry 2017). However, the Philippines now gives preference to the RCEP over the TPP to promote free-trade under President Duterte (Inquirer Global Nation 2017).

Unlike the other SEA countries, Aquino III government was completely supporting the US and did not attempt to keep the balance between the US and China. As a long-time security ally of the US, with whom it has a Mutual Defense Treaty since 1951 the Philippines asked US support to defend its maritime territory against China's expansionism in the SCS. This could explain Aquino's eagerness for the Philippines to participate in the TPP because it would enhance the US role in the regional security and economic development (Reuters 2015b). However, in contrast, Duterte is much less interested in doing so. Besides the economic argument against the TPP, namely that the Philippines would be unable to comply with the stringent rules Duterte has indicated that he does not relish a larger US security and economic role in the region. Instead, he has requested more economic support from China and has shown more eagerness to solve the territorial issue through negotiation. So, Duterte steered a middle course between the US and China, which was clearly different from pro-US Aquino III.

Duterte said in a speech that he did not believe that the agreement would benefit his country because it would reinforce the patent rights of the large pharmaceutical companies. As a result, the price of medicine would increase, making them less affordable

to Philippine people: ‘If we ratify TPP, of which I think we are not qualified [...] the best example of its implication would be that we will lose access to generic medicines’. Duterte even argued president Trump’s decision was right to reconsider the entry into the TPP, as he went on to say that: ‘I’m glad that Trump said he will throw to the garbage can ang [*sic*] TPP because it will create problems for us here in Asia’ (Duterte 2016c). Therefore, it could be said that the current the Philippines’ orientation is inconsistent with Abe’s strategic view of the TPP.

2.8 The NKP’s Expectation of the Abe Administration about the Economic Policy

The NKP understands that the TPP’s advantage is not only integrating Asia’s economic growth into the Japanese economy but also political and strategic dimensions as well. Yamaguchi expressed his view that the TPP had significant political and strategic advantage (Yamaguchi 2014c). As Japan’s national interests rest on US involvement in Asia, the TPP is one of the ways to induce US to refocus on the region as Yamaguchi says ‘an early and expeditious conclusion of TPP negotiations is desirable’ (Yamaguchi 2014d). So, he was concerned that Trump’s withdrawal of the TPP would have a harmful impact on the world economy and would not be good for the Japan-US alliance either because it undermined US involvement in Asia (Yamaguchi 2016a).

Aside from security, Yamaguchi said he thinks the TPP can play a role by associating with other projects in the Asia-Pacific region such as the FTAAP (Yamaguchi 2016b). He emphasized the importance of Japan’s leading role of free trade in the world as he said

TPP was a ‘model of free trade with common rules’ when the Japanese government won parliamentary approval for ratification of the TPP (Yamaguchi 2016c). Therefore, by and large the NKP shared the same view on the TPP’s effectiveness with the Abe administration.

2.8.1 The NKP’s Expectation of the Abe Administration about Human Security

The NKP seeks to maintain not only Japan’s peace but also the human security concept. It believes the Japanese government should simultaneously strengthen its peace diplomacy in the fields of development assistance, disarmament, disaster relief, and human security as well as conventional security. On the website, Yamaguchi declared in 2009 that Japan should be a ‘humanitarian power’ in the area of ‘Promoting Nuclear Abolition, Peace and the Environment Worldwide’, instead of military or economic powers (Yamaguchi 2009), indicating that Japan can contribute to the world in this field. For example, as Yamaguchi understood that democratic countries need to be united to confront terrorism, he emphasized the need of ‘international engagement to emancipate victims of poverty and oppression, the breeding grounds for terrorist recruits, that is related to human security’ (Yamaguchi 2015b). With respect to a security cooperation in a broad sense such as on reform of security forces and anti-piracy policy in developing countries as previously mentioned, the NKP encourages the government to use Japan’s ODA for human security. On its website, the NKP shows what the party considers a desirable ODA: ‘A standard should be made clear that a peaceful nation's ODA does not

contradict itself by being used for military support or for encouraging conflict' (Komeito 2014b). The conventional outline of the ODA Charter forbade any support to foreign troops, even non-military support. As mentioned earlier the Development Cooperation Charter made in February 2015 opened a way to cooperate with foreign troops in non-military area but simultaneously stipulates 'Japan will continue to uphold this policy and comply with the principle of avoiding any use of development cooperation for military purposes or for aggravation of international conflicts' (MOFA 2015c). In this sense, it can be said that the charter reflects the NKP's ideas. The NKP promotes human security through lobbying the government to bring about positive change. On 24 May 2015, the NKP's politicians made a proposal to the government to contribute furthermore to promotion of peace diplomacy based on human security and stability of international peace. According to the NKP proposal it could be done through an increase in ODA budget and strengthening of the non-nuclear policies and measures for infectious diseases, among others (Komeito 2016). In so doing, the NKP expects the Abe administration to play an important role in terms of development aid by exerting its influence on the national scene so that the Abe administration does not overlook the power of human security. As Abe emphasized human security in his statements for example in the UN conferences, it can be said that the NKP's attachment to human security reinforces the Abe administration's orientation toward including the concept in its foreign policy (Interview with Professor Fisker-Nielsen, 17 January, 2018, Soka University). The NKP is not rigidly ideological and arguing for one-state pacifism. Rather, it is pragmatic, considering what Japan can do to promote human security globally within the

constitutional restriction while recognizing the international environment is changing. The comment of Yamaguchi indicates it: ‘We stand firm on the point that we should conduct international coordination, cooperation and contribution, while giving heed to the successive governments’ basic policy’. He went on to say ‘the governments have held a stance that the spirit of the constitution is that Japan does not use force overseas. The SDF have been used for humanitarian aid or disaster relief. Any attempts or consideration should be the extension of that stance and within that boundary’ (Yamaguchi 2013f). In other words, the NKP does not intend to ignore international needs and tries to respond to them as much as possible in the existing constitutional restraint.

The analysis of the statements of the NKP reveals that there was a role contestation within the coalition government. The NKP succeeded in having the government accept the role demands. While the NKP and the LDP have largely agreed over their political priorities, the analysis of statements proves that they have quite a different view on the extent to which the constitution should constrain Japan’s use of force. The greatest divergence is found in the way of thinking about how Japanese pacifism should be. NKP’s pacifism imposes more constraints than the LDP’s, which supports the role conception of not exercising collective self-defense to defend foreign troops, indicating that Japan will not deviate from the course the Japanese government have always followed. In fact, Abe’s desire to change the 2nd clause of Article 9 is clear in the LDP’s draft of its new constitution in April 2012³⁵ (Fisker-Nielsen 2016). Then, the NKP influences Abe’s

³⁵ The following is the LDP’s main amendment proposals: 1) The Emperor is the head of state, 2) The SDF is a national defense force, 3) The Ring Sun flag and Kimigayo as national anthem are given official status, and 4) The state can declare a state of emergency to restrict human rights to some extent in an

foreign policy by encouraging some actions and preventing others. The coalition with the LDP enhances the reliability of Japan's pledge not to become a militaristic country again. It does not mean that the NKP denies the Japan-US alliance but it argues that the cooperation should be advanced with maintaining an exclusively defense-oriented policy with minimum essential capability in a gradual and cautious manner. Another discrepancy was the way to ensure stability in the region. Abe's statements put emphasis on the US presence as a deterrent to stabilize the Asia-Pacific region and express doubt about the effectiveness of an exclusively defensive security policy. By contrast, the NKP emphasizes the need to keep the defensive policy and suggests the government attempt to defuse strained regional environment through dialogue and communication. Yamaguchi also does not show his enthusiasm in making a security coalition with Australia and India to deter China because he does not support the idea of a China's threat. After all, it is assumed that Abe's role performance is consistent with the NKP's expectations to a considerable degree to respect existing norms and values in the Japanese Constitution. Abe is aware that to completely oppose NKP demands leads to role conflict that could go to the point of dissolution of the coalition.

emergency. The draft also deleted Article 97 stipulating fundamental human rights because the concept was Western and did not suit Japanese tradition (The Japan Times 2016c).

CHAPTER 6 ANALYSIS OF JAPANESE AND FOREIGN POLITICAL LEADERS (3RD AND 4TH META-ROLES)

3 Japan as a Pacifist Country Based on Non-Militarism

3.1 Japan's Non-Militarist Role

The role conception of non-military country implies the rejection of a strong military capability that may be used for invasion, exceeding self-defense. It reflects Japan's preferences to use diplomatic and economic means to achieve the foreign policy objectives.

Abe emphasized the Japanese Constitution was one of important cornerstones of postwar peaceful and prosperous Japan (Abe 2007c) and repeatedly promised that Japan would not be a 'military power' (Abe 2013a) or a 'country that would go into war' (Abe 2014d). This pledge was to avoid arousing fear among neighboring countries. However, between the first and second administrations, a slightly different view on the constitution can be observed. Arguing that 68 years passed since it was enacted, Abe expressed the wish to discuss its amendment during the first administration and the beginning of the second administration (Abe 2006b). He argued it is time to amend the constitution: 'I believe that now we should deepen our national discussions further, with a view to introducing amendments that incorporate various changes in the times' (Abe 2014g).

However, Abe changed the course to reinterpret Article 9, resulting in the cabinet decision on 1 July 2014. He emphasized that Japanese pacifism would remain unchanged even after reinterpretation because the SDF's operations would take place under civilian

control to ensure that Japan would not wage war again. The emphasis on minimum use of force in conflict resolution is evident as Abe stressed in the press conference after the cabinet decision: ‘Neither has the existing principle of not, as a general rule, permitting overseas deployment of the SDF changed in the slightest. It still remains the case that the SDF will never participate in such warfare as the Gulf War or the Iraq War in the past’ (Abe 2014a).

Nevertheless, while Abe admitted the effect of the constitution which helped Japan realize peace and prosperity, he expressed his desire to change the concept of pacifism, ostensibly not because it was imposed by the victorious countries but because it does not suit today’s international environment. Abe expressed his dissatisfaction with the current situation in his speech as seen above. He does not aim to follow traditional pacifism as it is, criticizing it as a ‘one-country pacifism’ because of its inherent inward-looking focus only on Japan’s own peace and security (Abe 2014h). He perceives a need to make Japanese pacifism more proactive, arguing as seen in the previous meta-role sections: ‘Now is the time for Japan to hoist the banner of ‘Proactive Contribution to Peace’ and play an even greater role in fostering world peace and stability. I firmly believe that therein lies a path that is more suited to the principle of a peace-loving nation set forth in the Constitution of Japan’ (Abe 2014h). Likewise, Yachi Shotaro, former vice minister in the MOFA during the Koizumi administration and first Abe administration and current NSC’s chief, explained that: ‘The Abe cabinet is simply trying to steer it [Japan] closer to the middle’ away from postwar left-leaning political orientation (Yachi 2013).

Abe clearly expressed this stance in a 2014 speech: 'For over nearly 70 years since the end of World War II, Japan has consistently followed the path of a peace-loving nation. We will continue not to deviate from this path. However, we cannot ensure that we can live in peace simply by saying that we are a peace-loving nation' (Abe 2014d).

