MASTERARBEIT / MASTER'S THESIS

Titel der Masterarbeit / Title of the Master's Thesis

„Sino-Japanese Relations: The Potential for Militarized Conflict in the 21st Century"

verfasst von / submitted by

Stefan Kolar, BA BA

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (MA)

Wien, 2016 / Vienna 2016

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACSA	Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement
ADF	Australian Defence Force
ADIZ	Air Defense Identification Zone
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense
CBR	Chemical, Biological and Radiological weapons
CCG	China Coast Guard
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CMS	China Maritime Surveillance
CMSA	China Maritime Safety Administration
CNOOC	Chinese National Offshore Oil Corporation
CNSC	National Security Commission (China)
COW	Correlates of War Project
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
DDG	Guided Missile Destroyer
DDH	Helicopter Destroyer
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Energy Information Administration (United States)
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FLEC	Fishery Law Enforcement Command (China)
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ISA	Information Security Agreement
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
JASDF	Japan Air Self Defense Force
JCG	Japan Coast Guard
JDSC	Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation
JDZ	Joint Development Zone
JGSDF	Japan Ground Defense Force
JMSA	Japan Maritime Safety Agency
JMSDF	Japan Maritime Self Defense Force
JNSC	National Security Council (Japan)

LDP	Liberal Democratic Party (Japan)
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MEXT	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
MID	Militarized Interstate Dispute
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDPO	National Defense Program Outline
NDPG	National Defense Program Guideline
PKO	Peacekeeping Operation
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLAAF	People's Liberation Army Air Force
PLAGF	People's Liberation Army Ground Force
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy
PRC	People's Republic of China
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
ROC	Republic of China
ROK	Republic of Korea
RPD	Repeated Prisoner's Dilemma
R&D	Research and Development
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SLOC	Sea Lines of Communication
SOA	State Oceanic Administration (China)
TGT	Tōkyō-Guam-Taiwan Triangle
TSD	Trilateral Strategic Dialogue
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNECAFE	United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
USN	United States Navy
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

1. Introduction

China and Japan have shared a complicated and conflict-prone relationship throughout history, overshadowing their cultural connection as regional neighbors. The rocky relationship and various conflicts, be it the invasion attempts of the (Mongolian) Yuan dynasty, Toyotomi Hideyoshi's[1] invasions of the Ming dynasty's tributary state in Korea, or the - more modern - first Sino-Japanese war of the late 19th century, eventually culminated in the Pacific War, and although both countries officially reconciled in 1978, conflict is still looming in the East China Sea.

The 21st century brought many changes to the playing field of international politics and military strategic planning. With the end of the Cold War a decade earlier, most nations have acclimated to the new geopolitical environment, though global change always offers the opportunity for a reformation of the league of most influential powers. The new millennium has seen a rapid advance of China, not only in terms of economic achievements but also in regard to military modernization and power projection capabilities. All the while Japan is still recuperating from the aftermath of the 'lost decade' which followed the burst of the bubble economy of the 1980s. Furthermore, the 2007-2008 financial crisis has also hampered Japan's economic recovery. Diplomatically both countries have been at odds with each other, even though the relationship was 'normalized' earlier. Persisting issues like the visits of Japanese politicians to the Yasukuni Shrine[2] and controversial stances taken in certain Japanese history schoolbooks continuously lead to Chinese protests and a deterioration of the Sino-Japanese relationship. Even more pressing is the still unresolved question of ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, which have been under Japanese administration since the late 19th century but have been claimed by China since the 1970s. The sovereignty over the small island group is connected to another lingering issue of maritime delimitation in the resource-rich East China Sea, with both issues continuously erupting in episodes of heightened tension and crises, with clashes between law enforcement and protesters as well as the deployment of naval and aerial military forces.

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[1] This thesis follows the common way of writing East Asian names with the surname in front of the personal name.
[2] According to Shintō-tradition, the souls of all people who lost their lives serving the Empire of Japan between the Meiji Restauration and the end of World War II are enshrined at the Yasukuni Shrine in Tōkyō, including several A-class war criminals.

With China's rise as an economic and military power in the region, its approach to its numerous territorial disputes, not only with Japan but also in the South China Sea, has become more assertive and is perceived as more aggressive by Japan, thus prompting attempts to counter and deter China's advance, possibly resulting in a slow destabilization of the East Asian region.

Research Question

In light of the deteriorating relationship between China and Japan as well as the increased attention given to the clashes and intrusions around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and China's growing military power, this thesis is aimed at establishing a risk analysis of the Sino-Japanese relationship in the 21st century. The leading issue will be the potential change in the military-strategic position of both nations over the course of the new millennium. Thus this thesis is aiming at exploring whether there has been a palpable development towards conflict between China and Japan and to assess the current risk of escalation. Furthermore, it is important to determine which issues have had the biggest influence on the military-strategic development and positioning of both nations in order to identify the main threats for stability and to examine whether they are currently increasing or decreasing.

By answering these research questions this thesis will not only provide a better understanding of the development of the Sino-Japanese relationship with focus on the dimension of security and disputes, but also pinpoint possible areas of high risk, while putting them into relation to other high-tension issues between both states. Thus the results should add to a groundwork upon which work for conflict prevention and reduction of bilateral tensions could be based.

Methodology

In regard to methodology, this thesis will mainly rely on critical assessment of published research in peer-reviewed journals and monographs, in order to supply the factual and historic background needed for answering the research questions. Furthermore, governmental publications will be utilized in an effort to present official positions on varying issues and to provide additional data and information on governmental policy and strategy. For the quantitative dimension of this work, statistical data will mainly be retrieved from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) military expenditure index and from the

Correlates of War Project (COW) militarized interstate dispute (MID) dataset. Due to the fact that this thesis focuses on fairly recent developments, it is also necessary to partly rely on internet sources such as news agencies, to supply information about current events and incidents, as these are not yet part of published works.

Outline

The empirical analysis is composed of five major chapters corresponding to the Steps to War theory. Although those chapters are self-contained, together they allow a better understanding of the overall situation of Sino-Japanese military and territorial relations.

The first of these chapters focuses on territorial disputes between China and Japan. The economic and socio-historic relationship between both countries is discussed as a short introduction before describing the geographic setting and the historic background of the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and the different phases of crisis escalation. Thereafter, legal claims concerning the disputed islands and bigger parts of the East China Sea are contrasted and explained. Finally, the economic, social and strategic value of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is analyzed to illustrate both sides' motivations for the continued dispute.

The chapter on alliances establishes whether China or Japan have politically relevant military alliances. Partnership history and drivers for security agreements are examined for both nations' closest regional and strategic partners and their influences are assessed, making it possible not only to ascertain whether a politically relevant alliance is in place, but also to gain an idea of potential near-future developments of the conflict.

To classify the relationship between Japan and China as either sporadic-, proto- or enduring rivalry, the third chapter follows the three integral components of the definition of an enduring rivalry, spatial and temporal consistency and military competitiveness, wherein the latter will be assessed by analyzing all Militarized Interstate Disputes related to the islands.

The question of a potential arms race between China and Japan is addressed in the fourth chapter, encompassing politics, military expenditure and quality and quantity of military forces. The motives behind the current military modernizations are examined in regard to drivers, threat perception, changes in strategy, and by contrasting post-Cold War developments with changes in the 21st century, thus giving a better understanding of why transformations are happening and how they are affected by foreign and domestic actors.

Finally, the Chinese and the Japanese leaders, Xi Jinping and Abe Shinzō respectively, are studied in regard to hardliner or accommodationist tendencies. Therefore, both men's connection to the military, their foreign policy attitudes and their stance on and use of nationalism are taken into account, to provide an overview of their political characteristics corresponding to the identification markers of hardliners and accommodationists.

Research Design

The structure of the research design this thesis will follow is mainly modeled after Maness and Valeriano (2012). The research will be conducted by separately analyzing each step of the Steps to War theory. Subsequently the results of each step will be combined in an additive fashion to produce what Senese and Vasquez describe as a *Simple Risk Barometer for War* (2008: 272), although a fifth step for *Hardliner or Accommodationists in power* will be implemented, similar to the approach of Maness and Valeriano (2012), shown in Table 1 below.

Factors Promoting War	Risk Level
Five Steps to War	5
Four Steps to War	4
Three Steps to War	3
Two Steps to War	2
One Step to War	1
No Steps (No Territorial MIDs, no Power Politics)	0

Table 1. Simple Risk Barometer for War

Source: Senese and Vasquez 2008: 272

Senese and Vasquez (2008: 273) have further introduced a provisional *Precise Risk Barometer for War* based on statistical research done with COW data for the 1816-1945 period. Although not a finalized or fully tested design, it provides an example of the probability of war in relation to measurable steps. Since Senese and Vasquez worked without the Hardliner/Accommodationist component there are only four steps, but in this case Senese and Vasquez differentiated territorial MID occurrence between up to six MIDs or up to fifteen MIDs in order to take the varying quantity into account.

Factors Promoting War	Risk Level (illustrative Probabilities)
Territorial Dispute, Outside Alliance, fifteen MIDs, arms race	.90
Territorial Dispute, Outside Alliance, fifteen MIDs	.65
Territorial Dispute, Outside Alliance, six MIDs	.55
Territorial Dispute and Outside Alliance	.45
Territorial Dispute	.15
Policy Dispute	.09

Table 2. Precise Risk Barometer for War

Source: Senese and Vasquez 2008: 273

Table 2 shows the Precise Barometer, though it should be noted that, as the datasets used to establish it only took into account the pre-World War II era, the precise barometer might not be 100 percent applicable to today's geopolitical and geostrategic environment. The calculation therefore also excludes the factor of nuclear weapons for either actor or ally, thereby rendering the barometer too inaccurate as a primary means of measurement for the purpose of a China-Japan comparison. Thus this thesis will predominantly rely on the *Simple Risk Barometer*, while using the Precise Barometer only as a medium to illustrate the increasing probability of war onset with additional steps.

After finishing the empirical analysis of each step regarding China and Japan, the *Simple Risk Barometer* will serve as a reference point for answering the question of the progress of China's and Japan's development towards a potential escalation, while the information gathered and presented over the course of the analysis will provide the background and basis for the identification of influencing factors and issues in this development. Analysis of the development of individual steps will also allow to determine which areas harbor the biggest threats and whether these are currently static, growing or decreasing.

Literature Review

The development and onset of interstate conflicts and wars is, without question, a widely discussed and thoroughly researched topic, stretched over numerous theoretical schools. As this paper is based mainly on the theoretical framework laid out by Senese and Vasquez, this literature review will mostly focus on sources related to their work.

Research focusing on war onset risk analysis as laid out by Senese and Vasquez (2008: 272-273) is rare, which is possibly due to the relative novelty of this risk barometer. As further

discussed later on, only two papers utilizing a comparable framework have been published, Valeriano and Gibler (2006) and Maness and Valeriano (2012) with the latter utilizing Senese and Vasquez barometer for war to assess the risk of war onset in a small case study focusing on Russia and three of its neighbors.

Due to the structure of the Steps to War theory of Senese and Vasquez, several different, albeit connected, fields of research are included on a theoretical level.

In regard to territorial disputes this thesis mainly draws from research done by Huth (1996; 2000), with further research done by Vasquez (1995), Vasquez and Henehan (2001) and Senese and Vasquez (2004; 2005). Beyond that, prominent work was done by Gibler (2007), Hutchison and Gibler (2007), Hensel (2000), Hensel et al. (2008), Rasler and Thompson (2006). Mostly research is focused on the connection between territorial issues and rivalry, territorial issues and domestic politics and territorial disputes' development toward conflict escalation. In regard to the topic of the Sino-Japanese territorial dispute, Drifte (2008a; 2008b; 2013; 2014), Fravel (2007; 2010; 2015), Hagström (2005; 2012), Manicom (2008a; 2008b; 2014) provide extensive factual information, with Drifte, Kawashima (2013) and Tatsumi (2013) mainly focusing on the Japanese side of the dispute. Shaw (1999), Swaine (2013; 2014) and Pan (2007) approach the subject from the Chinese position, though most authors provide a fairly balanced assessment, nonetheless potential personal bias always mandates critical examination of all sources. Patalano (2008; 2013; 2014a; 2014b) focuses mainly on the topic of security and military issues associated with the Sino-Japanese territorial dispute.

The theory on alliances is based on works by Gibler and Sarkees (2004) and Senese and Vasquez (2004; 2008), while issue-related literature is mainly drawn from governmental sources, such as the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or research done by the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS).

Interstate rivalry as a theoretical topic is extensively researched by Geller (1993), Goertz and Diehl (1993) and Diehl and Goertz (2001) with focus on enduring rivalries, as well as Hensel (1998; 1999) and Thompson (2001). Closely connected to the research on rivalries is the topic of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) as they are integral to the definition of rivalry types. Most prominently MIDs were analyzed by Gochman and Maoz (1984) and Jones, Bremer and Singer (1996). Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane (2015) do furthermore provide the most current MID dataset available through the COW project, while Wiegand (2007; 2009; 2011) compiled factual data focused on the Sino-Japanese rivalry.

After the inception of arms race study, follow-up research concentrated on determining whether arms races lead to stability or to escalation, a discussion integral to the arms race debate, which developed out of Wallace's (1979) research. Sample (1997), Diehl (1983), Diehl and Crescenzi (1998), all prominently feature in this discussion. More recent research examines issues such as the connection between arms races and arms control (Kydd 2000), the initial onset of arms races (Rider 2009), arms races and rivalry (Gibler, Rider and Hutchison 2005), the relationship between arms races and military build-ups (Sample 2002), and the position of arms races in the Steps to War theory (Colaresi and Thompson 2005; Valeriano and Marin 2010). With exception of the, predating, arms race precursor model of Wallace and Meconis (1995) there is no arms race literature focusing on Sino-Japanese relations in the 21st century. Nonetheless there is ample literature on the Chinese military build-up since the end of the Cold War and Japan's more recent military modernization. For Japan, official data from annual defense whitepapers are highly valuable sources, as well as Patalano (2008; 2014a), Patalano and Manicom (2014), Hughes (2004; 2009a; 2009b), who focus mainly on naval modernization, while with regard to China, Cordesman (2014), Cordesman, Hess, and Yarosh (2013), Godwin (2010), Saunders et al. (2011) provide valuable insights. Furthermore, statistical data from SIPRI permits an effective comparison of military expenditure, necessary for analyzing arms races.

Senese and Vasquez (2008), Vasquez (2009), Valeriano and Marin (2010) and Maness and Valeriano (2012) all include accommodationists and hardliners into their work, as the topic is closely associated and later-on integrated to the Steps to War theory. Apart from that, Hermann (1980; 1999) has provided frameworks for the assessment of foreign policy and leadership styles and classification of leadership types. In regard to the application of hardliner and accommodationist classifications to the current leadership of China and Japan, extensive literature is close to non-existent due to the fact that both leaders have only been in power for a short period of time.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 The Steps to War Theory

The Steps to War by John A. Vasquez (2009[3]), later on in cooperation with Paul D. Senese (Senese and Vasquez 2005; 2008), is a theory that seeks to explain the development and outbreak of international wars through the empirical analysis of historical occurrences of interstate wars. In the broadest sense, the Steps to War theory explains the onset of international conflicts as a pattern of steps that creates an additive dynamic which increases the likelihood of the outbreak of war. Vasquez and Senese's research is closely linked to the Correlates of War Project, as are many others in the field of conflict research. Quantitative research focuses heavily on the analysis of various datasets provided by the COW Project in order to test for similarities and trends in conflict development and are therefore instrumental for the Steps to War theory's findings.

In his earlier publication Vasquez attempted to find an explanation for the onset of wars, especially with regard to the outbreak of world wars. As main proponents of conflict escalation he presented territorial contiguity and power politics (Vasquez 2009), which he also applied in research on the development and the onset of World War II in Europe. He delineated a path of world war development, starting with territorial disputes that are met with power politics by the involved states, including military build-ups, alliance formation and continued or repeated crises. These crises would at one point trigger the outbreak of war due to continued arms races, hardliners in power or physical threat by one side (Vasquez 1996: 163; Vasquez 2009: chapter 7).

Together with Senese, Vasquez went on to further develop and test the steps to war model as an explanation for war. In a 2005 paper they put forth a selection of propositions akin to Vasquez path to world war, in order to test them with COW datasets in a time frame from 1816 to 1992:

> PROPOSITION 1. Dyadic territorial disputes have a higher probability of escalating to war than general foreign policy disputes or disputes over the nature of one side's regime.
>
> PROPOSITION 2. Dyadic territorial disputes where both sides have outside politically relevant alliances have a higher probability of escalating to war than dyadic territorial disputes where neither side has alliances.

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[3] This thesis will use the updated version of Vasquez *The War Puzzle* (1993) that was published under the name *The War Puzzle Revisited* (2009), which will be henceforth cited from.

PROPOSITION 3a. Dyadic territorial disputes where both sides have outside politically relevant alliances and have had a series of recurring disputes have a greater probability of escalating to war than dyadic territorial disputes where both sides have such alliances but have not had a history of militarized disputes.

PROPOSITION 3b. The effect of prior disputes is curvilinear. Initially, more prior conflicts steadily increase the probability of war for current disputes, but eventually this relationship reverses as a very high number of prior conflicts will actually engender a ritualization of relations whereby pairs stop their current disputes short of war.

PROPOSITION 4. Dyadic territorial disputes, where both sides have outside politically relevant alliances, have had repeated militarized disputes and have an ongoing arms race, have a higher probability of going to war than those that have these three conditions but do not have an ongoing arms race. (Senese and Vasquez 2005: 610)

The results of testing were analyzed and also further separated into two sub-periods, 1816-1945 and 1946-1992, due to the distinctive differences in the interstate dynamics and the political landscape of the international system as well as the introduction of nuclear weaponry. Overall analysis did confirm Propositions 1, 3 and 4, showing that especially the existence of territorial disputes and arms races strongly increases the likelihood of war. Analysis of the first sub-period (1816-1945) further showed support for all propositions, including Proposition 2, which the full period findings seemed to falsify (Senese and Vasquez 2005: 620-623). The second sub-period (1946-1992) on the other hand showed two differences to the earlier time frame. The authors note that Proposition 2, concerning both actors having relevant outside alliances, seemed to be reversed, which is to say that these alliances helped in facilitating peace rather than conflict outbreaks (Senese and Vasquez 2005: 626). Furthermore, Senese and Vasquez found arms races to be "[…] statistically insignificant in the Cold War 1946-92 period" (2005: 627) which was most likely caused by the small number of conflicts including arms races during that time. Though these two propositions were falsified, the authors note that this was in accordance with the historic developments, as the Cold War did not result in an interstate war between NATO and member states of the Warsaw Pact. In regard to arms races, the authors further conclude that their sudden insignificance could be attributed to increased efforts to manage arms races between nuclear-powers in order to avert nuclear war. Based on this assumption they note the possibility that arms races can again develop into a major factor in non-nuclear disputes of the post-Cold War period. The same reasoning is applied to the question of the influence of alliance structures and war, since alliances were shown to be a strong proponent of conflict escalation during earlier periods. With the disappearance of the bipolar alliance structure of the Cold War era, a reemergence of older trends is regarded as a possibility (Senese and Vasquez 2005: 627, 629).

In general, relatively little importance is given to the order in which the steps are taken, as it is assumed that the threat perception is heightened by the accumulation of steps, not by a particular order. Nonetheless, in most cases the existence or emergence of a territorial dispute is considered to be the first step, as it usually provides an impetus for the other steps to build upon (Senese and Vasquez 2005: 608). Somewhat related, there have also been efforts to analyze the relationship of different steps between each other and research on which combinations might be the most prone to a war outbreak. Brandon Valeriano and Victor Marin (2010) followed the Steps to War theory, though they concentrated on a smaller sample size for their analysis. In order to establish a potential correlation between the steps, they tested six hypotheses, mostly similar to the propositions of the Steps to War.

> H1: Pairs of states that experience war are likely to have formed politically relevant alliances prior to a war.
>
> H2: Pairs of states that experience war are likely to have participated in mutual military buildups prior to a war.
>
> H3: Pairs of states that experience war are likely to have had territorial disputes prior to a war.
>
> H4: Pairs of states that experience war are likely to have had more than three militarized interstate disputes in a period of twenty years prior to a war.
>
> H5: Pairs of states that experience war are likely to have hardliners in power before the war. […]
>
> H6: Pairs of states that form politically relevant alliances against each other, participate in mutual military buildups, have territorial disputes, experience rivalry, and have hardliners in power likely become involved in war. (Valeriano and Marin 2010: 6)

During testing it was concluded that Hypothesis 2 had to be dropped due to the fact that only a small number of arms races were included in the analyzed datasets, and "[…] each instance of an arms race in the context of a MID leads to strong correlations with the outcome of war" (Valeriano and Marin 2010: 17). Apart from that, rivalry was proven to be a major factor in war onsets. Furthermore the testing revealed that hardliners in power do also play a very relevant role in escalating looming conflicts. Initiator states, which are those who first "[…] express […] revisionist demand[s] during a dispute […]" (Valeriano and Marin 2010: 11), with hardliners in power, had 94.9 percent of conflicts result in war. Hardliners on the non-initiator side had a 77.2 percent likelihood of escalation. Overall the analysis concluded that hardliners in power on both sides occurred in 72.1 percent of all cases in the study, therefore assuming that hardliners in power is usually a prerequisite condition for interstate war (Valeriano and Marin 2010: 12, 17). Thirdly, alliances were found to be involved in, at least at one side of both actors, 68.4 percent of all analyzed interstate conflicts. Territorial disputes were only found to be significant in 54 percent of the wars, and were therefore not considered one of the necessary

conditions. Lastly, the authors rewrote Hypothesis 6 after dropping arms races as a factor, arriving at the conclusion that all previous results continued to support this combined hypothesis (Valeriano and Marin 2010: 17).

The Steps to War and Realism

Though initially based on realist insights on war, the Steps to War explanation deviates from the realist approach and view in several crucial points, which can be summarized as three distinctive aspects.

Firstly, and maybe the initially most obvious difference between realism and the Steps to War explanation is their respective approach to security dilemmas. While realist theory prescribes the establishment of alliances and military build-ups as an instrument to ensure peace through power and deterrence, the Steps to War explanation maintains that the effect of such power politics is contrary to realist expectations. The formation of alliances by one state leads to counter-alliances by its rival, similarly do military build-ups develop into arms races. While Senese and Vasquez note that some defensive realists, especially the spiral model of Jervis, share a somewhat similar approach towards the security dilemma, other realist voices criticize the authors' assumption that realism even seeks to maintain peace in case of a security dilemma. Much rather, it is argued, the focus is on staying on top of a potential crisis situation, maintaining the ability to positively influence the outcome of a conflict escalation in one's own interest – therefore the outbreak of war is not an argument against the effectivity of realist power politics.

Furthermore, the Steps to War explanation differs from classic- and neorealism in its conception of the underlying factors that influence and bring on the steps to war. In regard to classical realism, the main difference lies in the assumption that war is a result of material needs and conditions, while Senese and Vasquez regard war as an institution learned and gradually built up during history. Also, they attribute the institutionalization of war to realist thinking among diplomats and politicians, with which both authors do not necessarily disagree but rather just note the high frequency of the failure of the realist approach to maintain peace. Neorealism sees the international system as anarchic, which causes power politics behavior and therefore subsequently the steps to war. Senese and Vasquez maintain that the international system does not always need to be anarchic but that anarchy is a variable in a system that has different levels of order. Moreover they see several definitions and descriptions of anarchy used in neorealism

as too rare or not fully accurate to be utilized in the Steps to War explanation (Senese and Vasquez 2005: 609; 2008: 31-34).

Lastly, the Steps to War explanation and realism diverge in their approach to the topic and the importance of territory and its connection to war. While Senese and Vasquez accept that territory also plays an important part in realism, as they note that Morgenthau defined territorial integrity as a crucial component of national interest over which it might be vital for a state to go to war. Nonetheless both authors maintain that most realists do not share the view expressed by the *Territorial Explanation of War*[4] (Senese and Vasquez 2005: 35). In short, the Territorial Explanation asserts that wars, which are in most cases wars against neighboring nations, are strongly influenced by the approach that involved states take towards territorial disputes. Power politics, including alliances and military build-ups most frequently result in armed conflict, while a resolved or ignored territorial conflict often turns out to be a guarantor for the avoidance of conflict escalation. Further, the Territorial Explanation argues that territorial wars are fought not for power or just because the opportunity for an outbreak of war might exist. Much rather, these conflicts are explained as results of territorial disputes between states that cannot be resolved by diplomatic means (Vasquez 1995: 281; 2009: 160-161, 165-166). To support this theory, several propositions concerning the frequency of wars caused by territorial disputes were tested and analyzed, with findings further supporting the Territorial Explanation (Vasquez and Henehan 2001: 123-124, 136), which continues to play an important part in the Steps to War explanation. While the quintessential factor of realism is power, which includes the attaining and holding of territories, in the Steps to War, territory gains its importance through a natural proclivity humans feel towards the defense of "their" territory, which therefore makes it an important influential factor on decision makers (Senese and Vasquez 2008: 35).

The Steps to War and Case Studies

While the Steps to War Theory is usually used with a large number of wars in order to study the onset of these conflicts, the theory has also been employed as a tool to analyze the path to war of selected case studies focusing on a vastly smaller number of interstate wars. Vasquez (1996) used the Steps to War to research and explain the onset of World War II, but in general such case studies are rarely done. Brandon Valeriano and Douglas M. Gibler (2006) tackle this

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[4] For a more in-depth explanation see Vasquez 2009: chapter 3.

niche of analysis by focusing on three interstate wars in Africa "[…] of equal status in the Correlates of War dataset […]" (2006: 5) and then direct the course of their research to follow the main propositions laid out by the Steps to War theory. The authors arrive at the conclusion that all three analyzed conflicts not only followed the Steps to War closely, but also shared a common causal mechanism – insecurity, which, the authors concluded, was generated by continued use of power politics tactics, which in turn increased the hostilities until the conflict escalated (Valeriano and Gibler 2006: 28). A somewhat similar approach was used again by Valeriano together with Ryan Maness to establish "[…] a risk barometer for war by combining […] empirical findings with qualitative foreign policy analysis" (2012: 125). Other than the previous case study, the article does not analyze a series of already concluded wars, but applies the Steps to War explanation to three cases of international relations between Russia and its former vassal states of Estonia, Ukraine and Georgia, the latter being the only one having been involved in military altercations with Russia by the time of the publication of the paper. In order to establish a risk barometer for war and to ascertain the likelihood of escalation, the authors follow the various steps of Senese and Vasquez' model, treating it as an additive scale with each step being valued as one. The barometer contains the factors of (1) territorial disputes, (2) alliances, (3) arms races, (4) rivalry and (5) hardliners in power (Maness and Valeriano 2012: 127-128). The analysis concludes that of the three cases, only the Russo-Estonian dyad has shown promising trends towards peace, mainly due to the resolving of territorial disputes and a minimal usage of power politics. For the Russo-Georgian dyad the research implied an unstable relationship with the remark that due to the high number of military involved in the region, a resurgence of violence seems to be the only possibility to solve the question of disputed territory. Furthermore the analysis stated a growing probability of war between the Russo-Ukrainian dyad attributed to the problematic situation at the Crimean peninsula and Ukrainian tendencies towards Europe (Maness and Valeriano 2012: 147-148), which was to some extent proven to be correct by the aftermath of the 2014 Ukrainian revolution, Russian annexation of the Crimea and Russian involvement in the subsequent Ukrainian civil war.

2.1.1 Territorial Dispute

As stated before, issues related to territories and territorial disputes are viewed as one of the most potent catalysts for interstate crises. Likewise, territorial disputes are the most easily visible of the steps to war, shy of armed conflict. Paul K. Huth has provided a definition of

territorial disputes (1996; 2000) that serves as a functional framework to identify these disputes in analyses utilizing the Steps to War theory (Maness and Valeriano 2012: 132).

Generally, territorial disputes occur as a result of the following two situations:

- [T]wo governments disagree over where their homeland or colonial borders should be fixed.
- [O]ne country contests the right of another to exercise any sovereign rights over some or all of its homeland or colonial territory (Huth 2000: 86)

With issues concerning the delimitation of borders being the primary reason for dispute, Huth further mentions the relevance of the value of disputed territory to the respective governments, mostly "[…] factors such as natural resource endowment, the religious and ethnic composition of its population, or its military-strategic location" (2000: 86), which are the key indicators for a nation's focus and motivation to engage in a territorial dispute.

The above mentioned general reasons for the onset of a territorial dispute can be further subdivided in five categories:

- At least one country does not accept the current borders, while the other country wants to uphold the border based on previous treaties and legal documents.

- The lack of historic documents and treaties delimiting a clear boundary line results in both countries voicing opposing claims on territory and on where borders should be drawn. Usually this situation is attributed to general, careless or imprecise delimitation in older agreements.

- One nation's territory is occupied by another country, which refuses to withdraw its troops and to return control over the occupied space.

- One country does not recognize another nation's sovereignty and ownership of a certain region of this country's territory. This often leads to the not-recognizing country's support for separatist groups in the disputed region, rather than officially claiming the area for itself.

- One country does not accept the independence of another nation, seeking to annex parts or the entirety of the country in question (Huth 1996: 19-22).

Huth sets the onset of a territorial dispute at the first official governmental statement that calls another nation's sovereign control over a certain territory into question, while the other country has to respond to this by rebuffing the claims made by the initiator. Furthermore, Huth lists three possible instances that mark the end of a territorial dispute:

1. The occupation and assumption of control over disputed territory by the challenger is formally recognized by the target in a treaty, an international agreement, or in an official statement by the political leadership of the target.

2. The signing of a bilateral agreement with a target or an official statement by the challenger in which its territorial claims are either renounced or are satisfied with a compromise settlement.

3. The Challenger agrees to abide by a ruling issued by the ICJ [International Court of Justice] or an international arbitration panel (Huth 1996: 23).

Lastly, Huth remarks that it is important to distinguish between disputes with territorial and non-territorial issues, even though in some cases there might seem to exist a territorial component. Based upon other research, he classified disputes with non-territorial issues into four categories:

1. Attempts by one country to destabilize politically another regime and remove its existing leadership from power. […]

2. Economic conflicts relating to such issues as barriers to trade and the protection of home markets, the nationalization of foreign property and adequate levels of compensation, and compliance with bilateral and multilateral economic agreements.

3. Problems relation to cross-border movements of populations that governments find difficult to control or manage. […]

4. […] [E]fforts by one government to protect the rights of its citizens abroad and ensure their security when foreign governments are suspected of pursuing discriminatory policies or are unable to ensure basic law and order (Huth 2000: 87).

2.1.2 Alliance

In research associated with the Steps to War theory, information concerning alliances is usually taken from the datasets of the COW databank. Case studies, as those of Maness and Valeriano (2012) or Valeriano and Gibler (2006) mentioned earlier, also follow the definitions of the COW project for their assessments. At first glance it is rather obvious that determining the existence of an alliance for a certain dyad is an easier task as establishing whether or not an arms race is taking place, simply because in general, alliances are clearly defined, official treaties. Nevertheless not every treaty or alliance formed by a nation can be valued equally in regard to the Steps to War theory. An initial definition, as used in the COW datasets, contains three main criteria:

- "[A]t least two members of the alliance must be qualified system members" (Gibler and Sarkees 2004: 212), meaning states of sufficient size, being able to exercise their sovereign rights, and being recognized by the international community (Gibler and Sarkees 2004: 214).

- "[T]he alliance must be a defense pact, neutrality or non-aggression pact, or an entente" (Gibler and Sarkees 2004: 212). This various alliance types designate different levels of support, with defense pacts promising military aid in case of an ally being attacked as the highest, followed by neutrality pacts which are considered to be more specific as mere non-aggression pacts. Lastly ententes are understandings that can range from consultation to cooperation in varying cases, including armed conflict. Still, "[b]road, sweeping statements that pledge eternal friendship or observations of similar principles do not qualify as ententes […]" (Gibler and Sarkees 2004: 215).

- "[T]he effective dates of alliances have to be identified. Implicit within this definition is the formality of the agreement; a formal alliance is a written agreement that identifies at least the members and the obligations of each alliance member" (Gibler and Sarkees 2004: 212).

Along with these general criteria, Senese and Vasquez (2004; 2008) introduce a new concept of *politically relevant alliances*. These politically relevant alliances extend beyond the initial COW definition, as they seek to highlight only those alliances that are able to influence a given dispute between both initial participants. For this analysis nations are regarded as either major or minor states in accordance with their capabilities of power projection into areas beyond their regional sphere of influence. According to Gochman and Maoz, major powers are the following:

> United Kingdom (1816-present), France (1816-1940, 1945-present), Prussia/Germany (1816-1918, 1925-1945), Austria-Hungary (1816-1918), Russia/Soviet Union (1816-1917, 1922-present), Italy (1860-1943), Japan (1895-1945), United States (1899-present), and China (1950-present) (1984: 595).

Japan and West Germany were excluded at the time, due to their constitutional restrictions on power projection. In a later paper, Krause and Singer (2001: 15) reintroduce Germany and Japan as major powers starting with the year 1990.

While the general definition of the COW databank included all admissible alliances indiscriminately, Senese and Vasquez advocate a selection that only allows for those alliances that could actually influence the development towards war between a dyad connected to an issue or dispute (2008: 66-67). Valeriano and Marin give a fitting example, as "an alliance between the United States and Japan would only be relevant for disputes in the Asian region. Japan's disputes with other states in different regions would not be counted as occurring during the operation of an alliance" (2010: 7). Alliances with major states are usually politically relevant, while minor state allies are only relevant when they are situated in the region of the

disputed issue, or, as a notable exception, if they are in a different region but connected to either side of the initial conflict parties via land, giving these minor allies the opportunity to reach either party of the dispute. More specifically, politically relevant alliances must meet at least one of the following conditions:

1. If the state in question is a minor state, then any alliance it has with a major state is relevant.

2. If the state in question is a minor state, then an alliance it has with another minor state is relevant, if that minor state is in the same region as the "target" in the dyad or contiguous by land to either side in the dyad in question. This has the effect of dropping those minor states as politically relevant allies if they are nor contiguous or in the region of the target of the dyad, which might happen in a larger multilateral alliance.

3. If the state in question is a major state, then any alliance it has with a major state is relevant.

4. If the state in question is a major state, then any alliance it has with a minor state is relevant only if that minor state is contiguous by land to one party in the dyad or in the same region as the target in the dyad. (Senese and Vasquez 2008: 67-68)

2.1.3 Rivalry

As a framework and for the purpose of the analysis of the relationship between Japan and China, this thesis will employ the concept of *Enduring Rivalry* as defined by Paul F. Diehl and Gary Goertz (2001), as it is also utilized by Senese and Vasquez (2008) to define rivalry in the Steps to War theory. In earlier works they stated the concern that scholars of international conflict had tended to focus on conflicts as unrelated and independent events rather than look at recurring dyadic conflicts as interrelated events. Existing definitions for enduring rivalries, mainly differing in varying parameters such as timespan or number of included conflicts, were analyzed to determine their usability for certain forms of research and to operationalize the concept (Goertz and Diehl 1993: 148, 164-167).

Generally, the enduring rivalry concept is defined by three main criteria, spatial consistency, time or duration and militarized competitiveness or conflict – all of them needing to be sufficiently fulfilled to speak of an enduring rivalry (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 19).

2.1.3.1 Spatial Consistency

Enduring rivalries are expected to exist between spatial consistent dyadic actors, which are generally assumed to be states. Though in some cases non-state actors have participated in international conflict on a state-like level, usually militarized non-state actors are found in internal conflicts and civil wars. Following the assumption that wars and militarized conflicts

are usually limited to two actors, Diehl and Goertz generally define rivalries as dyadic, although they state that, due to alliance systems the number of rivalry-participants might increase (as seen in the Cold War), or rivalries within an alliance might overlap with alliance level rivalries (as USA-USSR and NATO and the Warsaw Pact). Such multilateral and linked dyadic rivalries are often seen in connection to what is described as "security complex", constructs of states with closely connected concerns over defense and national security, which can therefore not easily be separated into singular actors. These complexes are normally connected to wider issues, though in many cases rivalries are the centerpiece of these systems (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 19-20). While these different combinations of actors exist, Diehl and Goertz maintain that most multilateral wars usually start with dyadic rivalries, therefore even the analysis of larger systems and complexes is best served "[b]y looking at rivalries as dyadic phenomena, […] to assess the extent of the inter-relationship present" (2001: 20).

2.1.3.2 Time or Duration

The second important parameter in an enduring rivalry is the question of endurance, or more broadly, the temporal component. As Diehl and Goertz note, all rivalries are varying in terms of their duration. While many are only of short or medium length, only long lasting rivalries can be considered enduring. Over time, the scholarly definition of a *long lasting* rivalry has changed, moving from a ten to 15 year range to a 20-25 year average. Although Diehl and Goertz propose not to make the duration of an enduring rivalry a required conceptual definition, they stress the fact that the military competition between the potential rivals has to span a time frame long enough to allow for long-term strategy adjustments in both states. This is meant to ensure that political and strategic decisions are actually connected to the military competition and not only momentary changes (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 21). For analytical purposes they decided to separate rivalries, though regarded as continuous, into three sub-concepts to produce control groups which enduring rivalries can be compared to, to foster an understanding of why enduring rivalries might continue or end at some point. In regard to their temporal consistency these are:

> (1) sporadic or isolated rivalries between a pair of states, (2) proto-rivalries, which consist of repeated conflict between the same states, but not to the extent that an enduring rivalry can be said to exist, and (3) enduring rivalries, which are severe and repeated conflicts between the same states over an extended period of time (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 22).

Evidently sporadic or isolated rivalries are those only lasting for a short period before being resolved, with chances of war or a resurgence of the conflict fading fast after the resolution.

Proto-rivalries are described as potential enduring rivalries that are stopped in their development, longer lasting than isolated rivalries, but ebbing away before becoming an enduring phenomenon (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 22).

<u>2.1.3.3 Military Competitiveness</u>

Diehl and Goertz note that the subtopic of military competitiveness has caused the biggest controversies and discussion in the ranks of the international relation scholars, especially as the given framework of rivalry focuses not on the general relations of a dyad but more exclusively, only on militarized and conflictual relations, by which the states conduct their foreign policy (2001: 22).

As an example, they use the idea of "issue" as a source of rivalry. This theory does not regard military competition and threat as the centerpiece of a dyadic rivalry, but rather the issues for which the states are competing. If the issues remain the same over a longer time period, it is to assume that all rivalry-intern competition has the same connection. This approach enables scholars to ensure that all incidents in a rivalry belong to the same relationship. Furthermore, the appearance and resolution of the issues is a clear indicator for the start and end of rivalries.

Diehl and Goertz argue that competition over issues might not persist in a rivalry, even though the rivalry continues, while the issues shift completely. Therefore they decided to utilize the *expectation of continued militarized and conflictual relationship* concept, which does in some parts overlap with the idea of issues. Since different issues can produce the same rivalry effect, Diehl and Goertz selected the use of military force in a competition over an issue as their indicator. This is based on the assumption that neither competition alone nor continuously steady issues are sufficient to warrant talk of rivalry, as there can also be friendly or at least non-war threatening competition, similar to free market competition between states (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 23-24). In conclusion, they find the following:

> [A] rivalry connotes (and for us denotes) "militarization"- that the threat of, or actual use of, military force to resolve competing claims is an ever-present possibility. […] [But it] is more than merely saying that one state is a potential threat to another […], rivalry means that the threat is immediate, serious, and may involve military force. Thus, competition in a rivalry […] has a hostility dimension involving the significant likelihood of the use of military force (including […] full-scale war) (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 24).

Furthermore, as they regard rivalries as militarized competition they see "[o]ne key dimension of a rivalry [as] how severe it is, with severity [being] defined in terms of level of military force" (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 24).

2.1.3.4 Militarized Interstate Disputes

Militarized Interstate Dispute is a term used to describe a pre-stage of full-scale war. Charles S. Gochman and Zeev Maoz (1984) established a definition of MIDs based on data sets from the Correlates of War Project, which is also utilized in Senese and Vasquez works, as well as in numerous other publications in the fields of rivalry and arms race studies.