As seen above, promoting Japan's proactive stance to peace, Abe reinterpreted Article 9 to exercise collective self-defense to expand defense capabilities necessary for Japan's safety. His willingness to proceed to further changes can be seen through his moves to curtail the influence of the bureaucracy and make the prime minister's office more powerful. The analysis of speeches reveals that despite general continuity in the non-military pacifism conception of Japan's role, the need for a transformation of the concept of pacifism is present in Abe's mind. Abe seeks to make build up the image of Japan considered influential in the world and not bound to the past. For him, deterrence is more and more important and seen as necessary to survive in a changed security environment. This stance is exemplified in the same speech, Abe claims: 'I perceive that precisely by having the ability to respond to every possible situation and developing legal system which enables such responses, deterrence will be enhanced, and thus conflict will be prevented and Japan's embroilment in war will be eliminated' (Abe 2014d). Thus, it is clear that Abe's conception of pacifism rejects the idea that Japan is always the culprit and the neighboring countries are the victim. In fact, Japan may become a victim and has to be prepared to respond to all kinds of threats. Through this example it can be understood how the personal role conceptions in foreign policy held by top leaders impact on their decisions at the time of replacement of a dominant role conception by another. Abe

reiterated his willingness to change when his government took the decision to enact the security-related laws:

‘Seventy years ago, we, the Japanese people, made a pledge: The tragedy of war must never again be repeated. We will continue to uphold this ‘pledge to never wage war again’ into the future. We will secure the lives and peaceful daily lives of the Japanese people. Today, based on this determination, the Government made a Cabinet Decision on the ‘Legislation for Peace and Security’ for ensuring the peace and security of Japan and the world’ (Abe 2015g).

Thus, it can be said that Japan has gradually been in favor of a more proactive understanding of Japan’s role conception of pacifism under the Abe administration. While maintaining only minimum essential military capability, Abe want Japan to have enough deterrence to face a potential threat although he refrains from identifying threats against which deterrence is needed. Abe’s speeches about pacifism doubtlessly reflect the Japanese rejection of getting involved in war again. The suffering of Japanese people during the war is a core element of postwar Japan’s pacifism and Abe recognizes the importance of the national sentiment. In a speech in 2016, he expressed again Japan’s desire to ‘contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world’ (Abe 2016c) and linked it to his concept of proactive pacifism. Proactive pacifism has to be seen by the ego-part and alter-parts as a signal of a trend toward a more multilateral and proactive outlook on the roles Japan should play in the world. This trend is reflected in his efforts to reinterpret

collective self-defense and legislate security-related laws as seen in the 1st and 2nd meta-roles.

Thus, his role conception can be more precisely termed as that a non-military pacifist country which strengthens deterrent with the US and other like-minded countries rather than just a non-military pacifist country which strictly maintains the non-military principle. Thus, this role conception can justify the use of force by proactively dispatching the SDF. It has to be considered an acceptable option in Japan's foreign policy. Nevertheless, ambiguity remains about Abe's policy because it should be noted that the its role performance is based on security-related laws that do not admit use of force abroad and maintain five PKO principles. Abe also accepted not to proceed with his original intention of an amendment to the constitution. Therefore, it can be said that his role performance is by and large consistent with conventional non-military pacifist country role conception.

3.1.1 Japan's Role in Denuclearization

While Abe increased deterrent in the name of proactive pacifism, he is conscious of a special responsibility to the world to play a vital role with regard to denuclearization. Successive Japanese prime ministers have held a very constraining and limited policy about nuclear weapons, maintaining the three non-nuclear principles. Abe, in accordance with the traditional role conception, also emphasized Japan's determination to address denuclearization in the first and second administrations. He declared:

‘In front of the souls of the deceased atomic bomb victims and the citizens of Hiroshima, I have further strengthened my commitment not to repeat the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I renew my pledge to observe the stipulations in the Constitution, sincerely seek international peace and firmly maintain the Three Non-Nuclear Principles’ (Abe 2007d).

In May 2016, Abe and Obama declared their resolution of creating a world without nuclear weapons. Abe declared that ‘no matter how long and how difficult the road will be, it is the responsibility of us who live in the present’ to continue to make efforts’ (Abe 2016d). Therefore, Abe followed in his predecessors’ footsteps in maintaining the ambiguity of Japan’s position on the issue. Although he maintained the three non-nuclear principles and did not support nuclear armament, he did not try to modify the support of Japan to US extended deterrence and did not highlight any concrete initiatives that could help abolishment of nuclear weapons. It could have been for instance a decision to have Japan sign the treaty to ban on nuclear weapons but it did not happen and his statements always remained very abstract (McCormack 2016). One of his few initiatives related to denuclearization can be found in his response to Obama as part of his worldwide nuclear non-proliferation policy. In 2014, Abe agreed to return about 300 kilograms of plutonium which the US had left in Japan for research purposes during the Cold War. In March 2016, Japan returned the plutonium in time with the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit in the US (The Japan Times 2016d).

3.1.2 Japan's Role in Historical Issues

As pointed out previously Abe abstains from historical revisionist remarks and repeats the traditional explanation that prewar Japan policy of invading other Asian countries caused its own devastation. Such position is fundamentally different from what he was advocating as a key member of the History Examination Committee at the beginning of his political career. The committee had been created in the LDP in 1993 for the very reason of defending a revisionist position when prime minister Hosokawa made a statement in which he recognized that the Asia-Pacific War was an aggression. Afterward, Abe constantly criticized the postwar reforms, especially the constitution but also the IMTFE and the comfort women issue (Saaler 2016). In view of his defense of pacifism it can be said that Abe manages to balance his political faith and the geopolitical and diplomatic reality Japan faces after becoming prime minister (Vogel 2015).

In his statements related to history Prime minister Murayama utilized words such as 'colonial rule', 'invasion', 'remorse', and 'apology' which no other prime minister had ever used to address these issues (The Japan Times 2015). Abe never attempted to challenge Murayama's statements, reflecting remarkable continuity in this regard. In the statement that follows he even went farther than Murayama when he declared that the invasion had started in 1931 with the Manchurian incident. Once again Abe wanted to demonstrate to the audience that he was not a revisionist only defending Japan's honor and not insensitive to the suffering of the invaded countries' people:

'With the Manchurian Incident, followed by the withdrawal from the League of Nations, Japan gradually transformed itself into a challenger to the new

international order that the international community sought to establish after tremendous sacrifices. Japan took the wrong course and advanced along the road to war. [...] Incident, aggression, war -- we shall never again resort to any form of the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes. We shall abandon colonial rule forever and respect the right of self-determination of all peoples throughout the world. With deep repentance for the war, Japan made that pledge. Upon it, we have created a free and democratic country, abided by the rule of law, and consistently upheld that pledge never to wage a war again' (Abe 2015b).

Considering the comfort women issue, Abe never changed his stance that no Korean woman had ever been forcibly conscripted during his first administration. His position appears clearly in a declaration in the Diet in March 2007 that there was no evidence that the Japanese military had conscripted women in the invaded countries (Star Tribune 2015). During his visit to the US to meet with president Bush in April 2007, he made an apology, saying that these women were 'placed in extreme hardships, and had to suffer that sacrifice; and that I, as Prime Minister of Japan, expressed my apologizes, and also expressed my apologizes for the fact that they were placed in that sort of circumstance' (Abe 2007e). His statement aimed at not alienating the US, but it did not mean that he admitted that the Japanese army had been involved in recruiting them. In April 2013, Abe formed a panel in his government to verify the Kono Statement. In June 2014, the panel concluded that the statement was to some extent the result of a compromise between Japanese and South Korean negotiators (Park 2017). However, Abe did not seek to revise

the Kono Statement on the issue of coercion of the comfort women. He assumed it as a necessary compromise between the two countries and signed an agreement on the issue with South Korea in December 2015 in which he offered an apology and payment (BBC 2015b). The foreign minister Kishida emphasized in the joint press conference: ‘The issue of comfort women, with an involvement of the Japanese military authorities at that time, was a grave affront to the honor and dignity of large numbers of women, and the Government of Japan is painfully aware of responsibilities from this perspective’ (Kishida 2015). The Abe government also donated about \$8.3 million for a fund established by the South Korean government to help former comfort women, following the precedent of the Asian Women’s Fund established by the Murayama administration as a result of the Kono Statement which did not conduct any national compensation (Kim 2014). In this way, Abe adopted a yielding stance, in order to attempt to persuade the world of how Japan learned historical lessons from the past and how his own forward-oriented outlook was true. All those statements and role performances show the extent of the efforts of Abe to pay attention to alter-part proscription to avoid role conflicts for his smooth foreign policy.

3.2 US Expectation of Japan

The US regards postwar Japan as a democratic country, denying its prewar non-democratic past and fostering stability in East Asia. The US proscribes Japan from raising historical issues. In December 1945, The Occupation authority considered Shinto was linked to the military regime and ordered the Japanese government to cut the links (BBC 2009). So, the US wants Japan to be a role model of a successful democratic country.

Obama rejected the idea that democracy was peculiar to Western countries and was pleased to say in the following declaration it took root in Asian countries too: ‘Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, they have built thriving democracies’ (Obama 2014a). US perception of Japan as a model of democracy appears in an appreciative statement of NSC Spokesperson Ned Price about the Abe statement on 14 August 2015:

‘We also value Prime Minister Abe’s assurances of Japan’s intent to expand upon its contributions to international peace and prosperity in the years ahead. For 70 years Japan has demonstrated an abiding commitment to peace, democracy, and the rule of law. This record stands as a model for nations everywhere’ (Price 2015).

Conversely, it means the US does not appreciate any action or statement that seem to put in question Japan’s democratic credentials. It includes, above all, visit to the Yasukuni Shrine which, in the US mind, could have negative consequences in the whole region. After Abe’s Yasukuni visit in December 2013, the US Embassy issued a statement which described Japan as a ‘valued ally and friend’ but finished with a wish for Japan not to return to the past: ‘We take note of the Prime Minister’s expression of remorse for the past and his reaffirmation of Japan’s commitment to peace’ (The US Embassy & Consulates in Japan 2013). So, in the US’ view, it is difficult to understand why Abe behaves as if he admired prewar Japan’s symbol which disregarded democracy and human rights, and, in so doing, seems to challenge postwar Japan’s political system (Stockwin & Ampiah 2017).

In addition, more realistic reason is that troubles in East Asia go against US national interests and thus the US does not want Japan to arouse what the US considers unnecessary concern in China and South Korea (Sakaki 2015: 27). When Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine in 2013, the US Embassy in Tokyo made a statement that said:

‘The United States is disappointed that Japan’s leadership has taken an action that will exacerbate tensions with Japan’s neighbors. The United States hopes that both Japan and its neighbors will find constructive ways to deal with sensitive issues from the past, to improve their relations, and to promote cooperation in advancing our shared goals of regional peace and stability’
(The US Embassy & Consulates in Japan 2013).

The same statement was issued again by the US Department of the States later, indicating that the US viewed the matter seriously (Stockwin & Ampiah 2017). However, the US government’s reiterated expression of ‘disappointment’ to Abe’s visit to the Yasukuni Shrine is also creating anger toward the US government in the LDP. For example, Eto Seiichi, a LDP politician close to Abe criticized the US in a YouTube video telling that the US did not show understanding of the Japanese feelings (Harris 2014).

To deflect the US criticisms Abe tried to compare the Yasukuni Shrine with Arlington National Cemetery, indicating that the visit to the Yasukuni Shrine is a prime minister’s duty: ‘I think it’s quite natural for a Japanese leader to offer prayers for those who sacrificed their lives for their country, and I think this is no different from what other world leaders do’ (Abe 2013f). However, the US does not accept this view as the visit makes the US doubt whether Japan really recognizes its past atrocities and war crimes.