In the broadest sense, MIDs are defined as "[…] a set of interactions between or among states involving threats to use military force, displays of military force, or actual uses of military force. […] [T]hese acts must be explicit, overt, nonaccidental, and government sanctioned" (Gochman and Maoz 1984: 587). As the name implies, MIDs can only occur between actors on state level. The authors acknowledge that competing states do often utilize means of interaction different to military actions, but due to the strong correlation of threats of military force and conflict escalation, MIDs only focus on explicit military force – actions aimed on a specific target or clearly identifiable threats, exceeding blanket warnings and protests, acknowledged by governmental or state authorities (Gochman and Maoz 1984: 587).

From this first definition, the authors use a list of three main categories (Threat of Force, Display of Force, and Use of Force) containing subsets of military act of aggression associated with the categories:

Threat of Force

- *threat to use force*: threat by one state to use its regular armed forces to fire upon the armed forces or territory of another state

- *threat to blockade*: threat by one state to use ships or troops to seal off the territory of another state so as to prevent either entry or exit

- *threat to occupy territory*: threat by one state to use military force to occupy the whole or part of another state's territory

- *threat to declare war*: threat by one state to issue an official declaration of war against another state

Display of Force

- *alert*: a reported increase in the military readiness of a state's regular armed forces directed at another state

- *mobilization*: the activation by a state of previously inactive armed forces

- *show of force*: a public demonstration by a state of its military capabilities, not involving combat operations, directed at another state

Use of Force

- *blockade*: use of ships or troops by one state to seal off the territory of another state so as to prevent entry or exit

- *occupation of territory*: use of military force by one state to occupy the whole or part of another state's territory for a period of at least 24 hours

- *other use of military force*: use of regular armed forces of a state to fire upon the armed forces, population, or territory of another state or to enter the territory of another state for a period of less than 24 hours

- *seizure*: the seizure by one state of material or personnel from another state for a period of at least 24 hours

- *clash*: military hostilities between the regular armed forces of two or more states that last for less than 24 hours and in which the initiator of the hostilities cannot be identified clearly.

- *declaration of war*: an official statement by one state that it is in a state of war with another state

- *war*: sustained military hostilities between the regular armed forces of two or more states, resulting in 1000 or more battle fatalities; a minimum of 100 battle fatalities or 1000 troops in active combat is required before a state is considered to be a participant in a war (Gochman and Maoz 1984: 588-589)

In a later publication regarding a new MID data set of the COW project, Jones, Bremer and Singer (1996) use a similar categorization of threat-, display- and use of force definitions, though some points were further subdivided and subcategory for nuclear issues was added. These were, in the Threat of Force category, the "Threat to use nuclear weapons[:] threat by one state to use all or part of its nuclear arsenal against the territory or forces of another state" (Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996: 171), and in the Display of Force category the act of *show of force* was separated into several occurrences, while additional subsections were added:

- *Show of troops*[:] public demonstration by a state of its land based military forces, not involving combat operations (e.g., maneuvers).

- *Show of ships*[:] public demonstration by a state of its naval military forces, including a purposeful display of naval forces outside the territorial waters of a targeted state.

- *Show of planes*[:] public demonstration by a state of its airborne capabilities (e.g., repeated air space violations).

- *Fortify border*[:] explicit attempt to publicly demonstrate control over a border area through the construction or reinforcement of military outposts to defend or claim territory.

- *Nuclear alert*[:] increase in military readiness of a state's nuclear forces.

- *Border violation*[:] crossing of a recognized land, sea or air boundary for a period of less than twenty-four hours by official forces of one state, without any force being used on the territory (or population) of the targeted state or any significant public demonstration of military force capability. (Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996: 172)

In the last category, Use of Force, the newer definitions diverge in some parts stronger from those used by Gochman and Maoz (1984). While the acts *other use of military force*, and *war* are omitted, the subcategories of "*Raid*[:] use of regular armed forces of a state to fire upon the armed forces, population, or territory of another state. Within this incident type, the initiator can be clearly identified and its action is not sanctioned by the target" (Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996: 173), which is mostly comparable to *other use of military force* sans the temporal restriction, and "*Use of CBR* [Chemical, Biological and Radiological] *Weapons*[:] use of

chemical, biological or nuclear weapons from the arsenal of one state employed against the territory or forces of another resulting in less than 1,000 total battle deaths per dispute" (Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996: 173) were added. While all of these acts categorized above can be regarded as initiators of an MID, the severity of their nature does obviously increase from *threats* up to the *use of force*, which borders closely to, or overlaps with the comparatively rare onset of interstate wars (Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996: 171). Analysis has shown that, while the proportion of MIDs involving *use of force*, or interstate war has steadily decreased during the period from 1816 to the end of World War I, the dynamic has reversed in the time frame from 1919 to 1976, when *use of force* and escalation increased again. This development was explained by the de- and increase of the number of (smaller) states in the international systems. A high number of minor-minor power conflicts (especially after World War II) raised the number of *use of force* MIDs, as minor powers often lack the means to further their international interests in other ways. Major powers, especially in conflict with other major powers, rarely reach the *use of force* category, though they do in many cases exceed the *threat of force* denomination and tend to utilize military display tactics (Gochman and Maoz 1984: 601-602).

2.1.3.5 Enduring Rivalries Definition

To define enduring rivalries, Diehl and Goertz examined a list of over 1000 historical rivalries in a period from 1816 to 1992, focusing on the number of disputes and on the duration of the rivalry. The results allowed them to specify the limits of the aforementioned three subgroups of rivalries, isolated, proto and enduring. As they point out, more than 75 percent of all examined rivalries included only one or two militarized disputes and lasted only a short duration of time, mostly only up to three years. Thus this majority of rivalries is designated isolated and sporadic rivalries. Furthermore both authors noted a distinct decrease of rivalries along the three dispute mark, forming the rear echelon of proto-rivalries. According to the empirical data collected, in the remaining 300 rivalries the duration suddenly increases to a mean of 18 years as soon as the rivalry contains six militarized conflicts. The next rise follows at the eight-dispute mark, with also a visible decrease in overall number of rivalries starting from a six-dispute minimum. Lastly, they found that the mean number of militarized disputes grows exponentially around the 22-year mark. (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 42-44). In conclusion, Diehl and Goertz arrived at a definition of "enduring rivalries [as] any of those rivalries that involve six disputes or more *and* last for at least 20 years" (2001: 44), which also reflects most other enduring rivalry definitions analyzed in their previous research (Goertz and Diehl 1993). Subsequently they

further proceed to define all proto-rivalries as those neither falling into the isolated nor into the enduring category (Diehl and Goertz 2001: 45).

2.1.4 Arms Race

The study of arms races has been occupying many scholars in the fields of international relations, conflict or peace studies for a long time. Mostly Lewis F. Richardson's research from 1960 is seen as the basis of the modern study of arms races. Over time, scholars have been divided on several issues regarding arms build-ups, especially in regard to the effectiveness of arms races as a conflict deterrent, or vice versa in regard to the instability and increased likelihood of escalation during an arms race. Richardson's work regards arms races as unstable build-ups that will eventually result in armed conflict and war. This seems to be mainly based on the assumption that arms races cannot continue forever and after surpassing a certain breaking-point the military build-up will culminate in war. In opposition to Richardson's position, other researchers regard arms races and war as separate occurrences that are not directly affiliated. To support this approach, scholars cite several instances in which arms races did not lead to the outbreak of interstate war (Lambelet 1975: 123). Furthermore, Richardson's model, and most others based on it, is criticized for the assumption that all arms races have to be dyadic and linear, with some scholars following Richardson's model even stating that multi-state arms races are non-existent, though this is refuted by others with historical examples (Wallace and Wilson 1978: 175).

Over the duration of the Cold War, three main theories explaining arms races emerged, the repeated prisoner's dilemma (RPD), the spiral model, and lastly, the deterrence model. According to the RPD model, dyads will either engage in arms races or in arms control, depending on whether they choose to mutually arm or disarm, while unilateral actions harbor great risk and uncertainty for the actor. The spiral model describes arms races as result of fear which further fuels arming, locking the whole dynamic into a circle that could lead to escalation into war (Kydd 2000: 228). Thirdly the deterrence model "views arms races as symptoms of international conflict based on political differences or the clash of competing interests. Aggressive states wish to overturn the status quo and must be deterred from doing so by vigorous arms-racing behavior on the part of status quo state" (Kydd 2000: 229). While the RPD and the spiral model can serve as a groundwork for arms control and mutual disarmament, the deterrence model is closely affiliated with hawkish politics, especially throughout the Cold War (Kydd 2000: 228-229).

<u>2.1.4.1 Arms Race and Mutual Military Build-up</u>

Michael D. Wallace was one of the first scholars to focus on an empirical examination of arms races (Gibler, Rider and Hutchison 2005: 132) mainly through analysis of early Correlates of War Project datasets on military expenditure and disputes. In his article, Wallace finds that the presence of arms race has a very high correlation with the outbreak of war between two nation-states, with an over 90 percent risk of escalation (1979: 14-15). In a later paper, Diehl (1983) expresses doubt on the results of Wallace's findings, predominantly because of the way Wallace handled the inclusion of World War I in his dataset. To conform to his method, Wallace needed to work with dyads rather than multi-state disputes, wherefore he chose to split the conflict into several dyadic relationships, thereby creating 26 wars out of seven to eight multi-actor wars. Furthermore, Diehl highlighted the fact that Wallace's definition of arms races did only focus on military spending of any given state, but did not include any means to determine if the increase in military expenditure was directed against a certain opponent. Due to this, Diehl stated that *arms races* in Wallace's analysis can more likely be regarded as *mutual military build-ups* (Diehl 1983: 205-207). Upon modifying and retesting Wallace's initial approach, Diehl came to the conclusion that mutual military build-ups only result in war in 25 percent of all cases, with ten in thirteen wars starting without preceding increase in military force by the actors (Diehl 1983: 2010).

Similar to Diehl, other scholars also voiced criticism towards Wallace's hypothesis, prompting a prolonged debate about the methodological approach. In an attempt to end the discourse, later testing from Susan Sample somewhat redeemed Wallace's research by omitting controversial data like the World War I conflict sets (Gibler, Rider and Hutchison 2005: 133-134) while still finding "[…] a positive, statistically significant relationship between mutual military buildups and escalation" (Gibler, Rider and Hutchison 2005: 134).

Gibler, Rider and Hutchison emphasized the distinction between arms races and mutual military build-ups in their research on whether arms races are connected to peace or war. They state that, even though both phenomena share their characteristics, they differ in the sense that arms races are "[…] an interactive phenomenon operating within a rivalry relationship" (Gibler, Rider and Hutchison 2005: 134) and mutual military build-ups are coincidental increases. In regard of the identification of arms races, they remain in the rivalry literature, since they see an arms race primarily as a result of inter-state competition over specific issues. Taking into account several limitations, the authors decided to utilize the operationalized strategic rivalry definition of William Thompson (2001) in order to narrow down the number of states with the

potential for armed competition (Gibler, Rider and Hutchison 2005: 136-137). Thompson notes that not all dyads are necessary strategic rivals, even if their relationship might be prone to conflict. States with very unequal levels of strength can most likely not see each other as true rivals, though it remains a small possibility. Thompson further states that rivalries are not only facilitated by a conflict of interest, therefore he determined three selection criteria that the dyads must ascribe to each other. Seeing each other as "[…] (a) competitors, (b) the source of actual or latent threats that pose some possibility of becoming militarized, and (c) enemies" (Thompson 2001: 560). After framing the parameters of the strategic rivalries, Gibler, Rider and Hutchison proceed to test for arms races in their samples based on two indicators. First off, they look for an increase of military expenditure or military personnel of eight percent over a period of three years. They state that these numbers are not particularly significant, but serve only to prevent the inclusion of gradual expenditure increase due to inflation or temporary expenditure anomalies. Secondly, the authors utilize a qualitative evaluation of historical accounts to research the interstate relations during the supposed arms race. As main sources for this evaluation they use governmental documents and texts, historical accounts and news sources of the time period. As a frame for this analysis they search for two characteristics, somewhat similar to the two main arms race indicators. These are, first, whether the states in question increase the number of military personnel or their arms procurement, and second, whether a competitive dynamic can be found in the build-up between the actors in question (Gibler, Rider and Hutchison 2005: 137-138). After testing their approach, the authors concluded that arms races do not help to avoid conflicts, but rather increase chances of war (Gibler, Rider and Hutchison 2005: 145).

2.1.4.2 Wallace and Meconis' Arms Race Precursor Model

A few years after the end of the Cold War, Michael D. Wallace and Charles A. Meconis (1995) published a working paper focused on modern arms races and the Asian Pacific region. As the authors note, the vast majority of all arms race research up to the date of the publication was based on empirical evidence and data from the pre-World War II era. These studies mostly concluded that mutual military build-ups culminate in armed conflicts, but, as Wallace and Meconis emphasize, it is very important to take into account a possible change in dynamics attributed to the impact and implications of the utilization of modern and high-tech weaponry (1995: 1-2). In their paper, the authors do not focus on the analysis of quantitative data but focus instead on one possible arms race in the Asian Pacific in the post-Cold War period.

Initially the analysis uses an arms race definition containing the common elements of: (1) arms build-up reacting or aiming at the arming of a rival state; (2) the build-up has to be mutual (since there can be no unilateral arms race); (3) the build-up must contain a high and accelerating rate of military expenditure of both dyads; and (4) the build-up is aimed at surpassing the other state, or at preventing the rival from reaching parity or predominance in terms of military capabilities. With this definition, Wallace and Meconis pinpoint several arguments against the application of the arms race label for the Asian Pacific region during the 90s. On top of a large variety of economic development and size of the various countries in the region, military spending has, in general, been observed to be lower in most nations in the post-Cold War period, while growth was equally low. Spending rates were significantly lower than in arms races prior to World War II or during the Cold War. Furthermore, even though the number of arms imports to East Asia doubled from the 80s to the 90s, the authors note that in global comparison the number still remained relatively low, also that many of the procurements that could be viewed as a military build-up were classified as replacement of old and obsolete equipment rather than an effective increase of military size. Lastly, the authors note with regard to the increase in arms trading in East Asia, that it is mainly caused by competition between arms suppliers rather than national entities as arms buyers (Wallace and Meconis 1995: 5).

The authors conclude that, while there is no plausible cause to speak of an active regional arms race, there was still a growing potential that gave cause for valid concern, especially due to unrestricted arms trade, military technology transfers and continuous force modernization. Therefore, Wallace and Meconis identified a list of seven *arms race precursors* applying to the Asian Pacific region:

1) The existence of enduring historical rivalries between military contenders in the region.

2) The existence of significant territorial disputes which have led to armed hostilities or military confrontations in the region.

3) The involvement of two or more military great powers from inside or outside the region in regional disputes.

4) The acquisition of major military hardware as an explicit reaction to a perceived threat from another power.

5) Militarized domestic elites in at least some contending nations in the region, such that the military have a dominant influence in setting both political and budgetary priorities.

6) A pattern of military acquisitions in the region that focuses on increasing offensive capabilities rather than defensive ones.

7) A widely-shared perception that arms acquisitions are being driven by technological momentum, that staying militarily competitive requires the acquisition of the latest and most modern hardware. (Wallace and Meconis 1995: 6-7)

The authors separated the Asian Pacific region into Northeast and Southeast Asia and limited the focus of their analysis on naval arms races, since they are most likely to occur given the coastal nature of the region. Wallace and Meconis conclude that a naval arms race was only identifiable in the case of the PRC and the ROC, while all features of the arms race precursor model were present in Northeast Asia, as well as a "[…] clear danger of an intra-ASEAN naval arms race […]" (Wallace and Meconis 1995: 13-14) in Southeast Asia.

2.1.4.3 Arms Race Definitions

In general, most research utilizes somewhat comparable parameters to define an arms race, usually in relatively broad strokes. In the previous chapter, Wallace's and Meconis' initial definition was given, which does not deviate much from the arms race precursors.

Senese and Vasquez (2008: 143) mainly rely on a definition by Sample (2002). Two main indicators determine an arms race. First, the question if the growth rate of military expenditure is increasing in the period before the outbreak of a dispute, in comparison to the whole studied period. Second, the growth rate must increase within the second part of its initial growth period in order to signify an accelerated growth (Sample 1997: 9). Additionally Sample added a further variable attributed to military build-ups, militarization, which she describes as the "[…] *defense burden* of the state, [which] is a static measure of the proportion of its resources a country is spending on its military at a given time." (2002: 674-675).

Similar basic definitions of interaction and acceleration are used by Valeriano and Marin (2010), Kydd (2000), Wallace (1979) and Gibler, Rider and Hutchison (2005). A somewhat different definition was given by Gray (1971), focusing less on military expenditure, but rather on quality and quantity of military forces. Four conditions must be fulfilled to constitute an arms race:

(1) There must be two or more parties, conscious of their antagonism.

(2) They must structure their armed forces with attention to the probable effectiveness of the forces in combat with, or as a deterrent to, the other arms race participants.

(3) They must compete in terms of quantity (men, weapons) and/ or quality (men, weapons, organization, doctrine, deployment).

(4) There must be rapid increases in quantity and/or improvements in quality. (Gray 1971: 41)

In order to find a fitting and applicable arms race definition for this thesis, it might be most suitable to combine both kinds of definitions. Sample (1997; 2002) connects the definition to an explicit MID or conflict onset, which might be better usable to analyze arms races preceding

past wars. This thesis focuses on the more recent and ongoing relationship between China and Japan, at a point where no conflict beyond MIDs has erupted, therefore it is difficult to center the analysis on a definitive date. Gray (1971) on the other hand does not explicitly include expenditure data at all, making a direct comparison relatively difficult, though it might be argued that an increase in quantity or quality of military equipment or personnel might be somewhat similar.

For the purpose of this thesis, an arms race will therefore contain the following criteria:

- Two or more parties conscious of their rivalry

- Focusing and reacting in their arms build-up on the other's actions

- Competition in terms of quality or quantity

- Increase in quality or quantity

- Rapid and accelerating increase of military expenditure

Noticeably, arms race definitions usually lack temporal components. This can probably be attributed to the fact that some arms race prerequisites like rivalries already include minimum durations. Furthermore, some definitions are aimed on concluded historical conflicts, where the dispute outbreak can be used as marker from which the years leading up to it can be analyzed, starting with the first expenditure increase. As this thesis includes rivalry as an arms race criteria and there has not been a Sino-Japanese conflict outbreak at this point, no additional temporal component will be utilized.

In addition to these criteria, the chapter on arms race (see chapter 3.5) will also focus on Wallace and Meconis' (1995) arms race precursors, to reevaluate if they are still applicable for the Sino-Japanese relationship in the 21st century. In most parts it will naturally follow the arms race criteria, and in addition it might help to understand the setting of a potential arms race between Japan and China. The hybrid definition above should also help to prevent problems that might arise by utilizing a definition focused too much on military expenditure. Both Japan and China are intertwined in several other territorial disputes with other nations in the Northeast and Southeast Asian region, and furthermore have had several MIDs with those nations[5], therefore it is easy to assume that additional arms acquisitions and military build-ups might be

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[5] See COW MID 4.1 dataset by Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane (2015)

directed on either of those other opponents, making it necessary to give additional focus to intent, deployment, doctrine and specific weaponry.

2.1.5 Hardliners and Accommodationists in Power

In regard to the domestic prerequisites of war, Vasquez (2009) focuses on political leaders and dominant figures, who can be divided into two camps. In the broadest sense, these are a faction that either favors declaring or going to war, or works to oppose it. The factions are labeled hardliners and accommodationists in Vasquez' work, though several other names have been used over time, hawks and doves, militarists or soft-liners being the most prominent ones.

For the task of distinguishing between both groups of domestic rivals, Vasquez notes the approach of Margaret Hermann (1980), who emphasized four personal characteristics of politicians that influence foreign policies, these being beliefs, motives, decision style and interpersonal style. For his analysis, Vasquez only focuses on the issue of beliefs since they are easy to identify and there is no danger of falling prey to subjective impressions or attitudes towards political actors (2009: 220). Hermann describes *beliefs* as "[…] a political leader's fundamental assumptions about the world. Are events predictable, is conflict basic to human interaction, can one have some control over events, is the maintenance of national sovereignty and superiority the most important objective of a nation" (1980: 8-9). She further notes that the two topics of nationalism and the "[…] belief in one's own ability to control events" (Hermann 1980: 9) are important parts of a leader's *beliefs*. Subsequently, Vasquez establishes a definition of hardliners and accommodationists for the use in the Steps to War theory.

> […] [*A*]*ccomodationists* can be defined as individuals who have a personal predisposition (due to the beliefs they hold) that finds the use of force, especially war, repugnant, and advocates a foreign policy that will avoid war through compromise, negotiation, and the creation of rules and norms for non-violent conflict resolution.
>
> […] [*H*]*ard-liners* can be defined as individuals who have a personal predisposition (due to their beliefs) to adopt a foreign policy that is adamant in not compromising its goals and who argue in favor of the efficacy and legitimacy of threats and force. (Vasquez 2009: 220)

Vasquez furthermore advised to take into consideration that, while hardliners are the faction most prone to war and violence, they do not always occupy the same political facet in different nations, as e.g. hardliners in Nazi Germany were associated with nationalism and racism, while US hardliners during the World Wars were associated with democratic liberalism (2009: 221).

Valeriano and Marin (2010) provide an additional guideline used by coders to classify political figures into hardliners and accommodationists akin to the approaches taken in

Valeriano and Gibler (2006) and Maness and Valeriano (2012) that have been discussed earlier. The analysis is restricted to the political leaders of each nation, as it would be close to impossible to measure all political actors involved in various branches and levels of each government that influence the final foreign policy position (Valeriano and Marin 2010: 8).

Guidelines for coding HARDLINERS:

(1) They will use power politics (demonstrations of resolve and force) in prewar negotiations and diplomacy as a means to political ends, even rejecting pre-conflict peace treaties or summons for negotiations.

(2) They will see coercion as a first option, not a last.

(3) They will use coercion and power politics even when the outcome will be completely uncertain (such as a conflict between equals) or when it is obvious that his state will lose the war.

(4) They may pursue war to the extreme detriment of his and others' peoples; he/she will probably have a history of initiated interstate conflict and/or war.

Guidelines for coding ACCOMMODATIONISTS:

(1) Accommodationists see war as not only a last option, but also as an irrational option,

(2) Accommodationists avoid war at all costs, perhaps by readily accepting treaties or proposing such provisions themselves, even if these actions are detrimental to their own standing as a leader.

(3) Accommodationists typically appeal to international institutions, international law, or allies for assistance prior to war rather than resorting to displays of force.

(4) Responses to coercive and threatening action typically take the form of non-force level responses, such as embargos, blockades, trading bans, and suspension of diplomatic exchanges.

(5) An accommodationist might participate in a form of passive resistance to avoid conflict. (Valeriano and Marin 2010: 25)

Valerian and Marin note that, partially contradicting Vasquez' statement from before, nations with leaders classified as hardliners are not necessarily belligerent, since several other factors might also be influential and crucial to the position a leader or nation assumes. This is exemplified in conflicts related to national independence that necessitate hardliner behavior, or states that adopt a hardliner stance in order to gain concessions. Nonetheless they concluded that the most important factor is how the opposing conflict party is perceived, rather than their true positioning (Valeriano and Marin 2010: 8)

3. Empirical Analysis

3.1 Introduction to Sino-Japanese Relations

The relationship between the PRC and Japan is driven by a plethora of influences, reaching beyond the scope of military disputes and strategic issues. These, mainly economic and social factors, include unresolved historical problems as well as contemporary economic developments.

Post-war economic ties between Japan and China were practically non-existent due to the persisting animosity and Cold War-constraints. The US pressured Japan into abandoning all attempts of establishing state-level economic ventures with the PRC, while favoring Taiwan. Still, Japan and China began building up an unofficial economic relationship during the 60s, after previous, meager trade agreements were continuously affected by diplomatic incidents and US pressure (Burns 2000: 38-39). After the normalization of Sino-Japanese relation in 1972 and Mao's death in 1976, economic ties and trade began to flourish, with Japan taking the dominant position, supplying technology and China exporting raw materials and natural resources. In between 1979 and 1999 the PRC advanced to Japan's second most important trading partner. Over time Sino-Japanese trade changed gradually, moving from raw materials to labor-intensive textiles exported to Japan during the 80s, and Japanese foreign direct investment (FDI) becoming more important during the 90s (Burns 2000: 43-45). At the same time Japan established itself as "big brother" in the economic relationship with China, facilitating and supporting the PRC's inclusion in several international and regional entities such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Burns 2000: 47-48). China's economic rise has been linked to the increase in FDI since the late 80s and early 90s, and its economic growth occurred during a phase of stagnation Japan experienced after the bursting of the Japanese bubble economy in 1991. The PRC's economic ascension was partially blamed for problems and hardships such as bankruptcies and increased unemployment. The main argument was that growing imports and FDI had hollowed out the Japanese industrial sector. In reaction to subsequent political pressure the Japanese government introduced restrictions against some agricultural imports from the PRC. Naturally, these allegations fanned Sino-Japanese animosity and economic competition, although there is no definitive proof linking Japan's economic problems to China's rise (Ohashi 2004: 182-183). China countered Japanese agricultural safeguards with special tariffs levied from various

electronic imports in 2001, before bilateral negotiations established a mutually agreeable settlement. Still, the financial damage done to Japanese electronic and automobile enterprises by these special tariffs made the increased interdependence obvious and further spurred friction between both nations. During the same time, China began to develop a more active and direct economic diplomacy, vying for more influence in Southeast Asia, by proposing the establishment of a Sino-ASEAN free trade agreement (FTA). This step was seen as a direct challenge to Japan's regional economic position, and was also the first FTA to be established in the East Asian region. (Ohashi 2004: 185-188). Due to these developments, the perception of a "China Threat" took hold of Japanese economic circles between the early 1990s and 2003, which subsequently led to a more hostile environment. After 2003 both countries became more balanced in their approaches, the idea of a "China Threat" gradually disappearing from the perception of most Japanese industries apart from the agrarian sector. Nevertheless, the negative sentiment toward the others remained strong in public opinion, fanned by growing nationalist politics on both sides. Therefore, while China's and Japan's governments wanted to mend their strained economic relationship, public attention remained with controversial historical topics and the negative perception of the respective other, inducing a split between economic and popular desires and further hampering positive developments (Okano-Heijmans 2007: 10-11). The importance of bilateral trade has nonetheless remained high, with China surpassing the US as Japan's most important trading partner during the earlier 2000s. With the PRC's relentless economic rise, overtaking Japan in terms of total trade turnover in 2004, and continuous flow of Japanese FDI into China, interdependency grew correspondingly (Alvstam, Ström and Yoshino 2009: 200). Due to these developments the relative power-balance has shifted in China's favor during recent years. Japanese businesses have invested heavily in China-based subsidiaries, some industries becoming very dependent on Chinese profits. Furthermore, Chinese exports to Japan have shifted from resources and labor-based products to high-tech manufacturing, making Chinese exports more competitive and threatening Japanese businesses (Wu 2013: 72-73). China's new found trade-based power became most evident in 2011, amidst a new flare-up of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute following the collision of a Chinese fishing trawler and a Japan Coast Guard (JCG) vessel. Though officially denied by the Chinese government, exports of rare earth materials, which are nearly exclusively found and mined in China, were halted during the diplomatic dispute. While an official embargo would have given Japan the chance to internationally challenge this step, Chinese customs prevented exports from being loaded by conducting prolonged checks and inspections, thus evading official embargoes

and bans while still delaying and crippling shipping (Armstrong 2011; Bradsher 2011; Inoue 2011).

Socio-historically, three main issues periodically resurface to spark protests and cause discord between both nations. Controversies concerning official apologies for Japan's wartime atrocities are closely linked to politicians' visits to the Yasukuni Shrine in Tōkyō where Japanese war dead, including convicted war criminals, are enshrined. Furthermore, the issue of Japanese history textbooks published by nationalistic societies and used in a small number of high schools has caused continuous protest and outrage due to revisionist statements and white-washing of Japanese war crimes during the occupation of its neighboring states and World War II.

After the devastating occupation by Japanese forces during World War II, China spent a long period focused on internal struggles and the consolidation of power by the communist leadership. During the Cold War, wartime issues and atrocities committed by the Japanese occupational forces remained outside the diplomatic discourse between both nations, especially when the PRC sought to work toward normalized relations for economic benefits. Starting in 1985, when Japanese Prime Minster Nakasone paid an official visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, where the souls of fourteen Class-A war criminals had been enshrined a decade earlier, South Korea and China began voicing international protests. In 1993 Prime Minister Hosokawa acknowledged World War II as an "aggressive war" and apologized to its victims. Two years later, against significant internal resistance, Japan issued the Murayama[6] statement accepting the blame for the war time atrocities, apologizing and vowing to uphold peace and to learn from history. Murayama furthermore discouraged all his cabinet members from visiting Yasukuni Shrine. The early 21st century saw the long reign of Prime Minister Koizumi, who, although he offered condolences for war victims on foreign visits, rekindled regional outrage with visits to the Yasukuni Shrine which were seen as proof for Japanese insincerity. In 2005 large protests were staged in the PRC due to the previous Yasukuni visits and a revised edition of Japanese history textbooks. Politically these protests seemed to be connected to Japan's striving toward a UN Security Council seat and talks about revising Japan's post-war constitution. In reaction to the overwhelming public outcry, Koizumi skipped his annual visit to Yasukuni und issued another apology, reiterating Japan's remorse for past actions and commitment to peace and regional cooperation (Seraphim 2008: 270-285). More recently, the early Abe government

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[6] Named after Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi

came under fire as it was expected that Prime Minister Abe would not uphold the Murayama statement, although he eventually changed his mind and reiterated Japan's apology. Due to his nationalistic views, the topic still remained controversial, especially since his position regarding new apologies is seen as somewhat ambivalent, thus harboring fuel to initiate new controversies and protests from China and the Koreas (Asahi Shimbun 2015; Panda A. 2015a).

The Japanese Textbook Controversy has existed throughout most of Japan's post-war history, starting as an initially domestic political dispute, with conservative and nationalistic politicians and activists seeking to change history textbooks approved during the occupation of Japan. Conservatives holding positions as textbook examiners for the Ministry of Education pushed for more patriotic and nationalistic phrasing to promote a "Japanese spirit". Factual accounts were dismissed as being "too scientific" or for describing Japan's actions as "unilaterally bad". The controversy garnered international attention in the early 1980s, when the Ministry of Education ordered changes to chapters on the Nanjing Massacre and the Battle of Okinawa. Those alterations aimed at alleviating the responsibility of the military chain of command in the atrocities committed by the Imperial Japanese Army, and further dismissed Okinawan victims' accounts as "not scientific". In reaction, most of Japan's regional neighbors voiced concerns and sharp protests, resulting in Japanese apologies and the implementation of new screening mechanisms (Nozaki and Selden 2009). Because of these revisions of nationalistic phrasing and earlier lawsuit victories against textbook changes, the early 90s saw the inclusion of more wartime atrocities in the school curriculum, most prominently references to "comfort women"[7]. Unfortunately, domestic politics also enabled conservative and right-wing groups to garner influence, which led to the founding of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform[8],*Tsukurukai*, which planned to publish their own textbook. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) called for a revision of all history textbooks by 2002, which ended in the removal of most descriptions of Japanese atrocities and war crimes, sparking considerable outcry by South Korea and China. The draft of the *Tsukurukai* textbook, filled with nationalism, revisionism and basic errors caused additional protest, especially when the MEXT approved the textbook after some changes in 2001. Opposition against this *New History Textbook* came from within Japan as well as from South Korea and China, especially concerning the white-washing of the Nanjing Massacre. Needless

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[7] Korean and Southeast Asian women that were systematically coerced and forced into prostitution and sex slavery by the Imperial Japanese Army.
[8] Japanese: a*tarashii rekishi kyokasho o tsukurukai* usually shortened to *Tsukurukai*

to say, Sino-Japanese and South Korean-Japanese relations were damaged considerably, as they felt that the *New History Textbook* justified Japan's invasions and that the government had failed in its commitment to teach the truth about World War II (Beal, Nozaki and Yang 2001: 178-182). The *New History Textbook* had been revised and resubmitted after selling only 543 copies in 2001. It was reapproved by the MEXT in 2005 but still sold less than 5000 copies by the following year (Nozaki and Selden 2009) and was later dropped by its initial publisher due to the financial and overall failure of the textbook. Nonetheless Japanese history textbooks continue to provoke negative reactions and regional protests, most recently due to a MEXT decision to require a revision of textbooks to promote a content more in line with the official governmental stance on territorial disputes and wartime history (Pollmann 2015a).

It is easy to see that the complexity of Sino-Japanese relations (apart from its military component) is based on the partially unresolved nature of wartime history and nationalism, as well as on trade competition in the face of the shifting economic might and global position of power of both East Asian giants.

3.2 Territorial Disputes

3.2.1 Geography

The East China Sea is situated on the western fringes of the Pacific Ocean, constituting the maritime border between mainland China and the southern part of the Japanese islands. To the North the East China Sea borders on Kyūshū and South Korean Jejudo; to the Northwest it is bounded by the Yellow Sea. The eastern limit follows the Ryūkyū island chain down to its southernmost island, Yonagunijima, and to the northern tip of Taiwan (IHO 1953: 31). As one of the world's largest marginal seas, with an approximate 300,000 km² (according to western sources) to 770,000 km² (according to Chinese sources) surface area, the East China Sea is relatively shallow, generally measuring down to a depth of 200 meters. Only along the Ryūkyū island chain extends the Okinawa Trough with a depth of up to 2,300 meters (Hsiung 2005: 516). The island-dotted dividing line of Okinawa prefecture is part of what is often called the *First Island Chain*, which runs along the Japanese home islands, the Ryūkyūs and Taiwan, and the Philippines to encompass all of the South China Sea. This term, thought to have been coined in the 80s and early 90s by Chinese military strategists, gained usage in describing operational reach and strategic control in the doctrine of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). Hence, the term *Second Island Chain* denoting a more sparsely dotted line of islands extending along the Ogasawara Islands, the Marianas, Guam and ending at the Palau island group is often used in conjunction with the *First Island Chain*, dragging the scope of military strategic considerations and territorial related conflicts out into the Pacific Ocean (Yoshihara 2012: 294-296; Xu 2006: 57, 65). Amidst this wider setting of the East China Sea, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands seem to be not much more than mere rocks and stony islets; yet, it became the main focus of regional tension and political strife. The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are a group of five currently uninhabited islets and three rocks and span an area of approximately 7 km². The island group is located in the southern part of the East China Sea, lying in relatively shallow water of 100 to 150 meters just off the Okinawa Trough further south. The islets themselves are mainly lava rock and extinct volcanos with most features being barren; only the biggest island, Uotsurishima/Diaoyudao, is vegetated by trees, but does not provide any freshwater sources. Most of the features of the group are positioned in close proximity to each other with only Taishō-tō/Chiwei Yu being slightly remote (Valencia 2007: 150-151). The Senkaku/Diaoyu island group is located approximately 170 km from Ishigakijima (Okinawa prefecture), as well as the island of Taiwan, 410 km from the island of Okinawa, and 330 km from the Chinese mainland (MoFA Japan 2012).

3.2.2 History

3.2.2.1 Ryūkyū Kingdom and Okinawa Prefecture

The history of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and the respective historical arguments connected to the territorial dispute over the island group, reach back far beyond the last few decades in which the conflict has gained traction and moved into the international spotlight, and to the forefront of Sino-Japanese foreign and military policy.

Records of the islands date back to the Ming Dynasty where they find mention in travel accounts and documents by the envoys sent from the Ming court to the tributary island kingdom of Ryūkyū (Drifte 2013: 11; Beck 2010: 48). Dating back as early as to 1534, the sources report of islets as navigational markers and maritime boundaries of the Ryūkyū kingdom, which are later also mentioned in descriptions of costal defenses against *wakō* pirates. During the 16th century and late Qing Dynasty, some of these islets were seen as offshore islands of Taiwan (Shaw 1999: 44-45, 56; Beck 2010: 49). The Ryūkyū kingdom had tributary status to both, the Ming court as well as Japan. During the rule of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the late 16th century, the ryūkyūan king failed to comply with instructions to support preparations for Hideyoshi's campaigns in Korea. While Hideyoshi's campaign failed twice, the ryūkyūan reluctance was not forgotten, and after the king did not submit to the *bakufu*[9] of Tokugawa Ieyasu, an expedition force led by the Shimazu clan of Satsuma province landed on the islands in 1609, claiming them exclusively for Japan. Through tribute and trade they greatly benefitted the Shimazu during the following *sakoku*[10] period (Kerr 1964: 151-169). When Commodore Matthew C. Perry abruptly awakened Japan and the Edo-*bakufu* from their slumber of self-imposed isolation, two and a half centuries of peace culminated in a short Boshin War and the Meiji Restoration of 1868. With this renaissance of imperial power, Japan looked to Europe for reorientation, turning itself into a westernized Empire with all associated imperialistic tendencies and aspirations. Ancient provinces and domains were transformed into prefectures in 1871, and eventually Ryūkyū became Okinawa prefecture in 1879. During the following years, the government of Okinawa prefecture conducted surveys of outlying islands, including the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, but refrained from planting markers or claiming the islets due to

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[9] The military government of the *shōgun*
[10] Meaning "locked country"; a period of isolation in Japan when contact to most foreign nations was forbidden.

possible problems with the government of Qing China. Although these Japanese surveys were picked up by the Chinese side, no diplomatic protest or inquiries were voiced by the Qing court.

The First Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 was fought over control of the Korean peninsula, far off Okinawa, and culminated in a decisive Japanese victory and the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Before the signing of the treaty, Japan incorporated the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands into Japanese territory on January 14, 1895 following a petition of the governor of Okinawa from November 1893, and under the premise that they were considered *terra nullius* and did not belong to any other sovereign nation (Kawashima 2013: 123-124). With the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki on April 17, 1895, Qing China relinquished control over Taiwan, and according to the wording of the document, to "[…] all the islands appertaining or belonging to […] Formosa" (Shaw 1999: 24) without any direct mention of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (Drifte 2013: 13).

The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands stayed under the administrative control of Okinawa Prefecture for the following decades without causing any further issues in bilateral relations. The islands were leased to a private citizen, Koga Tatsushiō, who set up a bonito processing plant for fishing operations, and also collected albatross feathers, but the facilities were reliant on outside supplies and ultimately failed and were abandoned in 1940 (Wani 2012).

3.2.2.2 US Occupation and Okinawa Revision

Although Okinawa played an important role in the final months of the Pacific War, the nearby Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands remained largely irrelevant. Only the subsequent defeat of the Empire of Japan led to a change. In accordance to the Cairo Declaration of 1943, Japan lost all of its territories and holdings other than the four main islands. Furthermore, Japan lost some control over the Ryūkyū Islands, which were turned into a major stronghold for US forces in the area, although Japan still retained residual sovereignty. In a governmental appeal the Japanese government noted that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were not part of the renounced territories, but instead belonged to the Nansei Islands ("Southwestern Islands", the islands of the Okinawa and the Amami island groups). In diplomatic communications with the United States, the Republic of China (ROC) acknowledged the inclusion of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the Sakishima archipelago (Miyako and Yaeyama island chains), but also stated that because of the close proximity a possible link between Taiwan and the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands should be investigated. In 1952, a peace treaty was signed between Japan and the ROC during which no

objections to the inclusion of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the Nansei island group were made. Following the conclusion of the peace talks, the US occupation force turned the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands into a firing range and training grounds; however, intrusions by Taiwanese fishermen were relatively common due to lax enforcement by the US troops (Kawashima 2013: 125-128; Harry 2013: 658-659).