Afterward, a visit by US Secretary of State John Kerry and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel at Chidorigafuchi National Cemetery in Tokyo, where unidentified Japanese soldiers' remains are enshrined was organized as an attempt to make the Japanese government understand any comparison between the Yasukuni Shrine and Arlington National Cemetery was irrelevant (The Japan Times 2013). This incident reveals vividly that to insist on his ideological convictions could be considered improper and counterproductive for Abe.

In a 2014 speech in South Korea referring to North Korea, Obama reiterated US stance in declaring that the US expected Japan to foster stability and avoid contingencies in East Asia: 'What we're going to have to do is to continue with a consistent, steady approach. And the single most important thing is making sure that there's strong unity of effort between ourselves, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and other like-minded countries in the region' (Obama 2014e).

For the US, the situation where South Korea, Japan and the US are closed banded together is very pleasant. In the same vein, the Obama administration also welcomed the agreement on the comfort women issue between Japan and South Korea as Rhodes declared in a press conference:

'We very much supported and applauded both leaders for reaching an important agreement in dealing with comfort women and the historical legacy issues, and we believe that they both showed a lot of courage and vision to forge a lasting settlement on that issue. Bottom line for us is that we believe it's good for the Republic of Korea, good for Japan, good for the

United States, and good for the world when not only do we have good relations with our allies but our allies have good relations with each other' (Rhodes 2016).

As for other issues in East Asia such as the Senkakus, as seen above, the US expects Japan and other parties to use 'the law and diplomacy to resolve these disputes' (Obama 2014e). So, the US' opposition to any action that could bring instability to the region does not target only China but also its Japanese ally. Obama's speeches clarify this stance: the US prefers region-wide cooperation to historical and territorial disputes which are just an additional burden for the US.

So, the Obama administration expressed its appreciation for Japan's effort to build up stronger regional understandings as Medeiros said, referring to Abe's meeting with Xi in Indonesia to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Asia-Africa conference:

'What we've seen is a gradual improvement in the relationship in which they've opened up new channels of dialogue on both maritime issues broadly characterized, as well as military-to-military discussions, including addressing issues like crisis management. [...] We appreciate Prime Minister Abe's leadership in pursuing a diplomatic approach to improving the relationship and addressing their differences on maritime issues, especially related to the islands' (Medeiros 2015).

Overall, the Obama administration supports Abe's historical policy. That is why the US can trust that Abe's security policy is genuinely for defensive purposes and not an indirect stratagem to remilitarize. Obama describes Japan as a 'peace-loving country having

absorbed some very difficult lessons from the past. Japan does not engage in aggression on the international stage, or in its region' (Obama 2015a).

The US prefers to focus on reconciliation and future-oriented bilateral relationships and does not express the view that Abe's apology for the past is insufficient. The US positively considers Japan's proactive foreign policy. Rather, Obama seems to send a message to China to reconcile with Japan instead of adhering to the past by showing the current relations between Japan and the US is based not on persistent confrontation but on compromise and future-orientation. This message is apparent in Obama's statement in Pearl Harbor in Hawaii in December 2016:

'Prime Minister Abe, I welcome you here in the spirit of friendship, as the people of Japan have always welcomed me. I hope that, together, we send a message to the world that there is more to be won in peace than in war, that reconciliation carries more rewards than retribution. Here, in this quiet harbor, we honor those we lost, and we give thanks for all that our two nations have won -- together as friends' (Obama 2016a).

The statement reveals that the US considers that Japan is not a threat. Still, the US continues to expect reconciliation with neighboring countries and in this line, it remains intransigent in its opposition to historical revisionism.

3.3 Australia's Expectation of Japan

Australia's stance is that Japan drew a lesson of history by continuing successful economic and political rehabilitation since 1945. While foreign minister Bishop criticized

Abe's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine as it recreated a tension between Japan, China and South Korea, saying: 'Such events escalate the already tense regional environment' (Bishop 2014b), prime minister Abbott did not speak out against it. On the contrary, Abbott praised Japanese soldiers' courage even though Japan posed the greatest ever direct military threat to Australia during the Second World War. For him, 'Japan should be judged on its actions today, not on its actions 70-odd years ago and Japan has been an exemplary, an exemplary international citizen in the postwar era' (Abbott 2014a). This statement reveals that Australia does not want to focus on the past but cultivate future-oriented bilateral relationship because Japan behaves as a country that deserves to be respected. Therefore, Abe's reinterpretation of the constitution to permit collective self-defense is also welcomed not only because Australia considers Japan an important security partner but also because it is no longer a militaristic country. Abbott said in the same statement that: 'Since 1945, Japan has been a country which has acted in accordance with the rule of law. [...] I welcome its full participation in the family of nations - its full participation as a normal country in the family of nations' (Abbott 2014a).

Like the US, Australia expects every country including Japan to make a compromise and solve territorial and historical issues peacefully. Turnbull, successor to Abbott since September 2015, addressed this point in a speech in the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry:

'Any actions, regardless of their motivations, which add to tensions, which disturb that harmony, will damage all our economies. In this light, in Australia we have been heartened to see the leaders of Japan, China and the Republic of

Korea recently meeting to build stronger bonds of trust and security' (Turnbull 2015).

Bishop also welcomed Japan's reconciliation with South Korea on the comfort woman issue and asked Japan and others in the region to make a forward move in historical issues (Bishop 2016). With regard to historical issues, Australian statements reveal that Australia does not want to focus on the past. It tends to cultivate a new, future-oriented bilateral relationship based on reconciliation with Japan because Japan behaves as a country that deserves to be respected from an Australian viewpoint. While Australia expects Japan to reconcile with neighboring countries it does not indicate that Australia is dissatisfied with Abe's historical policy.

3.4 India's Expectation of Japan

The treatment of history does not undermine Japan's reputation among Indian leaders. Instead of paying attention to the Second World War, India emphasizes the modern relations and cultural linkage:

'I will begin my visit from Japan's old capital Kyoto, which is rich in heritage of our civilizations. [...] My visit to Kyoto reflects the ancient foundations of our contemporary relations and will also focus on some of our nation's priorities, including urban renewal and smart heritage cities as well as advanced scientific research' (Modi 2014d).

India looks favourably on the fact that the Japanese refer to Justice Radhabinod Pal³⁶. He had a relatively fair stance in the IMTFE when Japan was convicted of imperial expansion and war. For Pal the West shared the guilt (Nakanishi 2015: 419). Modi stated in a press conference in August 2014: ‘Even today, you can take the name of Justice Pal. Even the younger generation of Japanese get excited about it’ (Modi 2014b). India takes a neutral stance on the Yasukuni issue in comparison with China and South Korea. This is related to Japan-India history where there has not been serious military disputes. It explains why India largely accepts Japanese reluctance to recognize its behavior during World War II (Purnendra & Horimoto 2016).

This stance appears clearly in a media briefing after Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine in December 2013, an official spokesperson Shri Syed Akbaruddin responded to a question about the visit: ‘This is for the other countries and Japan to discuss and take it forward. Ultimately under the Vienna Convention, which all of you are very closely following these days, issues of two countries is for those countries to work together and resolve’ (Akbaruddin 2013). So, India does not want to make any value judgment on the issue of the Yasukuni visit itself to avoid making troubles with Japan and other countries. Another high-ranking foreign policy official Gautam Bambawale similarly indicated in a press conference in 2014 that India was in a neutral position vis-à-vis Japanese and Chinese confrontation, because of their importance to India: ‘We do not want to comment on relations between two other countries both of which have very strong and positive and

³⁶ When Abe visited India during the first administration, he admired Justice Pal and met his son, giving evidence of his positive evaluation of the judge. He said Justice Pal was still respected by many Japanese people for his courageous defend of Japan during the IMTFE (Abe 2007f).

expanding relations with India. So, we do not want to comment on that' (Bambawale 2014). This comment indicates the constant concern of India to keep good relations for its own interest. In the Indian statements analyzed in this study, the necessity of maintaining good relations with China was repeatedly mentioned. That India maintains neutrality and abstains from siding with China and South Korea does not mean that there is a clear consensus on the wartime history between Japanese and Indian decision-makers. Rather, it reflects the intention of India to keep equal distance between Japan and China, and become an equal partner of both countries. Japan's conception of being a pacifist country based on non-militarism is described by India as a policy of avoiding military conflict with neighboring countries, a position that already appears in the previous meta-role section.

3.5 China's Expectation of Japan

China does not show a tolerant attitude toward Japan's security policy nor treat Japan as a normal major power. China's cold reception of Abe's foreign policy implies the rejection of Japan's military roles that may damage China's national interests. In clear contrast to the US and other Japan's security partners, China gives great importance to Japan's traditional pacifist country's stance. China react cautiously to Abe's government because of his nationalistic pledges during the LDP presidential election in 2012; his commitment to amend the constitution; his visit to the Yasukuni Shrine and his revisionist stance on Japanese war behavior during the Second World War. His association with right-wing groups and his willingness to control the press when journalists want to

criticize his stance on the war is also pointed out. All these policies are said to offend China's sensibilities (Pempel 2015: 372).

The dissatisfaction with Japan's foreign policy was clearly reflected in Chinese statements. After Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine in December 2013, China's ambassador to the UK Liu criticized Abe's visit: 'We do hope that they will change their course, show remorse and make apology not only to Chinese people but also to Asian people, to all the peoples they have caused casualties and damages, and to start a new life, a new Japan' (Liu, X 2014). From China's perspective the visit to the Yasukuni Shrine can only mean that Japan does not condemn war criminals. It makes difficult to establish relations of trust in such conditions. When Japan showed its desire to hold a meeting of top leaders, Chinese foreign ministry sharply rejected that idea bluntly (Zhang, X 2015: 427). For China and South Korea, Japanese historical revisionism reignites a long standing grudge. They have anti-Japanese feelings as part of their national identities because their nationalism originated from the fight against Japan imperialism at the start of the 20th century (Berger 2014: 9). Even when Abe and Xi met during an Asian-African summit in Jakarta in April 2015, Xi insisted that China cannot easily compromise on the issue of history because it is a question of fundamental principle at the core of the Sino-Japanese relations (Xi 2015a). Therefore, the best for Japan is to adhere to its non-military role. For example, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei spoke of China's viewpoint in a press conference in 2014: 'The Japanese side could draw hard lessons from history, take seriously the security concern of its Asian neighbors, conform to the trend of times, follow a path of peaceful development and do more to uphold peace and stability of the

region' (Hong 2014). The ambassador to Afghanistan Deng Xijun wrote an article criticizing Japan in the Daily Outlook Afghanistan: 'Mr. Abe wishes to amend the postwar pacifist constitution, and demands to lift the ban on 'collective self-defence' and to relax 'three principles of arms exports''. In so writing, he continued to claim that Japan created a dangerous image of China as a pretext of its remilitarization (Deng 2014). The statements indicate that China wants Japan to permanently renounces military might as an instrument of politics. It is clear that China does not show any appreciation of Japan's proactive pacifism in stabilizing the region. However, other dimensions of the two countries' relations should be given more importance, especially the economic one (Maslow 2016: 195-196).

Concurrently China expects Japan to cooperate with China to build the stable and prosperous Asia-Pacific region. In May 2015, Xi delivered a speech in front of 3000 Japanese business people in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing in which he declared that: 'The China-Japan friendship is rooted in the people, and the future of the bilateral relationship is in the hand of the people of the two countries' (Xi 2015c). This speech indicates that while Japanese NRC and Chinese expectation differ in security terms, common points have to be developed to maintain good relations and avoid deterioration. Xi's preference for enduring and stable economic development is reflected in the speech as such:

'China and Japan should, in the spirit of taking history as a mirror and looking into the future, jointly promote peaceful development, jointly boost friendship from generation to generation, and jointly create a good future for the

development of both countries, so as to make contributions to peace in Asia and the world at large' (Xi 2015d).