The development from the relatively peaceful coexistence to the first Senkaku/Diaoyu crisis happened in two steps. After the Convention on the Continental Shelf came into effect in 1966, the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (UNECAFE) followed up with two consecutive surveys in 1968 and 1969, suggesting the possibility for high deposits of natural gas and mineral oil in the area surrounding the islets (Kawashima 2012: 129). The provincial government of Okinawa proceeded by erecting a concrete marker on Uotsurishima, denoting the island group as part of Japan's sovereign territory, giving it an address of Ishigaki city in the Yaeyama island chain. The following year the Japanese ambassador to the ROC issued a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taipei, denying any Taiwanese claims on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and rejecting any further claims to the surrounding continental shelf based on international law (Shaw 1999: 13). The decision of the Japanese government was mainly influenced by the fact that Taiwan had decided to award oil prospecting rights for the Senkaku/Diaoyu area to foreign firms, which naturally conflicted with Japan's economic interests (Kawashima 2013: 132). This started a cycle of continuous crises and disputes between the ROC, Japan, and eventually also the PRC.

3.2.2.3 Crises in the 1970s

With the Japanese rejection of Taiwanese claims on July 17, 1970, and the looming revision of Okinawa Prefecture, including the disputed islands, the first crisis arose. In the same year a group of protesters placed a ROC flag on the islets, only for it to be removed by the authorities later on (Shaw 1999: 13). While the situation of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands quickly grew into a diplomatic conflict between both nations, pressure from the United States, which sought to avoid even bigger problems concerning the revision of Okinawa, ensured the continuation of pre-crisis established trilateral joint undersea resource development (Japan, ROC and ROK) that followed the UNECAFE reports as an attempt to consolidate differing claims during the build-up of the crisis (Kawashima 2013: 138; Koo 2009: 213). Protest movements of overseas Chinese and Taiwanese exchange students grew in an effort to sway the US decision to revert Okinawa, including the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, to Japan until the actual revision in 1972

(Shaw 1999: 13-15). The joint-development and surveys of the continental shelf subsequently entered a phase of stagnation, when in late 1970 and early 1971 the PRC started voicing criticism on the joint exploration and challenging Japanese claims to the island group (Drifte 2013: 11; Kawashima 2013: 137). Even though the first crisis evoked clamor, the Okinawa Revision happened in 1972, and even before, the governments had started to downplay the dispute for various reasons. After entering the conflict belated and only after the discovery of mineral resources in the area (Drifte 2013: 11; Fravel 2010: 146), the PRC had its sights set on greater international goals: The establishment of diplomatic ties especially to the US and to Japan, and the replacement of the ROC as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The ROC suffered a series of diplomatic setbacks over the duration of the first crisis, losing not only its UN seat, but also its diplomatic ties to Japan, as well as the joint-development projects. With the loss of diplomatic recognition, any questions of sovereignty over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands could not be resolved with the ROC through official channels. Nevertheless, it continued to voice its protest in every crisis to come (Shaw 1999: 15).

Before the decade was over, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands again became the centerpiece of a regional conflict – now between Japan and the PRC – which would shape the decades to come. To understand the developments that led to the outbreak of the 1978 crisis one must consider the regional relations and politics of the 1970s.

Previous to the new outbreak of the crisis, Japan and the PRC were negotiating on the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, aiming for a consolidation of bilateral relations and enabling future economic possibilities. Besides these general goals, the biggest influence on the treaty and the overall situation of China and Japan was the Soviet Union. The USSR opposed the signing of the treaty throughout the drawn out course of the negotiations mainly because the PRC sought to strengthen its own position and to form a tighter regional front against its Soviet opponent. Japan, which held interests in the Soviet Far East, was a major player in the development and exploration of natural resources in the area. Initially, the Japanese political landscape seemed to be somewhat divided with pro-Soviet and pro-Taiwanese factions opposing the treaty, but after a harsh rebuke of the Japanese request for negotiations concerning the "Northern Territories"[11] support for Moscow grew thinner. Additionally, the United States started to exert influence by tacitly letting the Japanese know of Washington's approval of the

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[11] More commonly known as Kuril Islands; four islands in the northeast of Hokkaidō that were occupied by Soviet forces in the last days of World War II, an ongoing territorial dispute that prevents the signing of a peace treaty between both nations up to this day.

treaty. While these events might have swayed Japan away from the pro-Soviet stance, the pace of the negotiations was still very slow and eventually dragged down to a near-halt by opposing Diet members around March 1978. In a possible attempt to further delay or thwart the signing of the treaty, pro-Soviet politicians started bringing up the Senkaku/Diaoyu conflict during negotiations, demanding a settlement of the issue before the negotiations on the treaty could be finished. The inclusion of the dispute prompted a Chinese response which turned into the crisis of 1978 (Tretiak 1978: 1235-1241).

On April 12, a flotilla of 80 to 140 partially armed Chinese fishing vessels entered the Japanese territorial waters around the Senkaku/Diaoyu island group, brandishing signs that claimed Chinese sovereignty over the islets, and remaining in the area for up to four days as they were not challenged by Japanese defense forces. The whole event was highly covered by Japanese media and caused a serious deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations which ended the treaty negotiations. The PRC had meant to protest Japanese anti-treaty factions, but instead its actions resulted in the exact opposite, sabotaging all negotiations (Shaw 1999: 16; Smith 2013a: 37; Tretiak 1978: 1235, 1242). Although, as Tretiak (1978: 1242) states, there was little doubt that the fishing vessels were under PLAN command, the PRC settled on calling the whole situation an "accident", which they would further investigate. In turn the Japanese overlooked all opposition and suggested to separate the issue of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands from the negotiations of the treaty, allowing both sides to save face (Tretiak 1978: 1244-1246). As a result, the Treaty of Peace and Friendship was signed in August after a second round of negotiations, going hand-in-hand with a decision to "shelve" the issue of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, albeit whether this was a formal agreement or not was recently called into question by Japan (Shaw 1999: 16; Smith 2013a: 37).

3.2.2.4 Crises in the 1990s

Though the dispute had remained quiet for the next decade, in 1990 the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands started to generate diplomatic friction again. In September that year the Japanese Maritime Safety Agency (JMSA[12]; precursor of the JCG) approved the construction of a new lighthouse on the disputed islands. A Japanese right-wing youth group, the Nihon Seinensha intended to build this official navigation marker, as the organization had already built a lighthouse on the

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[12] Commonly abbreviated as MSA, altered to JMSA to distinguish from the Chinese Maritime Safety Administration normally also abbreviated with MSA, herein changed to CMSA.

islands in the 1970s. This plan triggered a nationalistic response by Taiwan and two fishing boats tried to approach the islets carrying the fire of the Olympic Torch with the intention of planting the fire on the islets to garner attention and to strengthen the ROCs claim. The landing attempt was foiled by vessels of the JMSA, which forced the fishing boats to turn back, and thereby sparked large protests in Taiwan. The incident also led the PRC to repeat its claims on the islands, demanding the Japanese vessels to seize their operations in the vicinity. Following diplomatic pressure from the PRC, and trying to de-escalate the situation, the Japanese government decided to retract the decision to officially recognize the lighthouse as a navigation indicator. Further negotiation led to another shelving of the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue (Beck 2010: 61-64; Pan 2007: 75; Shaw 1999: 18).

The next crisis arose a few years later, during a period of heightened friction between the nations in the area of the East China Sea. Relations plummeted after Japan froze all its development aid in reaction to Chinese nuclear testing in 1993 and 1995. Furthermore, the PRC had grown more assertive, trying to increase pressure on the ROC, and showing displeasure with a visit of the Taiwanese president to the United States. In the run-up to the 1996 elections in Taiwan, the PLAN staged naval exercises in the area, firing missiles aimed close to the Taiwanese shores, which prompted the deployment of US Navy vessels and further increased regional tensions (Beck 2010: 64-65).

After the ratification of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) by the Japanese government in June 1996 (Kawasaki-Urabe and Forbes 1997: 92), the establishment of an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as specified by the Convention became a regional issue, due to the overlapping of the 200 nautical mile zones of Japan and China. Already during the ratification process, marine surveillance and research ships of the PRC entered the area claimed by Japan to conduct test drillings, which further increased tensions (Beck 2010: 65).

The eventual construction of the lighthouse, and its recognition as an official Japanese navigational indicator, fired up protests by Taiwan and Hong Kong once again. Ultimately, the crisis reached its tipping point on September 26, when an activist jumped overboard when intercepted by the JMSA, and drowned in the attempt to reach the islands swimming (Koo 2009: 221; Manicom 2008b: 385-386; O'Shea 2012: 14-15; Shaw 1999: 19).

This tragic incident led to a surge in anti-Japanese protests in Taiwan and Hong Kong, followed by a successful landing-attempt by activists from both nations. The visit of Japanese

politicians to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine further escalated the situation. The PRC, which had been relatively calm up to this point, joined the protest under the pretext of trying to prevent deterioration. Public outcry eventually led the PRC leadership to assume a more assertive role (Beck 2010: 66). Following previous deployment of submarines into the area of the disputed islands, the PRC held another round of military maneuvers in September 1996, after threatening the use of force against Japanese vessels, should the situation endure. This joint-exercise of navy, army and air force was aimed at blockading and assaulting small island chains - another direct message to the Japanese government (Wiegand 2011: 102). While throughout early 1997, anti-Japanese protests continued to intensify and rioters attacked the Japanese embassy and other Japanese establishments in the PRC, Taiwan and Hong Kong, activists continued to try to reach the disputed islands on boats, ramming and colliding with Japanese vessels, and even trying to board them. Through diplomatic channels the PRC and Japan sought to contain the situation. The negotiations, which started in March 1997, concluded with the normalization of bilateral relations, the reopening of Japanese development aid funds and a new fishery pact, while the events of the crisis were downplayed by both sides (Beck 2010: 68; Shaw 1999: 20-21).

3.2.2.5 Crises in the 21st Century

With the turn of the century, the circumstances regarding the dispute in the East China Sea changed. The previous crises had always been a matter of civilian protestors, solved without military involvement - with the different developments in regional relations, the conflicts now became much more severe.

Most prominently, the PRC grew more aggressive and moved away from their containing and diplomatic posture of the prior crises. As Paul Smith (2013a: 38) maintains, the shift in the power relationship between Japan and the PRC is the main driver for the conflict dynamics in the East China Sea. While in terms of economic power Japan had reigned supreme during the Cold War, with the new millennium, China's economic and military development gained traction and expanded, with the PRC ultimately replacing Japan as the world's second largest economy in 2011.

UNCLOS did also provide further grounds for a rise in bilateral tensions. Although meant to clarify maritime boundaries, the ratification in 1996 gave rise to more and more diplomatic issues, especially since both nations tend to interpret the wording of the Convention

differently. Therefore, they do not only lay claim on the same islands, but also have overlapping claims on the continental shelve (Beck 2010: 71).

Even before the 2000s, the PRC had increased not only the frequency of its intrusions into the Japanese EEZ near the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, but also their threat level. Since 1998, China had sent maritime research ships in the disputed zone around the island group. Following that, in May 1999, the PLAN deployed a flotilla of naval vessels, including a frigate, inside the Japanese EEZ, which was then intercepted by Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) patrols, 70 M[13] from the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. In July, another group of ten PLAN vessels held military drills in the vicinity of the islands (O'Shea 2012: 17-18; Wiegand 2011: 102, 104).

During the first years of the 21st century, the cycle of provocative actions of Japanese right-wing groups (constructing a shrine on one of the islets) and Chinese protests and landing attempts went on with increased frequency (Pan 2007: 75-76; Valencia 2007: 130). Nonetheless, the previous intrusions had led to the establishment of a prior notification system in 2001. This system established the practice of China informing Japan before sending research vessels in waters close to Japan or areas of Japanese interest, while Japan in turn would inform China before deploying research vessels into areas close to China. While this system seemed to be a small victory for Japan, recognizing its quasi-authority over the Senkaku/Diaoyu area, the prior notification system disappeared within a few years, as it only addressed research ships but not naval vessels and also lacked any means of enforcement or implementation (O'Shea 2012: 18, Valencia 2007: 130). In summer 2003, China started to increase resource exploitation in the region north of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, along the disputed EEZ border. Next to the two Chinese oil conglomerates, the Chinese National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and Sinopec, concessions were also given to the foreign Royal Dutch/Shell Company and the Unocal Corporation. Both foreign companies later withdrew from the projects, most likely due to strong Japanese protests, while simultaneously the Chinese and the Japanese were engaged in futile joint development negotiation over the disputed development area (Kim 2012: 297-298). During the same time the Japanese government prolonged its lease of the privately owned islands, which also generated more protests in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Persistent attempts from Chinese protesters to reach the islands led to more frequent encounters with the JCG and culminated in 2004, with the arrest of seven Chinese demonstrators that successfully landed on the islands. Usually detainees were swiftly deported, but in this case Japanese

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[13] M denotes a nautical mile, measuring 1852m. Other commonly used symbols are NM and nmi.

authorities held the protesters for two to three days before sending them back to China. (Koo 2009: 225). In the same year Japan also started to explore natural-gas deposits within the EEZ generated by the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. These actions, along with the 2005 decision of the Japanese government to place one of the lighthouses constructed by a right-wing organization under state control, enraged Chinese protestors and resulted in high diplomatic tension (Beck 2010: 69; Pan 2007: 76). During the same time the PRC leadership continued to send PLAN forces to the disputed areas, with intrusions of armed ships in October 2004, and in the following month nuclear *Han*-class submarine which triggered a wide-reaching alert of the JMSDF. In late 2005, the PLAN dispatched a small force of five destroyers and frigates, including an advanced, soviet-built *Sovremenny*-class destroyer, to the islands, while using spy planes to observe Japanese forces. Furthermore, the PRC established a special naval reserve fleet for the East China Sea (Kim 2012: 299; Wiegand 2009: 187-189; Wiegand 2011: 105).

With protests and landing attempts ongoing, the conflict reached its next peak in 2008, when a Taiwanese fishing boat was intercepted by a JCG patrol vessel near Uotsurishima. When the Japanese authorities closed in for inspection, the fishing boat attempted to flee and was then chased by the coast guard vessel. In a sudden change of course, the Taiwanese boat collided with the JCG patrol boat, and sank. The detained crew and passengers asserted that they had hat no political motives. All detainees were released to Taiwanese authorities soon after, but the incident illustrated the tense situation in the East China Sea (Beck 2010: 70; China Post 2008; Wiegand 2009: 170; Yoshida 2008).

In a 2009 election, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) assumed power and in 2010, Kan Naoto became Prime Minister, following Hatoyama Yukio, who had resigned. The new Japanese government held a more China-tolerant position than under the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), but seemed relatively inexperienced, and the new leader had only been in office for a few months before the 2010 Senkaku/Diaoyu Crisis commenced (Fujihira 2013: 39-40). On September 7, a Chinese trawler named *Minjinyu 5179* was sighted operating within Japanese territorial waters, approximately 12km (Hagström 2012: 272) off Kubajima, the northernmost of the disputed islets (MoFA Japan 2010: 5). Three JCG vessels, *Yonakuni*, *Mizuki* and *Hateruma* (Smith 2012: 374), on patrol in the area, were tasked with deterring and inspecting *Minjinyu,* as well as other Chinese fishing boats in the vicinity. Upon the coast guards orders to stop to be boarded for inspection, the Chinese captain refused to halt his ship, trying instead to evade the Japanese patrol vessels. In the ensuing chase *Minjinyu 5179* first collided with *Yonakuni* and shortly after with *Mizuki* before the trawler was stopped, boarded and the crew

detained (Hagström 2012: 272). With the crew and the trawler in custody, the Japanese government proceeded by charging the Chinese captain with "illegal fishing" and "obstruction in the execution of public duty" (Fujihira 2013: 40; Hagström 2012: 272) which naturally led to a string of protest launched by Chinese diplomats and the PRC government. The detainment caused especially strong discontent with China since it differed from the usual practice of releasing crews and ships shortly after apprehending them – a system that was implemented by an unofficial 2004 bilateral pact whereby the PRC would prevent protesters from venturing to the disputed islands, and Japan would not arrest nor charge intruders (Glaser and Bai 2013: 91).

In regard to the question of fault in the incident, Reinhard Drifte (2013: 30-31) notes that the Chinese side naturally blames the JCG, while Japanese authors tend to see the Chinese captain as the culprit of the collisions. Drifte further mentions western authors like Hagström (2013) and Smith (2012) maintaining a neutral opinion on the matter, while he presents three different points as evidence for an intentional ramming by the Chinese captain. Firstly, the video footage shot by JCG crewmen seem to show the Chinese trawler ramming the patrol vessel twice. Secondly, the Chinese captain seemed to be inebriated and violent. Lastly, Drifte states that the fishing business in the East China Sea has become more and more competitive which heightens the anger of fishing crews at coast guard interference, and have rammed patrol vessels on several occasions.

While the crew and the captain were held in custody, the PRC retaliated by stopping the East China Sea negotiations and cancelling several diplomatic meetings and talks. Although the fourteen crewmembers were released three days later, the captain remained in detainment, leading to the implementation of a Chinese embargo on rare earth mineral exports to Japan. Though the PRC government denied the embargo, it was reported that custom officials weren't allowed to load any rare earth on transports in Chinese ports. Furthermore, a group of Japanese citizens in China were arrested after allegedly entering a military zone and videotaping without authorization. Finally, on September 24, Japanese officials released the Chinese captain and suspended their investigation due to the diplomatic impact of the situation, which in turn led to the release of most of the arrested Japanese citizens a few days later, relaxing the diplomatic tension (Hagström 2013: 272-275; Smith 2012: 374-376). The 2010 Incident resulted in several changes concerning the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute. Japan gained US assurance that the US-Japan security treaty would cover the disputed islands. On the other hand, the 2010 crisis showed how much the unofficial shelving agreement had deteriorated, despite the continuous announcements from Japanese politicians that there existed no territorial dispute. In direct

opposition, China started to deploy vessels of the Fishery Law Enforcement Command (FLEC) in the waters around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, prompting the JCG to step up their patrols (Drifte 2013: 33-34).

While the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands continue to be the main bone of contention between Japan and the PRC, three of the islands remained private property of Kurihara Kunioki, a Japanese citizen. Since he had reportedly fallen into deep debts, he decided to sell his islands before his lease to the government would have ended in 2013. Ishihara Shintaro, the then-governor of Tōkyō, a well-known nationalist, decided to raise money in order to enable the Tōkyō Metropolitan Government to buy the three islands in question (Uotsurishima, Kitakojima and Minamikojima). In an attempt to prevent the acquisition of the islands by the nationalistic Ishihara, the Japanese government under Prime Minister Noda began to negotiate with Kurihara as well, outbidding Ishihara and thereby acquiring the three islands. Although the move was most likely meant to minimize diplomatic fallout and to prevent nationalistic and right-wing groups provoking China by building on the disputed islands, the Chinese were furious, calling it an illegal and invalid "nationalization". The PRC government proceeded to repeated warnings, economic embargos, cancellation of meetings and also an increase of intrusions of FLEC vessels into the area around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, while the Chinese populace held mass-demonstrations and attacked Japanese businesses and nationals in the PRC. The final acquisition of the three islands happened on September 11, 2012, sparking even bigger protests, especially since the PRC saw it as a violation of the 1970 "shelving agreement". In December, an aircraft from the China Marine Surveillance (CMS) entered Japanese airspace to fly over the disputed islands for the first time, conducting a patrol in conjunction with other CMS vessels, which led to the emergency deployment of eight Japanese Air Self Defense Force (JASDF) F-15 fighter jets. CMS and FLEC vessels had by that time increased the frequency and the scope of their activities as well, to interfere with Japanese law enforcement and to challenge Japanese control, in an attempt to demonstrate the PRC's claim to the islands, (Drifte 2013: 37-41, Fujihira 2013: 42-43; International Crisis Group 2013: 5-7, 46; Swaine 2013: 5; Tatsumi 2013: 117-118).

With the start of the year 2013, the situation grew even worse with a gradual shift from deployment of coast guards and law enforcement to the inclusion and utilization of military vessels. On January 19, the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) scrambled two fighters to follow an American aircraft flying through the area of the Japan-China East China Sea median line, prompting the JASDF to send Japanese fighters in response (International

Crisis Group 2013: 46). The same month a PLAN frigate locked its fire control radar onto JMSDF *Yudachi* and in another instance in January, a PLAN frigate locked onto a JMSDF helicopter. China denied those aggressive moves but anonymous reports of PLAN crewmen corroborate the Japanese allegations (Tatsumi 2013: 119). Over the whole duration of 2013, the frequency of intrusions by either CMS or FLEC increased. Equally, the number of scrambles of the JASDF against PLAAF aircraft jumped up, and the first sightings of drones in the airspace of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were reported. In early 2014, a PLAAF and a JASDF plane nearly collided during the surveillance of Sino-Russian military exercises close to the disputed part of the East China Sea. The situation remained unchanged until late 2014, when finally the tension between both sides eased up; bilateral talks were resumed and a crisis hotline established (Martin 2013; Cole 2013; Rapp-Hooper 2013; Richards 2014a; Richards 2014b).

The encounters between warships are without question the most dangerous, but the main agents of the territorial dispute remain the JCG on one side, and the FLEC and CMS on the other, with all of them receiving constant upgrades due to the increased tension of the previous years. The CMS and FLEC had been rivals for political power and funding, the recent crises led to the latter being transferred to the control of the Chinese State Oceanic Administration (SOA), which does also oversee the CMS. Close cooperation between the law enforcement agencies and the PLAN have also been encouraged, with the CMS receiving re-outfitted PLAN vessels to bolster their numbers. Likewise, Japan increased the funding of the JCG after the 2010 crisis, and also stepped up the number of patrol vessels in the Senkaku/Diaoyu area from three to 30. Other than with PLAN and JMSDF, encounters between CMS/FLEC and JCG remain relatively tame, due to the fact that JCG vessels usually only shadow intruding ships, but do not engage them to force them to leave (Drifte 2013: 50-51; International Crisis Group 2013: 37-43).

3.2.3 Legal Claims on the Disputed Islands

The PRC bases its claim on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands on three main arguments, in direct contradiction to the Japanese position (Ramos-Mrosovsky 2008: 925). The first and most integral argument is that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were not to be considered *terra nullius* by the time of the Japanese acquisition in 1895 but had at that point belonged to China for several centuries. According to the Chinese claim, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were considered to be a border-feature between Ming China and the Ryūkyū Kingdom and a navigational marker for oversea voyages, and were also recognized as such by Japan, Ryūkyū and China at that time

(Pan 2007: 77; Shaw 1999: 37-38). The islands were supposedly used as fishing grounds, storm shelter and as a place to collect medicinal herbs. Secondly, the PRC maintains that Japan did also recognize the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands as Chinese territory in another instance before they were claimed by Japan in 1895. This argument is based on an 1885 letter of a former Japanese foreign minister who called for caution in endeavors to incorporate the islands, since the proximity to the Chinese boundary could invoke trouble. On this basis the Chinese government argues that Japan's acquisition in 1895 was a calculated move at a time when China's defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War was certain. Lastly, China regards the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands as a part of the territory which they had ceded to Japan in the Treaty of Shimonoseki as a result of the defeat of Qing China in the afore mentioned war, since the island group is seen as a part of Taiwan and its surrounding islands. Thus, the PRC demands the return of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands as a part of the conquered territories that Japan lost with its defeat in World War II (Ramos-Mroscovsky 2008: 926-928).

In contrast, the Japanese government has maintained three main arguments to oppose the claims of the PRC and the ROC. Concerning the acquisition of the Senkaku/Diaoyu island group, the Japanese government contends that the islands were subject to governmental surveys from 1885 to 1895 to gain information on the status and habitability of the islands. Due to the fact that neither of the islands and features showed any markings or other signs of sovereignty, the Japanese government considered the islands *terra nullius* and subsequently incorporated the whole island group into the territory of the Empire of Japan (MoFA Japan n.d. a). Furthermore, Japan does not consider the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands a part of Taiwan and its adjacent islands. This point is made to rebut the Chinese and Taiwanese claims that the islands had been part of Taiwan under the Ming and Qing Dynasties. By setting the island of Taiwan and the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands apart, Japan maintains that the acquisition of the latter, in accordance with international custom, is not related to the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, when Qing China had to cede Taiwan and its surrounding islands to the Empire of Japan (MoFA Japan n.d. a; Shaw 1999: 24).

Consequently, it is argued that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were not affected by the San Francisco Peace Treaty, since they were not obtained by Japan as territorial concessions from China during the wars. The islands had been under administrative control of the United States together with the rest of Nansei Islands and were part of the Okinawa revision in 1971. Moreover, China did never question the non-existence of the islands in the San Francisco Treaty, nor their placement under US authority. It is also mentioned that the PRC did publish maps in

which the disputed islands are not marked as Chinese territory but designate them as "Senkaku Islands". The Japanese government further claims that China's missing objection to the leasing of some of the islands to a Japanese national, and to the utilization of the islands as firing range are proof for the islands being regarded as Japanese. Lastly, the fact that the PRC and the ROC did only start to voice their disagreement after the publication of a report on the discovery of natural gas and oil deposits in the area of the disputed islands is used as a further argument to reject their claims (MoFA Japan n.d. a; Tatsumi 2013: 108-110).

3.2.4 EEZ and Continental Shelf Disputes

The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in December 1982 introduced a number of concepts to regulate and categorize state based conduct concerning maritime issues. While not being the first convention defining subjects like continental shelves and territorial waters, UNCLOS has had a lasting impact on maritime territorial issues partially due to the somewhat fuzzier language compared to the preceding 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf (Harry 2013: 665; Ramos-Mrosovsky 2008: 911). UNCLOS encompasses various sections defining territorial seas, regulating rights of free navigation, introducing the EEZ as well as functions for dispute settlement (UN 1982), which are all relevant to the East China Sea Dispute, but the diverging interpretation of the EEZ and the continental shelf are the biggest issues. With the ratification of UNCLOS by both nations in 1996 (UN 2013), they subsequently began to claim their EEZ and to designate their continental shelf, which led to an inevitable clash of interests.

In UNCLOS Article 55 the EEZ is defined as a zone "[…] beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea […] [in] which the rights and jurisdiction of the coastal State and the rights and freedoms of other States are governed by the relevant provisions of this Convention" (UN 1982: 43). Other articles regulate the rights of exploration, research and exploitation of natural resources in the water and the ocean ground, and establish that the EEZ can reach a maximum of 200 M from the baseline of a costal nation (UN 1982: 43-44). Article 121 of the Law of the Sea does also declare features that are not suitable to support human habitation or economic life as unable to generate an EEZ. This would most likely apply to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, which are mostly rocky outcrops. Nonetheless, they are usually regarded as islands by Japan so that they would maintain an EEZ. Harry notes that the big problem in regard to the size of the EEZ is that the area is most likely so large, that every states EEZ is bound to overlap with another EEZ if they are situated in a relatively confined body of water narrower than 400 M (like the East China Sea). Though this issue seems to be very evident, UNCLOS does not

specify any appropriate approach to solve it (Harry 2013: 666). Due to this hole in the framework, most disputes with overlapping zones employ the solution of the aforementioned Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf which specifies a borderline in equidistance between the claimant states. The International Court of Justice also employs a median line approach when ruling on maritime boundary decisions, though it uses the equidistance line as a provisional boundary from where further adjustments can be made (Ramos-Mrosovsky 2008: 911-912). Still, in case of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands a binding ruling of the ICJ to solve the EEZ or island disputes is highly unlikely. Japan, on one hand, has chosen the course of non-acknowledgment of any dispute as it would give the Chinese claim a better standing. The PRC on the other hand does not accept the authority of ICJ rulings on the basis that they see the court as unfair and biased as it is a western system (International Crisis Group 2013: 3).

The continental shelf is defined by article 76 on UNCLOS:

> The continental shelf of a coastal State comprises the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extend beyond its territorial sea throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin, or to a distance of 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured where the outer edge of the continental margin does not extend up to that distance. (UN 1982: 53)

Coastal states have the sole sovereignty over their continental shelf, which includes the rights of exploitation of non-living natural resources and minerals, but the continental shelf does not affect fishing rights, maritime sovereignty or the air-space the continental shelf (UN 1982: 53).

The extent of the continental shelf in the East China Sea is an important and controversial issue closely related to the question of ownership of the disputed islands. The PRC claims the whole continental shelf from its shoreline to the Okinawa Trough, although no exact limit of the claimed shelf has been stated (Valencia 2007: 139). This area would reach up to 550 km (or about 297 M) in distance to the Chinese mainland. Since this extends over the 200 M initially proposed by UNCLOS, China utilizes the principle of "natural prolongation" to justify their claim (Beck 2010: 71). For cases in which the continental shelf continues on after the initial 200 M, UNCLOS sets the limit for the further extension of claims on continental shelves at 350 M (UN 1982: 53). Therefore, China asserts that it has complete sovereignty over the East China Sea continental shelf. Japan on the other hand objects the Chinese position, holding the continental shelf should only encompass up to 200 M. Furthermore, Japan does not consider the Okinawa Trough the borderline of the East China Sea continental shelf, but much rather a natural depression in the shelf, which would then continue on to the Ryūkyūs. Therefore, Japan would be situated on the same shelf as mainland China, and share its claims. Thus, the

ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands regains importance, as Japan bases its claim on the continental shelf on its control of these islands. From there, Japan would seek to establish a continental shelf border in equidistance to the Chinese mainland, similar to a median line for the EEZ issue. Both nations disagree on the question whether the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands can even generate an EEZ and have a continental shelf. China is naturally opposed to this assumption, while Japan as well as most international legal commentators view some of the features of the Senkaku/Diaoyu island group as full island, thus being able to generate an EEZ (Ramos-Mrosovsky 2008: 912-913; Valencia 2007: 139, 142, 147-148).

3.2.5 The Value of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and the East China Sea

3.2.5.1 Economic Value

Since the geological features of the Senkaku/Diaoyu island group range in size between rocks and small islands, the actual islands do not hold a very high economic significance. While they had been used as storm shelter for fishermen, and as fish processing location in the past (Wani 2012), the true economic value of the islands lies in and beneath the waters surrounding them.

The East China Sea is particularly well suited for fishing operations, as it contains ample fishing grounds due to advantageous climatic conditions and salinity. With Japan having one of the highest rates of fish-consumption internationally, and Chinese consumption steadily rising, access to fishing zones is of importance to both nations. More so, in the light of the steady decrease of fish stock all over Asia. Confrontations between Chinese and Japanese fishermen were so common that shortly after the Pacific War, and well before the diplomatic normalization between both nations, several fishery treaties were signed to regulate fishing. While those agreements have been upheld and renewed after the ratification of UNCLOS, and both states established a *Provisional Measures Zone*, where both EEZ overlapped and fishermen of both sides could fish together, the area south of the 27th parallel (which includes the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands) was left out. Therefore, there is no regulation of fishing around the islands, and both nations regard the area as their own, leading to many and continuously worsening confrontations between fishermen and coast guards (Beck 2010: 74-75).

Even more important than fishing rights in the area is the access to the highly contested oil and natural gas fields in the East China Sea. Both countries are greatly dependent on energy imports. China, in order to fuel its relentlessly growing economy and domestic demand, had

turned from an oil exporting country (until 1993) to the world's second largest oil importer by 2003. Japan, which has no considerable energy resources on their main islands, remains the world's third largest oil importer, while being the largest importer of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). As a result of the oil shock 1973, which hit Japan hard, the country underwent a gradual shift in an attempt to reduce its dependency on Middle Eastern oil and on oil imports in general. Measures included a system of oil stockpiling as backup for future crises, as well as the exploration of alternatives to crude oil, most importantly LNG (Dowty 2000: 70-71). In comparison, China only became a net importer of LNG in 2007 (Drifte 2008a: 32-33; Drifte 2008b: 13-14), remaining mainly reliant on coal and oil to satisfy its energy demands (EIA 2015).

According to estimates of the Energy Information Administration (EIA), there are about 60 to 100 million barrels of oil in proven and presumed reserves in the area of the East China Sea. Furthermore, the PRC estimates the amount of oil in undiscovered resources in the Okinawa and the Xihu Trough to be between 70 and 160 billion barrels (EIA 2014). Other estimates speak of up to 100 billion barrels of potential oil deposits. Presumably, the vicinity of the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is also a prime location for hydrocarbon deposits. The Japanese government reported an estimation of over 94.5 billion barrels of oil for the seabed around the islands (Drifte 2008a: 33). Estimations for natural gas deposits in the East China Sea even surpass those for oil fields. The EIA reports between one and two trillion cubic feet in proven and in presumed reserves, while some Chinese sources estimated the presumed deposits at 250 trillion cubic feet. The latter however has not been verified by independent organizations. A 2013 CNOOC report estimated the proven deposits in the East China Sea at 303 billion cubic feet (EIA 2014).

After the initial discovery of the vast hydrocarbon reserves in the East China Sea in 1969, Japan sought to establish joint exploration projects, at that time with the ROC and with South Korea. After the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations the ROC lost its position in the joint venture discussions, although the PRC did not become a part of it. Japan and South Korea established a joint development zone in the northern area of the East China Sea, mostly on the Japanese side of the median line. Sino-Japanese joint ventures had been under discussion on several occasions during the 80s, 90s and the early 2000s, but eventually all attempts failed due to the unresolved territorial issues. The PRC had started to drill for oil on their side of the median line in the 90s at the Pinghu oil and natural gas field, but then also continued their exploration into the Japanese EEZ, masking their exploration vessels as scientific research ships

to claim legitimacy of their operations under UNCLOS. In 1999, the Chinese discovered a natural gas field, which was named Chunxiao field, situated only 4.8 km from the median line. The Chunxiao (in Japanese called Shirakaba) gas field is the southernmost field in a gas field group also called Chunxiao. The others are Taiwaitai, Duanqiao and Canxue (Drifte 2008b: 17).
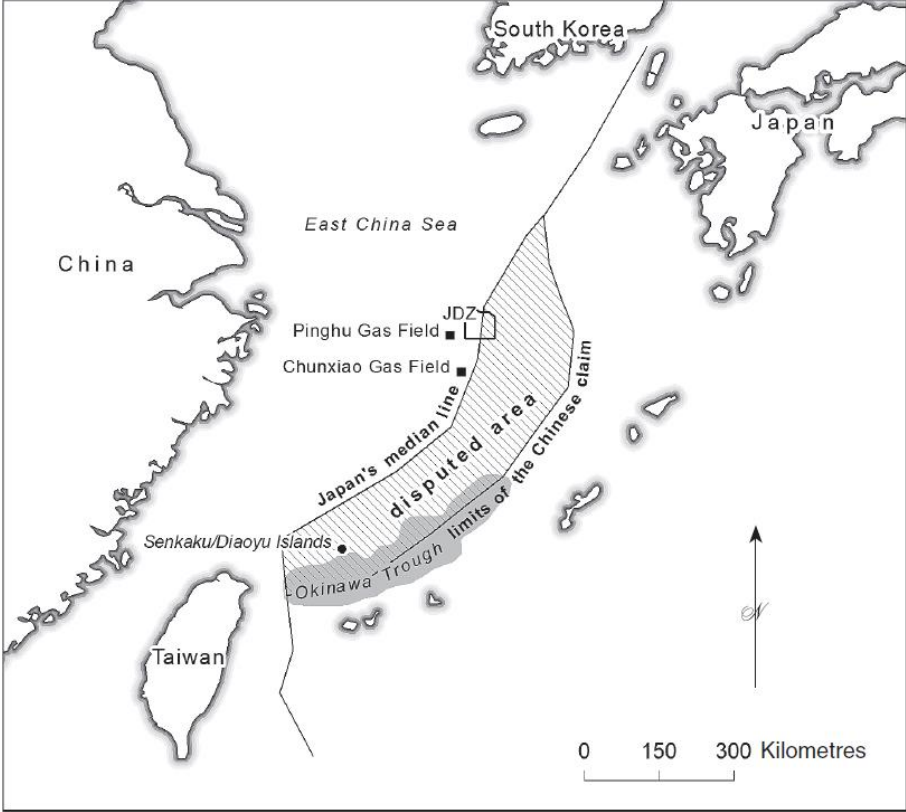

Figure 1. East China Sea natural gas fields and Joint Development Zone

Source: Manicom 2008a: 467

By 2004, a Chinese gas development facility started operations at the Chunxiao field. Japan suspected that Chinese natural gas extractions would also siphon off resources from the Japanese side, and in consequence the Japanese government enlisted a research vessel to survey the area east of the median line, which confirmed the likelihood of the gas fields stretching into the Japanese EEZ. As a result, the Japanese government began their own test-drillings and lifted a ban on exploration and development by Japanese companies in the East China Sea (Hsiung 2005: 518-519; Manicom 2008a: 461-462). What followed was a year-spanning sequence of discussions and threats that slowly made its way to a consensus in 2008. A joint development zone (JDZ) was to be created to the North of the Chunxiao field (see Figure 1) that would be intersected by the median line in equal parts. At the same time, any exploration in contested areas outside the JDZ along the median line would be halted (Manicom 2008a: 466-468). Unfortunately, the 2008 consensus was relatively unspecific in regard to several problematic

issues, and lacked an enforcement mechanism. Thus, the consensus proved rather ineffective when the CNOOC started developing natural gas unilaterally outside of the JDZ but along the median line at the Tianwaitian (jap. Kashi) gas field in the Chunxiao gas field group. Japan voiced its protest, as it considered the freeze of exploration and development to include all of the gas fields in the Chunxiao gas field group. China however insisted that the 2008 consensus only applies to the JDZ and the Chunxiao field (EIA 2014; Manicom 2014: 150-152).

3.2.5.2 Strategic Value

In regard to the strategic or military value of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, similarities and connections to the economic value become evident. As with the economic implications, the strategic setting of the islands has to be viewed in the broader context of the military and strategic relevance of the whole East China Sea in order to provide a sufficient understanding of their strategic value.

Similarly, the island's value is also closely linked to the issue of Taiwanese independence. Since the PRC clearly seeks to inhibit a definitive independence and "real" statehood of Taiwan, and has also shown its willingness to use force and military threats to influence the political landscape of the ROC - most obviously during the Taiwan crisis of 1995-1996 - a militarized escalation over the islands remains one of the most potent possible flashpoints in the region.

The military value of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands might be of greater importance to Chinese military strategists, compared to their Japanese counterparts. On one hand, China might expect Japan to militarize the disputed islands in the emergence of a forceful Chinese intervention in or invasion of Taiwan. With the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in close proximity to Taiwan, they could be used as a staging point for US and Japanese forces in an attempt to thwart Chinese military ambitions. However, while this scenario remains a possibility, it seems unlikely, as Japan never attempted to build any military installations on the disputed islands. Furthermore, other Japanese islands are also located near Taiwan, as do the military bases on Okinawa. Therefore, additional bases or installations to counter an invasion seem unnecessary (Beck 2010: 81-82). Secondly, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands also present the PLAN with a less hypothetical problem: by maritime law in accordance with UNCLOS submarines have to surface (and remain surfaced) and show their flag while passing through territorial water of

foreign nations to be entitled to the right of innocent passage. Obviously, surfacing a submarine defies its purpose as stealthy vessel operating undetected by foreign or enemy observers.
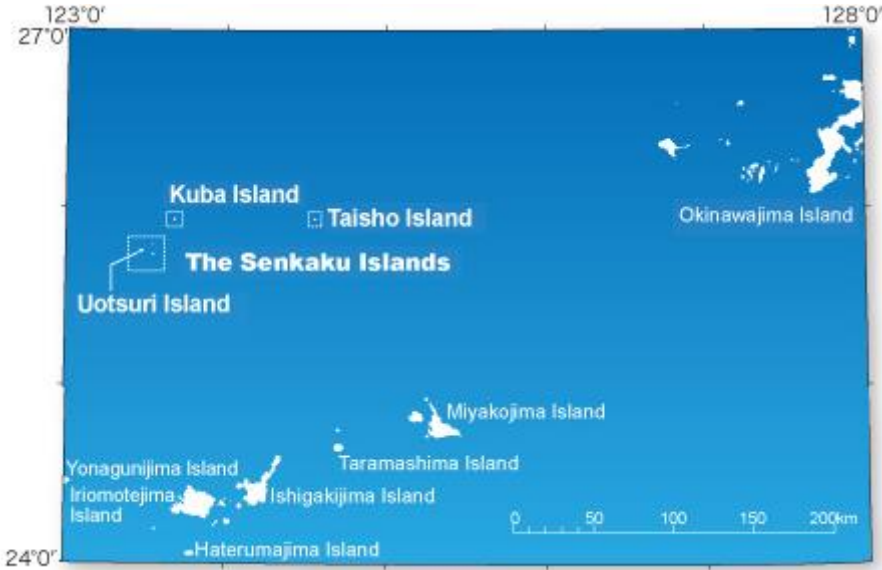

Figure 2. Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands with passage between Okinawa and Miyakojima

Source: Akimoto 2013

Due to the constricted geographical layout of the East China Sea, PLAN submarines that seek to reach the Philippine Sea or the Pacific Ocean usually pass between Okinawa and Miyakojima (see Figure 2), between the limits of the Japanese territorial zones to remain unseen. Still, Japanese control of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, located to the Northwest of this narrow passage, dictates the course of the PLAN vessels. If the islands would be controlled by the PRC on the other hand, Chinese submarines could operate and navigate relatively unimpaired from restrictions of international law (Akimoto 2013).