Likewise, in an interview with Asahi Shimbun, ambassador to Japan Cheng remarked:

'China and Japan should further strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation. China welcomes Japanese enterprises to continue to invest in China. Japan has quite a lot of experiences and technologies in fields such as energy conservation and environmental protection, green economy, health care and sanitation, and elderly care, so there is great potential in exchanges and cooperation between the two countries' (Cheng 2013).

Thus, Xi and other Chinese policy-makers consider nurture of the economic dimension of Japan's non-military country an important supplement to Japan-China relation alongside ensuring peace and stability. They show there is a possibility to improve relations and desire the building of a peace order based on mutually beneficial relations so that both countries should 'manage historical issues, and prevent new issues from emerging' to reduce 'stumbling blocks' (Xi 2016).

Overall, China seems to prioritize growing interdependence but it does not mean political leaders are indifferent to historical issues and accept Japan's historical perspective. It appears clearly in China's reaction to Abe's statement on history in August 2015: 'The Chinese side has taken note of the statement made by the Japanese leader' (Hua 2015). No positive appreciation can be found in the comment. In general term, it appears from the Chinese statements that China thinks the improvement of the bilateral relations

depends on to what extent Japan meets China's expectations and that it does not seem to be ready for much compromise to address Japan's concern.

3.6 The Philippines' Expectation of Japan

The Philippines stance is that Japan is now entitled to help contribute to peace in Asia-Pacific and beyond. As seen in the 1st meta-role, the Philippines is apparently accepting Abe's statement on 14 August 2015 and believe that Japan genuinely expressed remorse for its past. Nowadays the Philippines' leaders seem to believe Japan's peaceful intention as Aquino III said that postwar Japan's devotion to peace 'has been beyond question (Aquino III 2015a)'. Japan has greatly contributed to the Philippines' prosperity during the postwar era, resulting in the development of peaceful relations. Deputy Presidential Spokesperson Abigail Valte said that Japan has acted 'more actively and more positively' during the postwar period 'with compassion and in accordance with international law', and that led to establish a relationship of trust between the Philippines and Japan (Valte 2015). In fact, the Philippines, Indonesia and China received the largest amount of Japanese ODA from 1969 to 1999 (Togo 2005). In 2013, Japan sent the SDF to the Philippines to help disaster relief and reconstruction after the damage during the Typhoon Haiyan, a gesture which was highly appreciated (Palatino 2014).

Aquino III acknowledged Japan's important contribution in a meeting with Japanese journalists: 'There was a lot of kindness also done and we want to foster even more this kindness, in this good relationship between our countries'. Then, he declared it was necessary to overcome the past: 'We have to forgive you about the past, you have to

forgive us about the present, or together we have no future' (Aquino III 2015c). Consequently, the Philippines does not pay much attention to Japanese wartime actions. When Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine in December 2013, the Philippine government did not protest at all despite the destruction of Manilla by the Japanese army during the war. The main reason to prioritize cooperation in security matters is that Japan is considered a strategic partner to stop China's expansionism in the SCS (Palatino 2014). Even during the Duterte administration, the Philippines continues to trust Japan. It appears in the following statement: 'Japan will continue to play an important role in modernizing the capabilities of the Philippines for maritime domain and maritime security as well as humanitarian relief and disaster risk reduction response' (Duterte 2016a). These show Japan can be trusted despite (or even maybe because) its military capabilities. There is no concern in Philippine leadership mind that Japan is too powerful and threatening. Abe's pledge to never become a military power again is considered convincing enough.

3.7 The NKP's Expectation of the Abe Administration

The NKP proscribes Abe from visiting the Yasukuni Shrine and revising the Kono Statement and Murayama Statement. It is evident in Yamaguchi's statements that he expects that Japan rejects a revisionist historical view. Just after Abe's Yasukuni visit in December 2013, he expressed his displeasure, saying criticism came from not only China and South Korea, but also from US, Russia and the EU. Afterward, he made the following request to Abe: 'We should heed the voices of the people and the international community, and try not to stray away from our path' (Yamaguchi 2014e), implying that Abe lacked

global perspective and defended conception of history that could would undermine Japan's international reputation.

With respect to the Kono Statement, Yamaguchi expressed the NKP's stance that it does not want it to be modified: 'The important thing is that we are not revising the statement. It is important that we maintain our stance of apology and contrition' (Yamaguchi 2014f). This statement indicates that the NKP believes that Abe's attempt to replace it could make Japan's foreign relations worse.

With regard to the Abe statement on 14 August 2015, Yamaguchi praised him because he confirmed past Japanese administrations' position on the war. Yamaguchi also appreciated that Abe spelled out clearly Japan's continued commitment to renouncement to war. Actually, the first draft Abe showed Yamaguchi did not include the terms of 'aggression' and 'apology'. Yamaguchi asked Abe to include them, saying he should 'use sincere expressions' to 'convey a spirit of apology' (Yamaguchi 2015c). This role proscription reveals that there was a significant difference between Abe and the NKP with respect to historical issues. Yamaguchi's stance was strong enough to prevent Abe from deviating from past statements. The details of the negotiation indicate that the NKP was willing to find a compromise that was acceptable to every country concerned to prevent the emergence of historical revisionism.

3.7.1 The NKP's Expectation of the Abe Administration about Denuclearization

Yamaguchi's humanitarian power concept includes denuclearization. The NKP consistently supports the total ban on nuclear weapons in the world (Yamaguchi 2009). In Hiroshima and Nagasaki prefectures during a speech on a street in Tokyo, Yamaguchi reaffirmed Japan had a moral obligation to commit itself to nuclear abolition, drawing on Japan's own experience of nuclear weapons. He emphasized Japan should play a 'bridge' role of between nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers as the only country in the world to have endured atomic bombings. Concretely, the NKP expects the government to accelerate the process of nuclear disarmament by creating a legal framework that could be called 'Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty' as a concrete goal of enduring peace' (Yamaguchi 2016d). This statement revealed that the NKP's willingness to maintain the postwar concept of a peace-loving nation has a close affinity with the strict ban on nuclear weapons. In fact, the Soka Gakkai, the NKP's power base, has been one of the oldest supporters of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons which lobbied UN member states to ratify the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty (Matsuda 2017). As such, the NKP is promoting the ban on total nuclear weapons worldwide as part of a concept of humanitarian power which endorses defense-only policy, human security and a historical view that Japan has to learn from the historical lessons. Mainly, the content analysis of the NKP's statements indicates that its role expectations have an important consequence for the Abe administration's foreign policy. However, as seen in chapter 4, the Japanese government did not support a resolution to start talks on a treaty outlawing

nuclear weapons in the UN in October 2016 because of Japan's continuous dependence on US extended nuclear deterrent. Kishida explained that another reason for the opposition of the treaty was that it would trigger a confrontation between nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers (Asahi Shimbun 2017b). However, this explanation is contradictory with Abe's proclaimed aim to abolish nuclear weapons worldwide. It could be said that his administration has not played the role of a 'bridge' in opposing to a concrete action in signing the treaty. Therefore, the government does not meet the NKP's expectation in this regard.

3.8 The Japan Conference's Expectation of the Abe Administration

The Japan Conference believes the constitution was imposed by the occupation authorities because Japan was defeated and is unwilling to recognize the current constitution as it is. Miyoshi described it as a 'capitulation' (Miyoshi 2014a: 3) and Takubo described it as an 'occupation basic law' (Takubo 2015: 162) that has been created to prevent Japan from standing up again. For Takubo the preamble of the constitution tries to put together the US Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Atlantic Charter, and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. It does not reflect the old historical and cultural values of Japan that have been honed for thousands of years (Takubo 2015a: 162-163). Therefore, the viewpoint of the Japan Conference is that, besides the issue of the SDF status, there is also a problem with the preamble of the constitution because it does not respect Japan's tradition, the Emperor or the ancestors of

the Imperial family. Miyoshi pointed out that one of the defects of the constitution is that it lacks proper ‘regulation of the head of state’ status (Miyoshi 2014a: 3). The interpretation of the constitution in this regard is ambiguous although the government explanation to the outside world is that the Emperor is the head of state. So, the Japan Conference wants to restore Japan’s characteristics in its constitution by clearly stipulating the Emperor as the head of state. Takubo also questions the reason ‘why the government does not state clearly that Japanese polity is a constitutional monarchy’ (Takubo 2016b: 105). This is the current situation although dividing authority and power with the Emperor taking charge of the former has been Japan’s traditional feature for a long time. This role expectation is clarified in part of the preamble and Chapter 1 of the National Constitution of Japan which refers to Japan as a country having a long and unique history centered around the Emperor³⁷.

The Japan Conference is nostalgic but actually it does not want to bring Japan back to a prewar era when Japan pursued one-sided coercive leadership in Asia. In fact, the Japan Conference partly supports the meta-role of non-military pacifist country. The normal country Takubo wishes Japan to be is not a country that threatens neighboring countries although he does not support the Yoshida Doctrine either. He expects Japan to ‘coexist within this region but also provide a role in limiting within this region. [...] I believe that Japan will create a military but this should be under civilian control and this could be one way for example to prevent related countries or neighboring countries from having concerns in regards to this’ (Takubo 2016a). Thus, the important point is that the Japan

³⁷ See the website of the Sankei Shimbun: <https://japan-forward.com/a-proposed-national-constitution-of-japan-by-sankei-shimbun/>.

Conference rejects one of postwar fundamental tenets of Japan such as renunciation of use of military force. Its concept of pacifist country with military is similar to Abe's pacifism with increase in deterrence.

As for the timing of the revision of the constitution, since the Japan Conference aims to realize the long-cherished goal of revising the constitution (which is also the objective of prime minister Abe), it consistently expects Abe to proceed with it during his second term.

On 13 November 2013, Miyoshi declared that under the severe security environment around Japan, the time to revise the constitution had come because pro-revision parties occupied two-thirds seats in the lower house as a result of the December 2012 general election (The Mainichi 2016c). He went on to say: 'We have to encourage the Diet to organize a referendum as soon as possible to let the people express their voice' (Miyoshi 2014a: 3), and formed the Kokumin no kai (the People's Association to Create a Constitution for a Beautiful Japan) as a variant group of the Japan Conference in October 2014. The objective of the lobbying activities of the group is to encourage the government to initiate the process of an amendment to the constitution in the Diet. It then started a grassroots movement to collect 10 million signatures supporting the constitutional (Tawara 2017b). Those activities served to prepare for a referendum following the upper house election in July 2016 as the conference expected it would have happened. The Kokumin no kai, in its founding declaration, stated: 'Conditions have been prepared for passing a National Referendum Law that would set in motion the process for amending the constitution, and a national referendum to propose that the Diet amend the constitution would then carried out'. It went on to state: 'We will begin the activities listed below,

aiming at bringing about constitutional revision in two years, having gathered the number of votes needed in the Diet for adoption of the referendum measure, and then carrying out a national referendum coinciding with the next Upper House election in 2016³⁸ (Kokumin no kai 2014).

Takubo welcomed the result of the 2016 election and expected Abe to amend the constitution to make Japan a normal country. On 13 July 2016, during a news conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan in Tokyo, Takubo expressed his expectation of Abe, 'the only politician who has made efforts to bring Japan from the extreme left to the center as a normal country' (Takubo 2016a) to amend the constitution because 'those who are for constitutional amendment have reached more than a two-thirds majority in both houses. I believe this is the first time this has happened since the end of the world war. Therefore, I believe that this is indeed the best chance to go forward with the constitutional amendment' (Takubo 2016a). Takubo considers that Abe tries to change nationalism from negative concept to positive one.

However, Abe did not amend the constitution until the end of 2016 regardless of the fact that pro-revision parties composed of the LDP, the NKP³⁹ and The Osaka Restoration Party had gained more than the two-thirds seats needed for amending the constitution in the House of Councilors' election in July 2016 (The Mainichi 2016c). Several months after the election, Takubo talked to Furuya Keiichi, Chairman of Election Strategy Committee in the LDP, and complained: 'Prime minister changed his idea to stabilize the

³⁸ Translated by Tawara (2017a).

³⁹ The NKP argued to add clauses on the people's privacy and right to a healthy environment to the constitution (The Japan Times 2016e).

long-term administration' (Takubo & Furuya 2017: 159) regardless that the US tended to become inward-looking and China and Russia became outward-looking.

3.8.1 The Japan Conference's Expectation of the Abe Administration about the View on the Second World War

The Japan Conference takes a revisionist historical view on what the Japanese army did during wartime. Events such as the Nanjing massacre are proclaimed to be exaggerated or are said to have been invented. The group also considers the Japanese army was a liberation army for East Asians colonized by the Western countries and comfort women were not forcibly gathered by the Japanese army (Ascione 2015). One of main activities of the Japan Conference is to promote revisionist history textbooks in schools which justifies the Japanese war act. They also lobby school boards of education to let schools Japanese wave the Japanese flag and sing the Japanese national anthem (Tawara 2017a). In summary, the Japan Conference does not completely support Japan's actions in the war but does not want Japan to get all the blame. Other countries were also culprits of war crimes.

Takubo justified his historical evaluation of prewar Japan: 'We cannot say that one party was completely right and or completely wrong' (2016a). Likewise, as for the Abe statement, the Japan Conference argues that the IMTFE was a 'made-up story' (Miyoshi 2014b: 5). The Japan Conference made a statement which embodied its view on Japan's prewar history in 6 August 2015 just before the Abe statement:

‘There is no reason why only the Japanese act of war was convicted one-sidedly. [...] The Greater East Asia War [the Second World War] was a self-defense war to counter US, UK and others’ economic blockade [...] The so-called ‘comfort women issue’ is the same’ (The Japan Conference 2015).

So, the Japan Conference expected Abe to issue a statement on the day of the end of war which would not accept victorious countries’ unilateral claim rooted in the Tokyo Trial, which ruled that Japan’s wars from 1931 to 1945 were Japanese aggression (Nakajima 2011).

3.8.2 The Japan Conference’s Expectation of the Abe Administration about the Yasukuni Shrine

The Japan Conference shares with the religious right that aims to revive the State Shinto that was prosperous in prewar Japan. It was an integral part of national identity and the Japanese people had been required to visit the Shrine regardless of their faith until it was forbidden by the occupation authority just after the war (Larsson 2014). Therefore, it can be said that the Japan Conference expects prime ministers to visit the Yasukuni Shrine and justifies the request in the name of recovery of Japan’s identity in which Shinto provides an understanding of life and death:

There are no war criminals regardless of A or B class because this [the Yasukuni Shrine] is a shrine where the spirits of the war dead come. The visit is to respect the war dead who said ‘Let’s meet again at Yasukuni!’ People

who oppose the visit do not understand Japanese Shinto' (Takubo 2016c: 36-37).

Therefore, in the mind of the Japan Conference, the prime minister's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine indicates a strong support for religious symbolism. Miyoshi said as such: 'it is natural that prime minister regularly visits the Yasukuni Shrine. This visit [Abe's visit in December 2013] pleased us because we expected it for a long time' (Miyoshi 2014b: 5). He expected Abe to 'defy internal and external criticism and openly continue to visit [the Yasukuni Shrine] and establish the tradition for prime ministers to do it' (Miyoshi 2014c: 16). Takubo also supported Abe's visit in 2013 as a chairman of the Japan Conference because Abe defied the MOFA, the US, China and South Korea. As he declared in a dialogue with a right-wing critic, Sakurai Yoshiko: 'This was a historic, significant and excellent decision' (Takubo et al 2014: 137). In his view, Abe was showing Japan had an identity to be protected in visiting the shrine.

The statements above reveal that the Japan Conference regards the current constitution as the main determinant of postwar Japanese security and identity issues. Thus, the organization focuses on it to change Japan. The Conference's expectation about international affairs is also clear. The Conference evaluated positively Abe's policy to some extent on the points of the deepening of the relations with the US and other like-minded partners. The Conference appreciated Abe's emphasis on universal values because it shares with him similar viewpoint on the international situation. The view on the visit to the Yasukuni Shrine and the origin of the current constitution are also shared by the two actors. The visit is for respecting war deads and this is one of a prime minister's

most important roles. As for the constitution, Abe and the Japan Conference consider it was imposed by the occupation forces and has to be changed. However, no matter what deep relations the LDP and the Japan Conference have (Larsson 2014), the Conference's influence was found to be limited. Overall Abe did not meet the expectation of Japan Conference very well. The changes have been less radical than what the Conference expected.

He did not remove the 2nd provision of Article 9; did not insert an Emergency Powers Act, and did not designate the Emperor as the chief of state. So, Abe has not been active in respect of the Conference request regardless of the two-thirds of seats occupied by pro-revision policy-makers occupy in both chambers. On the historical issues too, he did not meet the expectation. Abe decided to adopt a conventional historical view that Japan was totally wrong during the war; he did not raise any objection to victorious countries' behavior and about the origin of the constitution in his statements. Therefore, his stance has not been attuned with the Japan Conference's historical view. Also, Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine only one time during his first and second terms. He never made it an annual custom. Takubo stated his concern that Abe gave in to foreign opposition about the constitutional revision. In this connection, he euphemistically expected Abe to defy foreign opposition in a dialogue with Furuya, as he declared: 'The constitution is a domestic matter and has nothing to do with foreign countries. I do not want to believe that Abe takes care of opponents such as Russia and China because Japanese relations with them is not very good now' (Takubo & Furuya 2017: 161). However, the situation seems to proceed according to the line followed so far by Abe. No alter-part and ego-part (the

NKP) expect Abe to expand security activity roles beyond the current constitutional framework. They are satisfied with the constitution which constrains Japan from making China wary for Japan becoming militaristic again. Although there was no clear opposition to the constitution amendment except for China, there is also little expectation of change. It does not give Abe a strong motivation to proceed, all the more that it can be expected to be a laborious and politically risky task if he failed. Abe could have utilized the strained Japan-China relations to adopt the Japan Conference's political agenda to bolster Japanese security capability. However, he preferred not to do so and prioritized Japan's foreign relationship. In fact, former prime minister Koizumi's persistent annual visit to the Yasukuni Shrine significantly damaged diplomatic relations with China and South Korea (Larsson 2014). Finally, the important point in either creation of armed forces or deepening ties with the US or other like-minded countries, the Japan Conference did not emphasize the importance of non-military instrument nor the use of force as a last resort. On the other hand, the Abe administration repeatedly argues this point repeatedly. Seemingly, the gap between Abe's pragmatism and the Japan Conference cannot help but widen.

4 Japan as a World/Regional Leader

In this section, three aspects about Japan's role conception of a world/regional leader will be analyzed. The NKP and the Japan Conference are excluded because assuming a leadership role is a common aspiration in Japan. To a greater or lesser extent, Japanese people expect the government to play important roles on the world stage. The analysis

examines how Japan seeks to take a leadership in the world. The analysis of this meta-role serves to reveal how Japan thinks it deserves to be a leader in the world in security, politics and economic terms. This role conception was found only in Japanese statements. Japan wants to occupy a leadership position regionally and globally, i.e. in the G7, the UN and in the TPP. While the analysis reveals that Japan wants to take initiative and have international respect, a leadership role is visualized only indirectly, i.e. Japan wants to play a leading role for worldwide issues together with other countries such as the US.

4.1 Japan's Role as a Leader in G7

Concerning the G7, Abe expresses the wish of Japan as one of 'we, the leaders of the world' (Abe 2014i), to play responsible roles, i.e. as one of world leaders. According to Abe: 'Various issues exist within the relations between countries. It is precisely because issues exist that we should engage in dialogue, including at the leaders' level' (Abe 2014i). The issues range from terrorism, Russia's annexation of Crimea to the world economy. Japan wants to gain influence on policy outcomes by assuming a pivotal role in the world politics. Claiming its status as one of G7 leaders, Abe showed his willingness to play an extensive role to realize the prosperous world by committing to 'demonstrate leadership under the banner of 'Proactive Contribution to Peace' (Abe 2016c).

4.2 Japan's Role as a Leader in the UN

As UN-centered diplomacy is one of three pillars of postwar Japan's diplomacy, the relations with the UN have historic meaning to Japan. One of the most important Japanese

objectives in the UN is to become a permanent member of the UNSC. An important reason why Japan regards itself as a suitable country for the permanent member is because of Japanese huge financial contribution as the second largest contributor next to the US along with its contribution to PKO mission (Takeuchi 2016). Since 1992 when PKO was allowed under Japanese law, Japan's objective has been to fulfil this aspiration in order to be considered a responsible player in the management of international peace and order (Soeya 2011). Thereby, Japan wants to take initiative in UN policy. In a 2006 speech, he explicitly expressed his wish:

‘It has been 50 years since Japan joined the United Nations. I believe that Japan must take on its full responsibilities through gaining permanent membership in the Security Council. In order to transform the U.N., which was established shortly after WWII, into one that is suitable for the 21st century, Japan will continue its efforts toward U.N. reform including its pursuit of permanent membership in the Security Council’ (Abe 2006b).

Abe thinks Japan is entitled to obtain permanent membership in the UNSC because Japan has a long experience in the UN. It can be thought that Abe sees Japan as being unfairly denied recognition as a world leader regardless of its big influence and contribution in the world as a big economic power.

His stance appears in another speech at the UN General Assembly in which Abe argues that Japan's contributions should be ‘commensurate with its place in the international community’ (Abe 2007c). In addition to a pledge of about \$ 810 million financial support for refugees from Syria and Iraq who go to Europe, he showed his willingness to see Japan

enter the UNSC in making reference to the UN's 70th anniversary and reform of the UNSC:

‘Japan is determined to undertake Security Council reform in order to transform the United Nations into a body appropriate for the 21st century, and then, as a permanent member of the Security Council, carry out its responsibilities in making still greater contributions towards world peace and prosperity’ (Abe 2015h).

Once again, this statement implicitly indicates that Japan's position in the UN does not correspond to the position it deserves. It also indicates that Japan cannot escape from its responsibility to help solve international issues regarding refugees and poverty if it wants to be recognized as a world leader. Proactive pacifism based on international contribution is closely tied to Japan's attempt to be a permanent member of the UNSC.

4.3 Japan's Role as a Leader in APEC and the TPP

APEC and the TPP are considered especially important as an institution and an agreement where Japan can exercise leadership and facilitate cooperation in Asia-Pacific. He wants to make use of the growth potential in the Asia-Pacific region to boost Japan's growth as well. Abe perceives Asia-Pacific as the region where ‘that is undergoing the most dynamic change in the world’ (Abe 2006c).