When it comes to the strategic value of the East China Sea, both nations seem to occupy rather similar positions. The PRC has three strategic main priorities in the East China Sea, namely to "[…] defend China's economic and political centers of gravity along its coastal areas, [to] prevent Taiwan from moving towards de jure independence - to include deterring or preventing the intervention of outside actors on behalf of Taiwan[,] and [to] safeguard China's growing economic interests in the region" (Hartnett 2012: 72). Since the PRC is also, although not as much as Japan, reliant on the SLOC running through the East China Sea, the need for security in and control of the area is high. Many of the big coastal industrial centers and cities like Shanghai, Ningbo and Qingdao conduct their trans-pacific trade through the East China

Sea, exiting through the aforementioned gap in the Ryūkyū island chain, which makes them very prone to blockades and general foreign influence and monitoring.

As mentioned earlier, the continuous line of the Ryūkyū Islands, Taiwan and the Philippines is usually designated as *First Island Chain*, and has gained considerable importance in Chinese strategic planning concerning the East China Sea. The risk of being blocked off from the Pacific Ocean has developed into a major driver for Chinese naval modernization and expansion. The ability to project naval power beyond the *First Island Chain*, and potentially also beyond the *Second Island Chain*, which follows the Ogasawara island chain down to Guam, has become increasingly vital for Chinese strategists (Glaser 2012: 36). While in recent years, the PLA planners have turned away from the designation of First and Second Island Chains, and rather use the terms of *near seas* and *far seas* to designate the operational areas of the PLAN, the *near seas* waters of the East China Sea remained a prime focus. In concurrence with the strategic priorities, the PLAN mostly aims its capabilities on anti-access and area denial strategies to prevent foreign interventions in territorial questions and island disputes (Bush 2012: 63-64; Patalano 2014b: 43).

For Japan, the hypothesis about the militarized Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands as a hindrance for the PRC's ability to fully project its military power onto Taiwan in order to force a reunification, might still work in its favor and limit the PLAs room for strategic planning. Some scholars note that Taiwan's independence is essential for Japan's partial control of the East China Sea, because it limits China's access to the waters to the East. Okazaki Hisahiko (2003) explains that China's naval facilities along its coast in the East China Sea are restricted by shallow waters, so that submarines are usually forced to travel longer distances along the surface before being able to dive to great depths along the Ryūkyū Trough, which makes them easy to track by Japanese surveillance. In the event that the PRC would regain control of Taiwan due to military or diplomatic means, the PLAN would be able to use Taiwanese ports and naval bases facing the Pacific Ocean, wherefrom they could operate undetected. Simultaneously, the PRC would also assume full control over the Taiwan Strait, through which some of the critically essential shipping lanes (or SLOC, sea lines of communication) to Japan and South Korea pass. Lastly, it would grant China dominion over most of the South China Sea, which contains even more important SLOC, and would also increase the Chinese influence on Southeast Asian nations, which Okazaki describes as "Japan's economic stronghold" (2003).

Especially more conservative analysts tend to assume that, in case of a PRC-ROC unification, the entirety of the Northeast Asian SLOC might fall under Chinese control, even though the

Taiwan Strait could be bypassed by a more southern route. Recent Chinese sub-surface surveying is interpreted as an indicator for work on a contingency plan in regard to hostile post-unification naval deployment around Taiwan (Bush 2012: 61-62). The SLOC route through the Strait of Luzon to the south of Taiwan is the most used shipping lane for crude oil and LNG to Japanese harbors with about 90 percent of Japanese oil imports following it, and due to the close proximity to Taiwan the route would by no means be save from PRC influence in the event of a reunification (Beck 2010: 81; Blazevic 2009: 153-154). While the protection of the SLOC is usually also an undertaking that goes far beyond the East China Sea, the free and uninhibited flow of trade and natural resources close to home remains paramount for both nations. The vulnerability of the SLOC around Taiwan became apparent in the aftermath of the Taiwan crisis in 1995 and 1996. Although the crisis was short-lived and military engagements were limited to test-firings of missiles aimed just off Taiwanese territorial waters, consisted mainly of the Chinese shelling the waters surrounding Taiwan, this was enough to interrupt regional trade for a short duration of time, but long enough to affect not only Taiwanese but also Japanese economic operations and trade as a result of the rerouting of shipping lanes, increased price of maritime foodstuff and fuel costs (Patalano 2008: 878).

If not focused on Taiwan or on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and the surrounding natural resources, for Japan, the strategic importance of the East China Sea, lies in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR). The JMSDF has a long history of deploying their submarine force in the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea, where they used to counter Soviet submarines during the Cold War. In recent years focus has shifted onto key strategic points in the East China Sea, especially the area of the Ryūkyūs, the Taiwan Strait and the Bashi Channel, a part of the Strait of Luzon (Patalano 2008: 867, 886; Patalano 2014b: 45-46). Maintaining ISR capabilities and partial control over the East China Sea is a vital component of Japanese bigger strategic planning. The area from the East China Sea to the *Second Islands Chain* roughly spans what is called the Tōkyō-Guam-Taiwan triangle (TGT) shown in Figure 3, which does not only contain all of the above-mentioned strategic and economically crucial sea lanes and islands of the Japanese, but are also important to US military posture and power projection in the West Pacific and East Asia.

Figure 3. Japanese defense posture and Tōkyō-Guam-Taiwan Triangle

Source: Patalano 2014a: 418

Especially with the realignment and reduction of US forces in South Korea and Japan, the military value of Okinawa and Guam in regard to US crisis intervention in East Asia was markedly increased. Likewise, the TGT area is the main operation zone for Japanese efforts in ballistic missile defense (BMD) and to deter terrorist activities, mostly conducted by ISR missions in cooperation with US Navy (USN) forces and the JCG. In addition to these operations, the JSDF held a large scale joint exercise in late 2011, including units from the JMSDF, JASDF and Japan Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF), conducting various military training operations around the Amami island group. These exercises, together with increases in the size of the JMSDF submarine fleet and a strengthened focus on offshore island intelligence facilities and maritime air and satellite surveillance, show the importance the JSDF attaches to the East China Sea as a matter of national security (Patalano 2014a:417-419; Patalano 2014b: 46).

On November 23, 2013, China unilaterally established an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea. This zone follows the Chinese coastline, extends into the

East China Sea encompassing the area of the whole Chinese EEZ claim, and subsequently overlaps with the Japanese ADIZ, as well as with a small part of the South Korean one. Usually, ADIZs require any civilian aircraft entering the zone to provide various identifications to air-traffic controllers. While China has stated that the ADIZ is not aimed at any country and does only serve as an early warning system to defend the Chinese airspace, many countries, especially Japan, South Korea and the US have criticized China's move. The PRC also stated that PLAAF aircrafts will be deployed to react to non-compliance to demands of identifications or orders given by Chinese air-traffic controllers. The Chinese government stressed national security and air safety as reasons for the establishment of the ADIZ, however, many commenters and analysts have alleged that the zone is mainly aimed on further asserting the Chinese claim on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands by incorporating them into airspace patrolled by Chinese planes. While several Chinese sources explained that the ADIZ does not constitute territorial airspace and would not be utilized to impede normal air traffic, the question of exactly which aircrafts would be affected by PLAAF interception remains vague. Alongside all aircraft not adhering to all Chinese orders (from identification to course changes, even if not in Chinese airspace), it is indicated that all foreign surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft in the ADIZ will be regarded as hostile by the PLAAF (Swaine 2014: 1-10).

In conclusion it becomes clear that from a strategic point of view, the issue of the disputed islands and the opposing claims on EEZ delimitation is mainly a matter of defensive zones. Besides the obvious interests in the natural resources of the seabed, both nations' main concerns in the East China Sea pertain to national security issues. For the PRC, a continued Japanese control of extensive parts of the area is a hindrance, not only because of the Japanese-US alliance causing subsequent power projection of US naval forces and potential interventions in case of an escalation on the issue of Taiwanese independence. Japanese maritime surveillance and the potential threat of being confined to the waters of the East China Sea do also compromise the Chinese ambition to fully move beyond the *First Island Chain* and assert its dominance inside the East China Sea. As Michael D. Swain (2014: 9) stated, some Chinese sources also explained the establishment of the PRC ADIZ in the East China Sea as a move to counter an attempt by Japan and the United States to blockade the PRC inside the *First Island Chain*, though how the new ADIZ would prevent such a move was left unexplained.

Similarly, the Japanese side sees the East China Sea as an area of operation, where it is crucial to remain in control, in order to counter the surge in Chinese military intrusions and the rapid increase in naval force. Controlling the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is seen as essential to

national security (Blazevic 2010: 72), because Japan fears that if it would fall under Chinese administration, the PRC would gain superiority in surveillance and intelligence in the whole East China Sea region, as well as regularly conduct military exercises and training in the vicinity of Okinawa in an attempt to push Japanese ships and planes out of the region (Bush 2010: 65).

Lastly, the ability to monitor each-other's naval forces through areal and maritime surveillance and reconnaissance, while being able to move their own vessels unimpeded and to protect their essential SLOC, seems to be the major strategic value of the East China Sea and the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands for Japan, as well as for China.

3.2.5.3 Social Value

Even though the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands have a visible social and cultural value proven by the high number of civilian protests all over China, the actual influence of this social importance is usually dwarfed by economic and strategic considerations. Nevertheless, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands have a very high significance for the Chinese view of their own territorial integrity and legitimacy - the latter being part of the government's power base, regarding itself as keeper of the China of old, and all its territories. Therefore, the 20th century is generally regarded as a *century of shame* in which the Chinese dominion was sliced up and redistributed among foreign nations (Hagström 2005: 173-174). Since China argues that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are part of this former sphere of influence, the issue of ownership of these mere islets became a constant reminder of past humiliation and colonial rule. Furthermore, the association of the dispute and collisions between JCG vessels and Chinese ships still invokes fear of a remilitarized Japan with more assertive foreign policies and a nationalist government. Lastly Viskupic (2013: 73-75) argues that the disputed islands have served as a symbolic instrument for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to construct new and patriotic narratives, in order to adapt to the changing international environment. Especially in the post-Cold War era, the CCP utilized the sentimental value of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands to convey Japan as "the significant Other against which the Chinese identity became redefined" (Viskupic 2013: 74).

For Japan, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands represent a territory that is connected to the nation's struggle for modernization after the humiliating intrusion of western powers and the subsequent Meiji Restoration - the birth of the modern Japanese nation. Moreover, it is crucial for Japanese leadership to resist Chinese pressure and exhibit the power to maintain territorial integrity. Especially in recent times, as China becomes more and more a main rival for Japanese

interests in the region, and also a rising military power, Chinese interest in what is perceived Japanese soil, sparks a high amount of animosity. This is mainly because of the lack of transparency of the Chinese military build-up, and China's overall ambitious attitude towards territorial enlargement, as illustrated by their South China Sea policies. The conflict over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is an issue of national honor for Japan, as it is for China, and also an issue of overcoming a violent past (Beck 2010:167-168, 175-176). The latter point is strongly connected with the Japanese victim-mentality, as most Japanese think that they have apologized and suffered enough for their role in the Pacific War (Beck 2010:147).

3.2.6 Analysis

Of the two initial situations given by Huth (2000: 86) it is complicated to determine which one suits the Sino-Japanese situation best. On one hand, both nations argue about the delimitation of their national borders, in this case the maritime borders in the East China Sea, however, arguably the EEZ does not count as a border in conventional understanding, since both nations can't exercise all their territorial rights in an EEZ. On the other hand, the PRC does undoubtedly contest Japan's effective control and sovereign rights over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and their associated waters. Since the issues of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and the delimitation of the EEZs in the East China Sea are complicated and intertwined, it might be most suitable to accept both general explanations for the occurrence of the disputes. The initial onset came with the question of sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands during the Cold War, the disagreement over the delimitation of the maritime borders followed, connected to the first dispute, at a later stage. In addition to these primary indicators as territorial disputes, there has been ample evidence to underline the motivations and intentions of both countries in regard to resources, military-strategic importance and social issues. Most prominently, the disputes revolve around proven and presumed resource deposits in the area, which are closely related to the strategic value of the control over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Even though they, by themselves, are only of minor military importance, by extension to the associated area of the East China Sea, and the accompanying issues (e.g. ADIZs), they hold a high strategic value for both nations. Comparably, while the islands may not be populated, they remain some degree of social relevance because of their linkage to unresolved animosities, and as reminder of Japan's Pacific War aggression and expansionism.

Of the five categories subdividing the onset of a territorial dispute (see chapter 2.1.1) provided by Huth (1996: 19-22), two seem fit for the dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands:

First, one country (China) does not accept the current borders, while the other (Japan) wants to maintain *status quo* (or better) based on previous treaties. Second, the lack and inconsistency of historic documents and treaties delimiting a clear boundary, led to China and Japan both claiming the islands as their own, based on different historic positions.

If Japan's *de facto* control is based on a previous treaty, and China is therefore disputing a current border, China's lack of protest and apparent acceptance of the island's control falling to the United States after World War II, and early references of the islands under Japanese nomenclature, provide evidence to possibly assume the existence of an accepted treaty. Nonetheless, the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which would have placed the now disputed islands under US control, presumably as a part of Okinawa prefecture, was not signed by the PRC. Therefore, it seems doubtful that there was a previous treaty that China could later have deviated from when voicing its claims.

The second option appears to be more probable. Both nations' claims are mainly based on differing assumptions and views of the legal proceeding of the 19th century, and the Treaty of Shimonoseki. When the latter was signed, ending the First Sino-Japanese War and granting the island of Taiwan to Japan, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were not mentioned. Therefore, the PRC nowadays insists that these islands were always considered part of Taiwan, while Japan regards them as a separate feature that was incorporated as *terra nullius* only by chance during the same timeframe of this first Sino-Japanese altercation. The imprecise wording of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, together with its timing, is what gave rise to debate over the ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and their relation to later treaties. Thus, the second explanation for the dispute onset is considered the most fitting.

As a starting point for the territorial dispute over the islands, Huth's definition would suggest December 1971, when the PRC officially claimed the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, following the mention of possible natural gas and oil deposits in 1969's UN report (Drifte 2014). Since the dispute is still ongoing, the three markers for resolved disputes provided by Huth's framework can temporarily be dismissed. Lastly, Huth (2000) also provided a number of possible alternative causes for territorial dispute like conflicts, though the lack of habitation of the islands, the clear economic motives (resource exploration), and the absence of involvement of both countries in the other's domestic politics seem to contradict all these indicators and make a strong case for a persisting territorial dispute.

3.3 Alliance

3.3.1 U.S.-Japan Alliance

In the aftermath of World War II and the subsequent occupation of the Japanese islands, the first step towards the creation of an alliance between the United States and Japan was made by signing the San Francisco Peace Treaty on September 8, 1951. With Japan regaining full sovereignty over its territory, the creation of a security treaty was made possible. Both nations enacted this new security treaty the same day the Peace Treaty was signed. This first security treaty laid the groundwork and direction of U.S.-Japan security cooperation for over half a century. Initially, US negotiators aimed for a Japanese commitment to rearmament in order to take on a bigger role in regional security, however, this proposition did not gain Japan's approval (Reed 1983: 6-7). Thus, negotiations resulted in a compromise, drawn up in a treaty of five articles concerning the right of the US to station troops on Japanese soil in order to defend it from attack or to maintain regional and international peace and prohibited Japan from allowing other states to maintain bases on Japanese territory without US consent. While the treaty did not compel the US to commit to defending Japan in any case, it enabled them to intervene in case of civil unrest and large-scale internal riots, if they were observed to be instigated by foreign powers. Furthermore the treaty regulated the disposition of military forces, and was set to expire only after consent of both states (Lillian Goldman Law Library 2008).

A few years after the initial security treaty was signed, both nations deepened their security cooperation with the conclusion of the *Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement* of 1954. This agreement laid out a framework for the growing integration of Japanese forces in the regional security structure and also regulated the provisioning of Japan with military hardware from the United States. Subsequently, Japan established the JSDF under civilian control in order to bolster the Japanese ability to defend against foreign intrusion (Reed 1983: 7).

The direction taken by the Japanese post-war government, which rendered these first treaties possible, was mainly influenced by what was later called the Yoshida Doctrine, named after Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru. In its first phase the doctrine sought alignment with the United States, together with a partial rearmament of Japan, which ultimately resulted in the first security treaty of 1951. With the defense guaranteed through US forces, the Yoshida Doctrine further focused on economic development, enabling Japan to swiftly recover from the war. The new treaties helped to open up the US market, to receive economic aid and also helped Japan

to regain a place in the international market and community. By putting a strong focus on economics, the government under the Yoshida Doctrine did its best to deter all attempts of the US to persuade Japan to increase its military spending and assume a bigger military role in the region (Hughes 2004: 21-23).

Following the path set by the Yoshida Doctrine, Japanese diplomats tried to increase military protection through the United States over the course of the 50s. Likewise, they sought to renegotiate some of the more ambivalent portions of the 1951 treaty to further secure Japan's defense posture. The goal was to solidify the US commitment to defend Japan from external threats without giving US diplomats room to maneuver around this treaty obligation. Meanwhile, US negotiators continuously tried to bring the Japanese government to accept an increase in military expenditure and to give the US permission to continue the usage of military bases on Japanese territory. All these varying efforts resulted in the revision of the security treaty in 1960, giving way to the signing of the *Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan*[14] on January 19 of that year (Dian 2014: 40; Reed 1983: 8). While the United States gained continuous recognition of their right to maintain military bases for their army, air force and navy on Japanese soil, the Japanese managed to get a more explicit and binding commitment to their national defense by US forces. Both nations declared to act upon any armed attack on US and Japanese forces within the territories administered by Japan. Furthermore, both agreed on continuing to develop their potential to react to foreign threats and attacks within the lines of their constitutional regulations (MoFA Japan 1960). This partially hampered US expectations of integrating Japan into a broader security network in the Asia Pacific region (Hughes 2004: 23). For Japanese negotiators, however, limiting commitment to constitutional restrictions was a major point of interest. Akin to previous directions of the Yoshida Doctrine, they wanted to avoid an entanglement in US regional politics and the US regional rivalries with the USSR and the PRC, especially with regard to looming conflicts in Taiwan and Indochina and the fear that Japan could become a proxy target in case of a (nuclear) conflict between the superpowers. By relying on Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, Japanese negotiators were able to avoid institutional and structural military cooperation with the US. They managed to keep the JSDF separate from US forces or a potential joint command, and closely focused on the defense of the Japanese islands and territorial waters (Dian 2014: 40-41; Hughes 2004: 23).

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[14] Japanese: *nihonkoku to amerikagasshūkoku to no aida no sōgo kyōryoku oyobi anzen hoshō jōyaku*, usually shortened to *Anpo*

During the 70s, US-Japanese relations were shaken by the two "Nixon Shocks", one being the US rapprochement with China, of which Japan's politicians were not informed or consulted beforehand by their security partners. The other shock was the change in US economic policy, which resulted in a big short-time loss for the Japanese economy due to its heavy reliance on a strong dollar (Dian 2014: 84). Despite these setbacks for the US-Japan relationship, cooperation continued on and by the 80s, the security treaty had taken the form of a conventional alliance structure. The JSDF had acquired new equipment, boosting their abilities to defend US bases on Japanese soil and assisting US forces, which in turn served as the main tool to project power against the Soviet Union (Hughes 2004: 97).