Japan has a history of being willing to be alternative to US leadership as an Asian country. More and more, Japan relies on its Asia's longest and prosperous democratic history to differentiate itself from China and insist that Japan have a right to take a regional

leadership (Medeiros et al 2008). Now, Japan tries to link the national characteristic to its role of promoting free trade in Asia. Behaving as ‘the second largest economic power in the world’ and as ‘the country with the longest tradition of democratic governance in Asia’ (Abe 2006c), Japan wants to have a position to exercise influence on rule-making and development in APEC while paying attention not to adopt unilateral policies. Abe also believes Japan can lead the rule-making process in the TPP as a big economic power (Abe 2013d). As this free trade zone offered an opportunity for Japan to develop its economy and strengthen even more economic relations with emergent Asian countries having a large population, the TPP appeals to Japan to assume a larger leadership role in creating a liberal democratic order in the region. Abe links how Japanese governments have supported free trade since the end of the Second World War and his strong attachment to contribution to Asia-Pacific economically. Moreover, Abe maintains that the TPP is accompanied by diffusion of universal values such as democracy and the rule of law that reinforce stability and peace. In a 2015 speech at the US congress, Abe argued: ‘Involving countries in Asia-Pacific whose backgrounds vary, the U.S. and Japan must take the lead. We must take the lead to build a market that is fair, dynamic, sustainable, and is also free from the arbitrary intentions of any nation’ (Abe 2015a). As can be seen from this speech, while Abe expresses Japan wants to take a leadership role as a rule-maker in this region, he persists in insisting that Japan will not adopt unilateral positions, especially in relation to the US. He shows his willingness to offer the leader’s position to the US: ‘Through the TPP, the US can make clear its commitment to playing a leadership role in the growing Asia-Pacific’ (Abe 2016e). This statement means that as long as Abe regards economy in

the same light as security, it is all the more difficult for Japan to be a leader. Therefore, it seems that Japanese regional leadership consists of two elements: namely that Japan modernized earlier than other Asian countries did and that Japan is a leader to the extent it can lead in line with the US to proceed with free trade in Asia-Pacific.

4.4 US Expectation of Japan

There are few statements about this role conception from alter-parts about despite efforts to establish Japan as a world/regional leader. The US leaders rarely express their desire for Japan to be a leader. One of the few expressions is articulated by Rhodes in April 2015, when he expects the US and Japan ‘will have a leadership role to play in helping to bring about a successful conclusion to those discussions’ (Rhodes 2015) in referring to Japan-US cooperation on global challenges such as a climate change. So, US expectation of Japan’s leadership is in a non-military field that does not include economy either.

In a significant declaration on this issue of leadership Obama stated in Japan in 2014 his intention about US leadership: ‘America’s security and prosperity is inseparable from the future of this region, and that’s why I’ve made it a priority to renew American leadership in Asia Pacific’ (Obama 2014b). This indicated the US intended to use the TPP as a leverage by which the US would advance its leadership. In addition, Rice, US ambassador to the UN, stated that the US is the only country that can take leadership in Asia:

‘There’s a significant demand for U.S. leadership in that region, and our strategy of rebalancing to Asia includes economic, political, security and

cultural interests in Northeast and Southeast Asia. [...] No other nation other than the United States has a network of alliances and partnerships in Asia that match ours' (Rice 2014).

For the US decision-makers, the US must remain the leader in security and economic matters. Therefore, it is unwilling to admit Japanese leadership role in the region. This viewpoint that the US has to keep leadership in the TPP is expressed as follows by Obama: 'The US ought not to fail in taking a leadership, otherwise it would 'not just have economic consequences, but would call into question America's leadership in this vital region' (Obama 2016b). As the TPP is an important subset of Obama's rebalance policy, it can be assumed that the US cannot renounce its leadership position in the regional economic integration.

As for Japan's aspiration for expansion its role in the UN, Japan and the US confirmed this point in the Japan-US joint statement in April 2015: 'The United States looks forward to a reformed UN Security Council that includes Japan as a permanent member' (MOFA 2015b). However, it is argued the US may support the Japanese bid only half-heartedly because it tends to prioritize US national interests over anything else (Wang 2011). Indeed, the US administrations have ostensibly supported Japan's permanent seat but have opposed reforms of the UN in light of US national interests (Bosco 2015). By and large, the US expects that Japan remains not as a leader but as a partner that promotes peace and benefits of democracy and market economy to other countries in the Pacific-Asia region with the US.

4.5 Australia, India and the Philippines' Expectation of Japan

Australia, India and the Philippines refrained from regarding Japan as above them or below them, let alone demanding Japanese unilateral leadership. Their relations with Japan are on a basis of equality. They refer to Japan as a 'closest friend in Asia' (Abbott 2013), 'vital partner' in economy and security (Modi 2014c), or an ally (Aquino III 2015d). Still, these countries support Japan's UNSC permanent membership. This is the case of Australia whose foreign minister Bishop said her country supports Japan on this issue (Bishop 2013c). India is one of the G4 including Germany, Brazil and Japan which aspire to become permanent members together (Takeuchi 2016). Therefore, it is natural to support Japan's goal as Singh said: 'Together, we seek a new architecture for the United Nations Security Council' (Singh 2013b). Aquino III also supported Japan's bid (Sankei News 2014).

4.6 China's Expectation of Japan

Statements cannot be found where China shows its expectation of Japan to be a world/regional leader. In the case of the entry into the UNSC's permanent seat, China strongly opposed Japan's bid in 2005 (Takeuchi 2016). This opposition is said to be related to the fact that China is concerned that Japan will become powerful in Asia (Rozman 2004). It means that not only the US and other Japan's friendly countries but also China does not want Japan to take a unilateral and dominant leadership. Quoting a comment of Chinese political scientist Chen Xiankui in Renmin University of China, the China Daily repeats again the traditional claim based on war history that Japan does not

deserve the permanent membership because ‘Japan has still not faced up to its war crimes’ (China Daily 2015). Instead of accepting Japanese leadership in the UNSC, China opposed the bid of Japan with accusing it of planning to be a great military power again once it obtained the seat. Therefore, the historical issues and Japan-China rivalry are the reasons for China to oppose Japan’s leadership role.

Conclusion

Based on role theory, the thesis examined the roles the Abe administration was engaged in from comprehensive perspectives. By analyzing political leaders' official statements related to security, economy, history and leadership in the Asian region and in the world it revealed the complex reasons behind Japan's foreign policy decisions. They reflect the expectations and proscriptions the Abe administration faces in Japan and the world where international issues, domestic politics and economy are intertwined. The concept of NRC provided clues to understand the degree of influence of the domestic and international actors and how their expectations are reflected in Japanese foreign policy. Role theory is based on intersubjectivity. In other words, ego-part and alter-part expectations may vary in relative importance according to Abe's NRCs and how they are perceived. Analysis of Abe's NRC and of the alter-parts provided a clear view of why Japan under the Abe administration adopted a particular orientation and approach and not others in foreign policy.

In order to explain the outcome of the analysis the conclusion is divided in two groups. The first group draw conclusions about ego and alter-parts influence on the Abe administration's foreign policy according to the selected meta-roles. Then, the second group of conclusions utilizes Hermann's classification model which assesses the potential change in level of Japan's foreign policy that may result from NRC transformations.

The four main conclusions regarding ego and alter-parts influence on Abe administration's foreign policy according to meta-roles are as follows:

1) Japan is seen as reliable ally but not expected to confront China

The first conclusion is that the US, China and the NKP are critically important to Japanese security policy direction and the Abe administration takes them into consideration to a significant degree.

Abe strived to live up to perceived US expectation as much as possible since the first administration. It confirmed the long standing highest priority given to the relations with the US among Japan's decision-makers. In the second administration, spurred by the desire to assist US rebalance policy, Abe took various measures to keep in step with the US in security matters. Abe's roles were performed in the name of proactive pacifism, i.e. based on the defense of democratic ideals, to prevent credibility problem. As a result, US signals (and from the other alter-parts other than China) were not found which indicated support to Japan would decrease or stop.

In terms of Abe's interpretation of the environment surrounding Japan, a constant preoccupation is the need not to confront China while keeping the perception unchanged that China tries to change the status quo in Asia-Pacific. Abe's statements show he perceives that counterbalancing China without partners' support is difficult. Albeit with different levels of intensity of the perception, alter-parts such as the US, Australia, India and the Philippines indicated they share similar recognitions that the security environment is becoming severe. They welcome Japan's role of a reliable security partner. All indicate that they share an interest in preserving a peaceful and stable regional order. In showing interest to deepen their relationship with Japan, including in security matters, they indirectly indicate they want to avoid a Chinese hegemony in the region. However, it can

be said that they are reluctant to cooperate with Japan to the extent that the defense collaboration damages their relations with China. They still expect Chinese peaceful emergence because it is not only a threat but also a potential economic power. This perception is even shared by the US. Statements show that it does not regard China as a threat to the extent of Abe.

Although it is ambiguous to some degree, this limited role expectation is discernible from the alter-parts' statements. The kind of collaboration on security-related matters that appears in statements - and that transcribes in the official texts legislating their security cooperation with Japan - mainly focus on the role of Japan in PKO activities, cyber security, anti-terrorism, anti-piracy, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. They do not mention the threat of China. This shows the extent of efforts of alter-parts to skillfully avoid the risk of exogenous role conflict with China. Especially, the clear gap between Japan and its alter-parts on the issue of China's threat appears in the statements of the Abe administration and the Obama administration. Explicit pressure from the US could not be discernible in US political leaders' statements but statements indicate the US would like Japan to adopt a conciliatory attitude toward China. It can reasonably be inferred that this position of the US, Japan's sole official ally and superpower in the world exerts influence on what Japanese NRC performance should be in respect of the perceived China's threat.

The Abe administration-NKP relationship in the ruling coalition reveals that political leaders' roles can show inconsistencies not only with those of powerful alter-parts like the US and China but also with ego-parts. Due to the NKP, Japan cannot have nor provide

weapons for foreign countries on offensive purpose and the right to collective self-defense is still severely limited. Alter-parts appear to share the NKP's stance. Despite the fact that they welcome strategic partnerships with Japan, they do not expect Japan to cooperate for offensive purposes. While Japanese security contribution receives a positive evaluation alter-parts' statements are focused on Japan's contribution to peaceful resolution of issues through communication mechanism, negotiation and international law. This limited expectation of Japan also reveals from the alter-parts' role performance in the technological cooperation perspective. If alter-parts had had a strong motivation of joining possible military actions with Japan against a state, for example China, they would have favored Japan's arms purchase and transfer of military technology. However, in reality, Japan did not succeed so far in this respect, at least not as much as it was expected. Japan actively transfers military technology to some SEA countries such as Vietnam and Indonesia but it failed in its attempt to sell submarines and a patrol plane to Australia and India, respectively. In fact there have not been large-scale arm deals since the lifting a ban on arms export in 2014 (Sankei 2017).

Therefore, it can be said Abe meets the alter-parts expectation on this point. Pressure from the ego-part NKP to strictly adhere to a defense only security policy and the signals from the alter-parts that they do not expect Japan to play a military offensive role, prevent Abe from escalating military tension with China. It could be argued that this role expectation was acknowledged and responded to in Abe's foreign policy. Despite Abe's concern for China's increasing military presence, Japan puts priority on a peaceful solution, not igniting territorial disputes with China and not interfering with the SCS issue militarily.

Abe privileged a backstage role to calling out from behind to countries concerned about respect for the rule of law. Japan provides legal expertise for countries embroiled with conflicts with China in the region.

The rapprochement with China is one of the remarkable role performances of Abe. However, Chinese statements reveal that China perceives Abe's foreign policy such as enhanced cooperation with the US and other alter-parts as assertive and aggressive. Abe failed in obtaining China's understanding on that point but, in spite of the territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands, Japan and China have continually tried to improve their relations, focusing on their cooperation in economy and trust-building, putting aside territorial issues.

So, compatibility exists in a situation characterized by few and limited Japanese roles and Chinese expectations. Focus is kept on developing economic relations and protecting stability in the region but these efforts do not lead to higher expectation, i.e., they are unlikely to make the two countries build friendly relations. The analysis of statements and role performance in this regard shows how complicated the bilateral relations is because of the high level mutual distrust.

As far as value-oriented diplomacy is concerned, regardless of Abe's support of universal values being in evidence in his statements, it can be considered insubstantial (the same is true for proactive pacifism as seen below). Value-oriented diplomacy does not aim to promote universal values. Rather, referring to them means to deepen robust security ties and reinforce the feelings in targeted nations that Japan is their partner. However, it is mistaken to dismiss their role because sharing values smooths relations between Japan

and alter-parts. Universal values serve a purpose of a rhetorical package of shared interests between Japan and like-minded partners in Asia and beyond. Foreign countries' general understanding of Japan as a country supporting universal values such as democracy, the rule of law and freedom of navigation are reflected throughout foreign leaders' statements. The perception of Japan seems to be clearly shaped by the role conception of a 'promoter of universal values'. Abe finds them useful in identifying with the US and other strategic partners and differentiating itself from China. Therefore, it is understandable that alter-parts except for China did not have bad feelings toward Japan.

At the same time, despite Abe's emphasis on the protection of the regional liberal order from possible domination by China which had different political values, he proceeded with defense cooperation with authoritarian Vietnam and the Philippines that do not necessarily share universal values with Japan. He does so pragmatically in refraining from interfering with their domestic political values lest it would hamper the collaboration with important countries for Japan's strategy toward China. In addition, Japan signed a civilian nuclear technology agreement with India in 2016 regardless of the fact that India is a nuclear power and not a signatory to the NPT. India's strategic importance to Japan is one of important factors for Japan to prompt nuclear cooperation with India (Purnendra & Horimoto 2016). Thus, value-oriented diplomacy can be said to be an attempt to deploy Japan's friendly countries around China as a buffer against growing Chinese hegemony in the region. On this point, Abe's foreign policy can be said to be reactive, not proactive. He does not have an enough positive attitude to improve Japan-China relations. Abe prefers deterrence to cooperation in his China policy. He is reluctant to take initiative to

make a breakthrough, thereby putting the onus on China. Instead of adopting constructive behavior toward China, Abe explicitly and implicitly emphasizes the difference between the two countries and seeks a status quo.

This means the two sides are unable to cooperate fully because Abe's perception is solely focused on the idea of China seeking greater influence in Asia and beyond. This status quo thinking with a very narrow role-set may result in making the current unstable environment even more unstable. Abe seemed to recognize himself the danger when he declared that economic interdependence is not enough to defuse tensions and when he compared Japan-China relations to Britain-Germany economic relations before World War I.

2) Japan's multilateralism is accepted because of the non-threatening posture

The second conclusion is that the Abe administration does not adopt unilateralism that would be unacceptable to ego and alter-parts. Japan continues to devise and implement important foreign policy in a multilateral structure. It maintains the importance of both economic and peace-related multilateral roles as a core part of Japan's foreign policy strategy. Abe has repeatedly showed that he favors multilateralism in his statements and role performance.

In the case of the TPP, Abe's approach has been building a league of democracies that would be members of a regional economic group linked by high level trade and investment standards. The TPP was not supposed to be merely a loose free-trade area but

the standard bearer in terms of intellectual property rights and labor standards. The objective was to keep China's economic influence at bay in making Japan's economy more interdependent with Asia-Pacific markets. In that sense, it is not totally new. However, Abe understands the project not only in terms of economic interdependence but also security. The TPP is another way of securing US presence in the region as well as bolstering ties with regional countries.

In promoting the TPP and emphasizing regional stable development and interdependence as an equal partner with the regional countries in his statements, Abe attempts to remove the remaining doubts in SEA that Japan wants to dominate and remilitarize. While Abe emphasizes engagement with China in repeating the door is open to become part of the TPP, his role performance has an element of containment. The fact that he has never shown any accommodating attitude toward China, for example in being ready to accept to lower the high standards of TPP rules, indicates that he still seeks to preserve the status quo in most respects with China.

Japan's NRC related to the TPP obtains generally positive reactions from alter-parts but if opinions focusing on economic advantage and the high standard of TPP are conspicuous, interest in the strategic (security-related) perspective on the TPP is generally absent from the statements of foreign leaders. It is only shared by actors such as the US and the NKP. China adopts a pragmatic stance in recognizing the economic importance of the TPP but does not hide its sense of danger about the political objective of the project.

Few alter-part statements express doubts about the intention of Japan in participating in the SDF's multilateral operations such as humanitarian aid, disaster relief and PKOs.

As security-related laws legislated in September 2015 include stipulations which clarify the roles and activities of the SDF deployed on the UN-sanctioned peacekeeping missions overseas, expectations emerged from alter-parts, except China, about joint operation to address international issues such as terrorism and piracy. While China denounced collective self-defense which extended the SDF's latitude, it did not show opposition to those allowing the SDF to use force for other than self-defense in the PKO. This indicates China is unconcerned for the roles that relate to multilateralism even if they mean that Japan can be involved in military activities.

Likewise, few ego and alter-parts but the NKP and the US were interested in and reacted favorably to Japan's role performance in humanitarian missions beyond bilateral relations. This includes for example the refugee issue, the support to fight infectious disease and denuclearization. The explanation is that the NKP has a history of support of human security and the US has power as well as a sense of duty as a superpower to deal with international issues more than any countries. Viewed from the opposite side, it can be thought that the efforts of Abe in human security mainly aim to meet the NKP's and US expectations. Overall, there is not conspicuous role inconsistency and conflict in this meta-role, indicating that Japan's multilateral meta-role is generally compatible with ego and alter-parts, a situation that can be largely explained by the alter-parts' lack of worry or interest.

3) Japan's self-restraint to keep from historical revisionism is welcomed

The third conclusion is that Abe's statements reflected alter-parts' and the NKP's preference not to use military capability to defend Japan's national interests and use diplomatic means to settle disputes. Conversely, this role behavior ended up disappointing the right-wing Japan Conference's expectation. Restraint not to deviate from the conventional historical view was regarded as imperative from alter-parts and the NKP. The analysis of statements reveal that all alter-parts expected and welcomed this role conception. While Japan is recognized as a reliable security partner, it does not show any intention to remilitarize and does not challenge any alter-part's sovereignty. Abe did not show any willingness to use force to preserve Japan's national interests. In addition, although Abe does not hide the fact that he wants to bring back national pride with his conservative historical view, he did not take any significant steps to actually concretize his views. This is related to the fact that the NKP and all alter-parts, except for India and the Philippines, opposed historical revisionism. It can be said that in real terms, every country opposes this because the two precited countries have never indicated support for historical revisionism.

Abe was compelled not to visit the Yasukuni Shrine after December 2013 because he learned that this behavior was unacceptable by alter-parts. This role learning indicates that roles are induced not only by role expectations but also by role proscriptions. Japan's NRC relating to wartime history that would be seen as leaning toward reconsideration of the past in the direction of more lenient viewpoint of Japan's war behavior would be incompatible with the NRC of all alter-parts. At best it could lead to the perception of role inconsistency with Japan's postwar democratic credentials by Japan's Western allies. At

worst, it could become a potential conflictive point, especially with China (and South-Korea).

Abe also acknowledged that historical revisionism is an obstacle in the full normalization of the relations with past invaded countries and Japan's key partners. Therefore, he refrained from issuing his original statement which may have been contradictory to the Murayama Statement and the Kono Statement under pressure from the NKP. As a consequence, all countries other than China did not show suspicion for a possible resurgence of Japan's former belligerence. They (and the NKP) indicate that this benevolent attitude will prevail provided that Japan does not amend the constitution radically in order to expand its military might. Japan's alter-part security partners and the NKP welcome Japanese security policy's gradual changes such as the collective self-defense as long as the Japanese Constitution maintains the core peaceful values. They indicate that Abe meets role expectations well for the moment. Except for China and the radical right represented by the Japan Conference there was a consensus among the alter-parts on supporting Japan's role conception of non-military pacifism under the Abe administration.

4) Japan is not seen as a world/regional leader but as an equal partner

The fourth conclusion is that Japanese roles are generally welcome but Japan is not seen as a leader. This is so, regardless of its readiness to become a leading country expressed by Abe. The US regards itself as the indisputable leader in the alliance, China is cautious

of Japan's intention and like-minded countries want to cooperate with Japan on an equal footing.

Australia, India, and the Philippines also perceive that to cope with rising China will be a challenge. The changed environment has prompted them to have a strategic relationship with Japan but the Japanese position should preferably be of a friend, a partner or an ally at best. As stated previously, such an attitude is connected to the fact that they do not want Japan to stand up to China.

No country, including the US and China, expects Japan to be a unilateral and self-righteous leader. Still, no causality was found between the rejection of Japan's leadership and its past militarism. Japanese and foreign statements indicate that they do not think that Japan yearns for leadership for that reason. Only one Chinese statement denounced Japan on this point. Either way, contrary to Japan's willingness to take a leadership in the region and the world, there is a large gap between Japan's sense of duty in international community and alter-part expectations.

Adjustment change, program change, problem/goal change, and international orientation change are used to provide plausible explanations for change in level of Abe's foreign policy. The second group of conclusions regarding Hermann's classification model are as follows:

1) Continuity of exclusively defensive security policy and incomplete normalism

The first conclusion is that strong continuity characterizes Abe's security policy. It goes with small changes and adjustments of a number of role conceptions in spite of the friction

existing in some important relationships. In other words, the change is the 1st level, i.e. adjustment change.

According to Hirata's categorization (2016), Abe can be said to be a normalist. However, he did not behave like a normalist who would have eased the security constraints imposed after the War. Far from becoming independent, Abe's Japan became voluntarily more embedded with US security policy. As Green (2001) argued one of the reasons for Japan's engagement with the US was to constrain a rising China and a declining of Japan's own influence. Abe's policy matches with what Green called reluctant realism, evincing a degree of continuity. Or, his policy can also be deemed defensive realism (Mearsheimer 2001; Mochizuki 2007). Indeed, while he believes Japan should prepare for war, his policy is that the SDF should be used only for defense. Moreover, the security cooperation agreements are also focused on the peaceful use of equipment Japan provides for.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the centrality of the key elements of one or several meta-roles, notably those related to pacifism and/or to the stability of alliances, as well as partnerships and relationships with key alter-parts such as the US and China does not show any noticeable evolution. Eventually, Japan continues to rely on the US commitment for its defense. Thus, an element of buck-passing still subsides in its policy. Indeed, Japan is still taking advantage of the US nuclear umbrella's dissuasive power. Still, the statements revealed that Abe proclaimed that Japan was back in foreign affairs and perceived the necessity of reconsideration of its defense and security posture. He did not disregard the alliance or intended to be independent. The engrained norm of giving priority to the Japan-US alliance is likely to continue to be the anchor of foreign policy.

Enactment of laws related to the right of collective self-defense would just mean a 'greater level of effort' in Hermann's terms (Hermann 1990: 5), i.e. not the shift toward different kinds of efforts in another direction that would mean, for example the tilt toward acceptance of preemptive strike that would require the acquisition of offensive weaponry. Since the end of the occupation Japan was a faithful ally of the US. Likewise, Abe tried to let Japan's NRCs be compatible with US foreign policy. The Japan-US relations do not change fundamentally as Abe did not show any attitude to challenge US leadership. Rather, he was determined to cooperate more closely with the US.

While the central position of the US in Japan's NRC is not altered at this level of change, Abe progressively adjusted Japan's security roles. He focused on working at geopolitical stability in the region, allowing for greater robust defense exchange with key regional countries such as Australia, India, the Philippines and Vietnam, and by strengthening the institutional arsenal through the NSC, NSS and the state secrets law, as well as the security-related laws which allowed the exercise of collective self-defense and transfer of weapons and appurtenances in the name of defense equipment.

There was a possibility that Abe significantly changed the concept of pacifism by amendment to the constitution. In that case Japan would have started to undertake the 3rd level of change because of his perception of the China's threat coming with its increased military capability and presence in the region. For that purpose Abe requested a new NRC for Japan which could deter China by legitimating the military force. However, as observed previously this sense of danger was not shared by domestic and international actors, notably the NKP. Then, while the Abe government adopted new means (the 2nd

level of change), i.e. new laws, principles to ease restraints on the SDF, it is hard to say they are truly new means. The NKP succeeded in imposing brakes on the government's creation of a *fait accompli* now and in the future. It was done in committing itself in policy-making of new laws and principles to clarify what the SDF can and cannot do. Notably, collective self-defense is still difficult to exercise because of the strict restriction. The principle that the SDF's activity is only for Japan's defense remains in place. Thus, the change is not the 3rd level nor 2nd level but 1st level, i.e. gradual expansion of the scope of the security activities overseas. Constitutional restraint preventing waging war, the security dependence on the US and the support to regionalism (APEC, the TPP and RECEP) and multilateralism (the UN) remain unchanged. The activity of providing for weapons in the name of defense equipment is added. This is merely an extension of Japanese foreign policy since the end of the Cold War with only slight adjustments that keep the current NRC's stable foreign policy anchors. In the role contestation, the NKP overwhelmed the LDP.

There used to be a role contestation inside the LDP and between the LDP and the JSP during the Cold War. After the Cold War normalists gradually took the initiative in the LDP, especially since the Koizumi administration. Therefore, role contestation is much weaker inside the LDP. Because of the decline of the JSP it essentially takes place between the LDP and the NKP. This led Abe to maintain basic ideas such as strictly defensive defenses policy, the three principles regarding arms exports, non-nuclear principle and the one percent cap on defense budget⁴⁰ made during the Cold War.

⁴⁰ See the website of the Peter G. Peterson Foundation:
https://www.pgpf.org/chartarchive/0184_ally_defense_spending.

Therefore, Abe's security policy does not indicate Japan is becoming a normal country. Such policies were linked to universal values which Japan had already supported before Abe (Macleod 1997; Hosoya 2011a) although he intensified the level of efforts in shaping an image of Japan which cherishes universal values. Thus, this is not a fundamental change of security policy because Abe just added countries other than the US in the security field. In Hermann's terms it would correspond to 'enlargement in the scope of recipients' (Hermann 1990: 5).

2) Multilateralism as a reinforcement of the Japan-US alliance

The second conclusion is that Abe makes efforts in multilateral missions, either UN-authorized or not, and in the free trade regime with new means such as the TPP. These efforts play a role to complement the defense exchange with the US and other countries with which Japan has friendly ties. It indicates the change is limited in the scope or salience of the national role conception but still in using new means. In other words, the change is between the 1st and 2nd level, i.e. adjustment change and program change.

In both cases it can be said that Japan obtained new means through international peace support law, the revised PKO law and the TPP. In the case of former, however, it is also difficult to say this means brings big change because the SDF cannot join combat and has to stop logistical support when combats happen as before. The only new point is that international peace support law enables the government to save time to make a special law each time the SDF is sent abroad.

Japan's international contribution is financially and non-militarily is as before, showing a close similarity to the conventional foreign policy. Abe called it proactive pacifism but it did not indicate substantial and visible change. Abe emphasized conventional pacifism had reached its limit and imposed constraints in foreign policy but proactive pacifism did not reveal much element of proactivity that could have manifested in sending troops abroad or getting involved in armed conflicts abroad, for example.

By contrast, the use of free trade regimes in foreign policy can be said to be new means because the TPP is not a mere instrument helping boost free trade in the region. It is a high-level sophisticated agreement that aims to build rules for economic governance that will reinforce liberal free-market in the Asia-Pacific region. Still, the core objective is an extension of the Japan-US alliance and a different way of balance of power policy. It is hard to say whether the TPP replaces the conventional NRC. Therefore, it is difficult to judge but probably the changes in the 2nd meta-role lies between adjustment change and program change.

3) Continuity and expansion of efforts to reconcile with neighboring countries

The third conclusion is that although there was a possibility that Japan would choose program change, i.e. nationalistic historical view as a new means in diplomacy, Abe decided to hold the common view on the standard historical NRC. In other words, the change is the 1st level, i.e. adjustment change.

His behavior can be thought to be limited to adjustment change, which means only the scope of conventional activities was changed. Abe defined Japan's invasion of China started from the Manchurian incident in 1931 for the first time as a Japanese prime minister. Abe also expressed his regret in the US and Australia over Japan's war conduct. It was the first time that both Japanese and US leaders stood together in Hiroshima city to pledge denuclearization. These symbolic moves were done with additional remarks that Japan supported universal values, thus putting emphasis on Abe's forward-looking characteristics of diplomacy.

In terms of Japan-China relations, Abe did not make a new NRC to China. He just decided to freeze the territorial and historical issues in order not to breach the non-militarism meta-role. In other words, Japan's policy remains within the bounds of pragmatism and contingency prevention. So, with regard to historical issues, far from becoming a historical revisionist, he expanded historical reconciliation with neighboring countries.

4) Continuity of the importance of leadership and rejection of unilateralism

The fourth conclusion is that Abe shared with his predecessors the similar view of the Japanese leadership image while expressing the willingness of becoming a leader. In other words, the change is the 1st level, i.e. adjustment change.

As Japan is one of leaders in G7 since 1970s the desire for becoming a leader in Asian economic frameworks and a permanent member of the UN Security Council is not new nor representing a fundamental change of course. The TPP is relatively new but its

emergence did not bring about clear effect on the level of this meta-role. Rather it meant the area where Japan can play a leadership broadened. Also, Abe repeatedly rejected unilateralism and domination of the region, indicating he shared a restrictive notion of the Fukuda Doctrine with the aim of collaboration with other Asia-Pacific countries.

This is common from the 1st meta-role to 4th meta-role, Abe did not change meta-roles themselves during his terms. They are by and large consistent to the traditional meta-roles regardless of his political faith, i.e. his own definition of Japan's NRC. Le Prestre (1997) said there are two ways of role change; whole and unilateral change and gradual change respectful of existing system. Abe's foreign policy proved to be the latter because he did not (or could not) change the military posture in accordance with his perceived security environment. As Thies (2010) said, roles are 'sticky'. Differences are noticeable but it can be said that the role conception itself does not change in most cases. What is changing is their interpretation and the manner the roles are performed. Core norms do not change but their meaning is evolving. For example, Abe tried to justify his change of foreign policy by quoting the preamble of the Japanese Constitution which he wanted to amend. This is a clear evidence that he does not try to change pacifism the Japanese supported but rather he tries to change the interpretation. While Abe perceived a new situation encouraged him to adopt new roles, he learned his roles were not to change Japan's policy in the interaction process with other actors.

Role theory helps consider Abe's foreign policy in a light that neither only Abe's personality nor the international distribution of power could explain. This research avoided reducing explanation of the Abe administration's foreign policy to either of them.

His foreign policy is understandable by roles established by both Japan itself and through Japanese leaders' interaction with others. In particular, security and domestic political environments influenced Abe's behavior to be socialized and constrained.

Through the interaction with ego and alter-parts, as a pragmatist, Abe reassessed his roles. He chose reinterpretation of Article 9 instead of the amendment, prioritizing deepening defense cooperation over embracing Japanese nationalism. He did so because he understood that choosing the second alternative could have destabilized the relations not only with China but also with Japan's strategic partners. If only either Abe's personality or the international distribution of power decides his policy, nationalistic policies could have been more common and leeway of the SDF could have been higher. In other words, while Abe has the ambition to expand Japan's presence in the region and beyond, he must take a balance between his important objectives and strong ties with the key ego and alter-parts and cannot treat them with disdain concurrently. Thus, it is correct to depict Abe's foreign policy as active but also restrained. Regardless of the requirement of contradictory role performances from the US, like-minded countries and China, Abe runs the administration for a long time compared to his predecessors. This is because he chooses ends and means based on the calculation of what roles to perform well and this ability is important in terms of role theory: 'Roles call for judgement, which involves reasoned belief, self-monitoring of aims, and a general shrewdness' (Hollis & Smith 1990).

This thesis clarifies that Abe manages to meet diverging external and internal expectations and accommodate conflicting role conceptions by making closer relations with like-minded countries. At the same time, he did not actively attempt to become closer to China

but was cautious not to alienate it excessively either. This research result is not completely new but this thesis contributed to the research on Japan's foreign policy by reinforcing the idea that change of Japan's foreign policy under the Abe administration is not radical but gradual with role theory. Moreover, this thesis revealed that the Abe administration was not necessarily dominated by hawkish thinking by taking into account human security aspect of his foreign policy. This enabled readers to see the Abe administration from a different perspective.

However, a relatively stable role-set does not mean that Abe's foreign policy will remain unchanged until the end of his second administration. Abe reemphasized his inherent political goal and adopted slightly contradictory roles after 2016. He worked out a blueprint of revising the constitution by 2020 in May 2017 (The Japan Times 2017a). There is a possibility that he will make a bid for an amendment to the constitution before his second term expires as he still desires Japan to play a role that suits his own NRC. In addition, while Abe continues value-oriented diplomacy to contain China (Miller, J, B 2017), he came out with a positive position for the first time when he declared that Japan could join the AIIB with conditions (The Japan Times 2017b), which may be partially a result of the new US administration's decision not to enter the TPP because this forces Japan to build more active relations with China. As regard to security concerns, new American president Trump's claim Japan did not share military burden with the US very much during election campaign certainly compels Abe to review his roles. In fact, the Abe government's decision on security policy in December 2017 was to introduce air-to-surface missiles which can be used as an offensive purpose against threats such as North

Korea (Reuters 2017). This decision questions compatibility with conventional strictly defensive defenses policy. This may lead to new stage of the Japan-US alliance, which assumed only the US plays a role of attacking the enemy. Finally, Abe's diplomacy, also known as diplomacy of a bird's eye view of the globe, aims at strengthening ties with the UK, France and other democracies, apart from Asia-Pacific countries. How Abe builds relations with international organizations such as the UN and NATO is also important. Given that this thesis is more concerned with regional roles than international meanings of Abe's foreign policy, these countries were not examined. A more comprehensive work taking into account the rest of his office term and more international actors related to Japan would offer a better understanding of the Abe administration's foreign policy. So, examining Abe's foreign policy after 2016 as well as other important alter-parts' expectations toward Japan are future research issues.

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