3.3.1.1 *Anpo* in Post-Cold War

With the end of the Cold War came a considerable shift in the security environment of the whole Far East and Asia Pacific region that also had an impact on the *Anpo* alliance. Change in Russia, China and the two Koreas made these nations the main hotspots.

In regards to Russia, three main issues changed with the conclusion of the Cold War and the dissolution of the USSR. First and foremost, the decrease in power of the former Soviet Union meant that also the threat towards the Western allies in the East Asian region decreased. While the US and the USSR had both been superpowers of somewhat similar capabilities, they had acted in a predictable manner during their struggle. Likewise, the USSR had also represented one of the biggest rationale and driving factors behind the close alliance between the US and Japan. As this duality dissolved and the threat decreased, Japanese dependence on US military protection and power did also begin to wane. Then again, the relationship between Japan and Russia showed no signs of rapprochement, hinging on several factors, mainly the open territorial dispute over the four southern Kuril Islands (Northern Territories) that the USSR had occupied in the final days of the Pacific War. Other issues were lacking recognition of change in Russia by the Japanese and fear of Russian military hardware and technology being sold to other regional rivals. Though several attempts to clear this issue had been made over time, the dispute remained unresolved and represented a major obstacle for Russo-Japanese diplomatic relations. Lastly, the lack of stability in Russian domestic and foreign policy resulted in an unpredictable and therefore uncertain security environment for the Japanese side.

Somewhat similar to Russia, the PRC also influenced the post-Cold War security environment of Japan due to its unpredictability. But other than with the dissolving Soviet

Union, uncertainties about China's future course were rooted in its increasing economic growth. This led to an increased military spending and a general growth of China as a regional power, that resulted in Japan fearing that the PRC could either become an economic or military rival, or overreach itself and dissolve, whereby the failing Chinese economy would have negative effects on the whole East Asian region. The perceived unpredictability of the Chinese was also chained to their domestic politics, especially reform movements and changes of political key figures. The open questions of the future of Hong Kong and Taiwan did also play into US-Japanese security considerations, especially since Japanese officials feared the possibility of US engagement from bases on Japanese territory in case of conflict outbreaks.

The last hotspot for changes in the security environment was the Korean peninsula, where three main threats were perceived by Japanese strategic planners; these were mainly related to North Korea. Obviously, the two Koreas had a potential for regional instability long before the end of the Cold War. However, the possibility of the North Korean military obtaining nuclear weaponry with the ability to strike the Japanese islands represented a new threat to the security environment. Furthermore, the stability of North Korea was called into question, since it was expected that the Kim regime would not be able to continuously consolidate its power especially with the gradual change in leadership from Kim Il-Sung to Kim Jong-Il. Lastly, though one of the more unlikely considerations, the potential for a reunification of both Koreas was seen as a threatening factor by the Japanese, as a combined Korea would boast an immense military force, at least by numbers. If this reunified country continued along the lines of the very hostile North, while benefiting from the bilateral alliance of the United States and South Korea, Japan would have found itself in a very isolated and difficult position (Fukuyama and Oh 1993: 8-15).

The end of the Cold War, and the numerous new security considerations in a new environment, several other, more general issues put pressure on US-Japanese relations and strained the *Anpo* alliance. Economic and social difficulties, together with trade imbalances which encouraged US criticism of Japan lead to a decrease of Japanese respect towards their ally. The US on the other hand grew suspicious of a perceived shift from market-oriented to a mercantilist economy in Japan. With the decreasing pressure and reduced threat from the traditional security issue of the Cold War era, Japan attempted to find a more independent international posture with less US influence on Japanese foreign policy (Fukuyama and Oh 1993: 21-22).

As a countermeasure to gradually shifting apart, the United States took a first step to revitalize and to further strengthen the US-Japan alliance in 1995 by publishing a report that focused primarily on this alliance and on Japan as the centerpiece of the US East Asia policy and strategy. Simultaneously, the Japanese side reviewed their own security policies and defense doctrines, revising their Cold War National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) in close connection to the American report (Hughes 2004: 98-99). After the NDPO was revised in 1995 (MoFA Japan n.d. b), the *US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security: Alliance for the Twenty First Century* followed in 1996 (MoFA Japan 1996), which reaffirmed the security cooperation between both nations and also widened its focus on more than just Japan, by emphasizing the importance of the *Anpo* alliance for the whole Asia Pacific region. Finally, in 1997, the revision of the *Guidelines for the US-Japan Defense Cooperation* was published, focusing on bilateral cooperation in humanitarian and military issues, especially logistic support through the JSDF. This revision took until 1999 to pass all stages of approval and did then give the US-Japanese alliance a much broader scope of options to deal with regional security issues. Another shift was made by the Japanese government, that extended the potential and permitted range of JSDF operations beyond the area adjacent to the Japanese islands, since there was no geographical limitation to Japan's security interests (Hughes 2004: 99-100; Dian 2013: 4-5).

3.3.1.2 *Anpo* in the 21st Century

With the turn of the century, the changes in the global security environment following the September 11th attacks and the subsequent US led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, prompted Japan to react with swift amendments that enabled the JSDF to further protect US military facilities in Japan and to provide noncombat support to allied forces, while also allowing the JSDF to fire upon vessels or troops violating Japanese territory (Cossa and Glosserman 2005: 9). In 2004 followed a report by the so-called Araki Commission, re-assessing the security environment of the 21st century. While the main goals and issues remained similar to other post-Cold War assessments, this report was notable for strongly advocating a more outward looking self-defense strategy and stronger ties within the US-Japan alliance. Moreover, it called for the implementation of an effective ballistic missile defense (BMD) system. The latter required a relaxation of Japanese bans on arms exports to enable research and development of such systems together with the United States, which was granted, especially in the face of the North Korean Missile Crisis, one of the two main security treats (the other being the growing military power and assertiveness of China) identified in the 2004 version of the NDPO following the

Araki Commission report (Cossa and Glosserman 2005: 14-15; Armitage and Nye 2007: 19). Security threats from North Korean potential nuclear capabilities, China's growing military prowess and, in connection, territorial disputes as well as SLOC have remained the top concerns to Japanese defense policy over the 21st century. Similarly, those issues and their containment are regarded as common objectives in US-Japan relations, making them the consistent focal point of the security alliance. In regards to SLOC security (Koga 2009: 8), JMSDF vessels started participating in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden together with task forces from various other nations. Because of the limitations that banned collective self-defense, Japanese forces would not have been allowed to cooperate with US vessels in defense of Japanese interests or security (Armitage and Nye 2012: 15). In July 2014, a reinterpretation of the constitutional restrictions on collective self-defense by Abe's cabinet opened up the possibility of the JSDF helping and directly supporting US forces. Japan's parliament's Lower House approved the 2014 Cabinet Resolution in July 2015, albeit under strong protest from opposition parties and the Japanese public, and was approved by the LDP-dominated Upper House in September 2015. Next to domestic opposition, the ROK and the PRC criticized the security bill, urging Japan to adhere to its pacifist principles to not endanger regional stability (Bendini 2015: 16-17; Borah 2015). Although this represents a big step in regard to the US-Japan alliance, those changes come with several restrictions. Japanese forces will be able to help close allies if there is a threat to constitutional rights, liberty, or the happiness of Japanese citizens. Furthermore, military aid can only be given if all diplomatic means to ensure the safety of the citizens are futile. Lastly, military force shall be limited to the bare minimum. All three restrictions act to hamper the potential of the new collective self-defense abilities of the JSDF. Nevertheless, it opens up a variety of possibilities for close cooperation, training and planning between both allies (Cossa and Glosserman 2014: 7-8). In April 2015, the *Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation*, which had been negotiated since 2013, were finalized, containing four main features of particular importance to the evolvement of the *Anpo* alliance: First, the establishment of an Alliance Coordination Mechanism for faster and more flexible cooperation; Second, expanding cooperation in ISR, counterterrorism and peace keeping operations (PKO); Third, the assistance of JSDF for US forces under attack, as allowed by the 2014 Cabinet Resolution and 2015 Security Bill, and fourth, the decision that both nations should strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation with other nations, and take on leadership roles in regional and global nontraditional security operations and capacity building (Liff 2013: 87-88; Chanlett-Avery et al. 2015: 19).

Finally, one of the most prominent and persistent issues for the *Anpo* alliance has been the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands territorial dispute. With recurring crises, clashing patrol vessels and protesters, and more recently, incursions of Chinese military vessels into the waters surrounding the area, the question on whether these islands are covered by the US-Japan security treaty should a military confrontation arise, has been asked repeatedly. The United States have, for the longest time, avoided to take a definitive position, announcing that they would not take any side in this territorial dispute, although they sought to emphasize their commitment to their ally. A palpable shift from this stance could be sensed in 2010 when Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced that the islands would be defended under the US treaty obligations (Manyin 2013: 5). This announcement was further bolstered by a statement from US President Barrack Obama in April of 2014, when he emphasized and reaffirmed that the US-Japan treaty covers all territories under Japanese administration and that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are subject to Article 5 of security treaty, whereby the US would act against foreign aggression towards Japan and Japanese territories (Singh 2014).

3.3.2 Japan-Australia Security Relations

Following the end of the Pacific War, and throughout the Cold War up to the 21st century, Japan and Australia have shared a very similar position in the strategic environment and the Asia Pacific alliance system. Both nations are closely tied to their US allies in a network of bilateral security treaties known as the hub-and-spokes system, with the United States being the unifying hub. This system has secured an American hegemony over the Asia Pacific, while also promoting the establishment of the economic networks that benefit the region. The hub-and-spoke alliance system emerged with the failure to establish a NATO-like multilateral security alliance in the area in order to ensure western predominance and to deter the encroachment of the USSR in East and Southeast Asia (Ikenberry 2004: 354-356). Close relations between Australia and Japan were a natural consequence of being linked through the United States. This connection grew into a regional economic partnership over the course of the Cold War. First attempts to include defense and regional security were made in the 90s with negotiations and visits from the respective defense ministers followed by reports advising to form defense ties with Japan, especially in regards to intelligence sharing. Australia was one of the first to support JSDF PKOs. First real negotiations began in 1996, initiated by Australia's view that Northeast and Southeast Asian regional security cannot be separated (Terada 2010: 6-8). Due to the fact that the two nations form the most northern and the most southern component of the hub-and-

spokes alliance system they enclose the PRC between them, sharing all associated problems, especially the issue of the South China Sea and the security of the SLOC (Graham 2014: 43). Since regional stability was seen as a topic of utmost importance to Australia, which was heavily tied to China and Japan in exports and imports, Australian politicians sought a direct link to Japan to proactively ensure stability in Northeast Asia. Due to the restrictions of the Japanese constitution, as well as numerous bureaucratic hurdles and lacking support from the US, these first attempts to form a security alliance never gained enough traction to reach fruition (Ball 2006: 167; Terada 2010: 8).

With the rise of China, the American view eventually changed and during the Bush administration interest in a trilateral security cooperation grew. A Japan-Australia connection was seen as an efficient counterweight to China by Prime Ministers Howard and Koizumi, which led to the inclusion of security and defense elements into the mostly economic bilateral relationship (Terada 2010: 9-10). Militarily, Japan and Australia cooperated closely in PKOs and disaster relief efforts in the early years of the 21st century connected to the US-led *war on terror* following an earlier collaboration in Cambodia in 1992. The JSDF helped supply and refuel the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and closely cooperated with the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) in the latter country, where JGSDF units were conducting humanitarian and reconstruction operations. Both nations further cooperated in peacekeeping in Timor-Leste and in the aftermath of natural disaster, such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami (Katahara 2012: 131; NIDS 2013: 92; Terada 2010: 13).

Starting in 2006, Australia, Japan and the USA introduced the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD), aimed primarily on countering terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) through strategic assessment and information sharing (MoFA Japan 2006). Concerning Australian-Japanese bilateral relations and next to cooperation of JSDF and ADF there has also been a constant exchange and dialogue between the respective defense ministries and politicians, which led to the *Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation* (JDSC), announced in 2007 and a revised *Memorandum on Defence Exchange* in the following year. The JDSC was the first Japanese treaty of this sort, next to the *Anpo* treaty with the United States, and was also aimed at not only improving Japanese and Australian defense cooperation, but also strengthening the trilateral relationship of all three nations (Katahara 2012: 133; DoD Australia 2013: 95). The main focal points of the JDSC are to respond to new security threats and to enhance security cooperation for border security, counter-terrorism, maritime and aviation security, human relief operations as well as disarmament and counter-proliferation of

WMD and so forth (MoFA Japan 2007). Although the treaty was as major step both countries took towards each other, the JDSC did not fully represent Australia's whish for a formal defensive alliance (Graham 2014: 47). Nonetheless does the continued and improving cooperation in the years since the signing of the JDSC show that important progress has been made, though some see a much higher potential and room to increase cooperation in the future (Davies 2014: 82), especially since the JDSC was not necessarily focused primarily on maritime problems, but had a broader focus. The main rationale for a Japan-Australia security cooperation or alliance on the other hand, is certainly found in maritime issues (Graham 2014: 47).

The next big step was made in September 2012, when Japan and Australia held the biannual *2+2 meeting* (each nation sent their foreign and their defense minister) in Sydney. The meeting resulted in a document including many new clauses and further tightening the security partnership of Japan and Australia. One of the main focal points of the meeting was to promote adherence to UNCLOS, while other important issues were the promotion of peace in regard to the South China Sea dispute and the increase of maritime security, especially concerning SLOCs (Sahashi 2013: 12; Graham 2014: 48). Simultaneously both nations also ratified an *Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement* (ACSA) which had been signed two years earlier (Katahara 2012:152) and an *Information Security Agreement* (ISA). Australia and Japan also intensified their bilateral and trilateral training exercises together with the United States (Ishihara 2014: 93), with intentions to specifically improve cooperation in amphibious operations through continued future training exercises. The ACSA also enabled the JMSDF to support and refuel an ADF naval vessel during disaster relief efforts in the Philippines in 2013 (NIDS 2014: 192) and allowed for logistical cooperation between both militaries in relief and supply missions in South Sudan (Sahashi 2013: 13; DoD Australia 2013: 61).

In the last few years, Japan's and Australia's bilateral cooperation has made an obvious leap towards institutionalization. Ishihara (2014) argues that this institutionalization is part of the high value placed on the defense cooperation by both governments, together with the long and positive track record of the security cooperation, especially in regard to joint peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. The institutionalization is based on a three-part approach, containing the creation of a framework for military cooperation, training and exchange, the creation of a legal framework, and the formation of non-partisan support for the security cooperation. First, exchange and unit-to-unit training were facilitated by numerous ministerial meetings and visits, which, with the inclusion of the US as a mutual ally, lead to a trilateral

strategic dialogue. Second are the two aforementioned treaties, ACSA and ISA, which form the main body of a legal framework for cooperation between both countries. The last piece important for the institutionalization is the creation of political foundation. As Ishihara mentions, both countries have seen political change since the commencement of the institutionalization process around 2007, but although the governing parties did change, cooperation has steadily developed and bipartisan political support has grown and continued (2014: 95-103). Next to those more internally focused reasons, Davies (2014) has also identified external factors that have influenced the improvement and institutionalization in the latter part of the last decade up to today.

Population growth has increased settlement in disaster-prone environments (expected to further grow due to climate change), prompting a higher demand for humanitarian operations. Globalization has connected countries that are separated by great distances but share common infrastructure in cyberspace, but has also given rise to more non-traditional security threats through international networks and multinational organizations. Maritime trade has also grown and become a necessity for most countries, making this SLOC security even more important. On the more militarily focused side, the arms industry has grown more and more complex with costs for R&D rising exponentially for new armament projects, leading to cross-country cooperation and joint developments. Nonetheless, East and Southeast Asia have experienced a continued military modernization and capability increase in many nations, some, as North Korea or Iran, potentially increasing their nuclear armament. Lastly, the rise of China signifies a main power shift in the Asia Pacific region on the one side and on the other, the US pivot back to the Asia Pacific region, this development being coupled with the introduction of new strategies to deal with emerging security threats through increased incorporation of regional allies (Davies 2014: 83-84).

The rise of China, especially in regard to the military growth, rather than the economic side of China's resurgence, worries Australia and Japan as well as their US ally. Since 2007, US-Australian military exercises have included the JSDF as observers, later on as participant in order to improve interoperability. Furthermore, the Australian government decided to increase the ADF equipment compatibility by ordering three new naval destroyers of the *Hobart*-class outfitted with the Aegis Combat System that is also employed by JMSDF and USN vessels. Moreover, there has been an internal rebalance of force posture in regard to the growing capabilities of the PLA, although recent defense budget cuts have hampered this development (Terada 2010: 22-23; Air Warfare Destroyer Alliance 2014; Lee 2014: 21). Still,

the overall maritime capacity of the JMSDF and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) are limited, even in the area of their most likely cooperation, the South China Sea. Capacity building is under continuous constraint by financial limitation due to other areas of concern, especially the East China Sea.

While initially conceived to deal with more non-traditional security threats such as terrorism and arms proliferation, reportedly the TSD has also begun to concentrate more on traditional strategic concerns. Although the TSD is not a tool for the containment of China, the close cooperation between the US, Australia and Japan is evident in collective policy decisions concerning regional island disputes, as well as in defense equipment deals between Japan and Australia and likely future trilateral military exercises (Pollmann 2015b).

Graham concludes that, even though having high potential, the Japan-Australian security cooperation is still largely overshadowed by their respective bilateral relationship to the United States. Nonetheless he sees the Japanese-Australian collaboration and technology sharing, especially in regard to the development of future submarines for the RAN, as an important step towards keeping the momentum of the Japan-Australia security partnership going (2014: 56) and potentially increasing towards an alliance comparable to the bilateral relationships with the US, a tendency that has also garnered some critique. Some voices warn that a further development into an alliance might be problematic since it might pull Australia towards the competition between Japan and China, though the latter is by now Australia's biggest trading partner (Ishihara 2014: 113).

3.3.3 Japan and Other Countries

Over the course of the last decade, Japan has become more active in its search for security cooperation and foreign partnerships, as exemplified in the previous chapter. Apart from Australia and the United States, Japan has had varying success in courting its closer or more distant maritime neighbors, though never in a scope similar to the US or Australia.

The most obvious and, objectively viewed, reasonable choice for a strategic partnership close to the Japanese shores would be South Korea. Both nations are important parts in the hub-and-spoke alliance system of the United States and both cooperate very closely with US military forces. Furthermore they share a common adversary in North Korea, which regularly directs its threats and failing missile launches at both countries. In a wider geographical scope, Japan and South Korea also share the same interest in securing the East- and South China Sea to protect

their SLOCs (Sahashi 2013: 15-16) and are or were both involved in a territorial dispute with China. However, the PRC-ROK dispute over the submerged Socotra Rock appears to be only of marginal importance compared to other regional territorial disputes, especially since Chinese sources have publicly stated in 2013 that there is no territorial dispute with the ROK, although their respective ADIZ still overlap (GlobalSecurity.org 2013a; Yonhap News Agency 2013). Under US leadership both countries have participated in trilateral military drills together, though military cooperation remains very low. Although there was an attempt to establish *Acquisition & Cross-Service* as well as *General Security of Military Information* agreements, these failed to be approved by the South Korean Congress. The persisting ownership dispute over the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands and the perceived lack of Japanese acknowledgement of historical issues from the Pacific War are the main challenges that hold back any closer strategic Japan-South Korea partnership (Sahashi 2013: 16-17).

As with South Korea, Japan and the Philippines do also share their linkage to the United States via the hub-and-spoke alliance system. Both countries were vital parts in its initial function as a counterweight and blockade against communism, although the respective focus has changed over time and with the disappearance of a "communist threat" in the region. While Japan remained a strong and close ally to the US, the relationship between the US and the Philippines started to focus more on internal security issues and counterterrorism. The relationship between Japan and the Philippines remained mainly economical during the 20th century, with Japan becoming the Philippines' second most important economic partner during the 70s. With the steady rise of China starting at the end of the Cold War, the relations between the PRC and the Philippines grew as well, and with Japan coming to see China as a new rival in the 21st century, this development started to alarm Tōkyō (Cruz de Castro 2009: 706-708; Shoji 2009: 183). Japan continued and increased disaster relief and economic aid, and also provided training to the Philippine Coast Guard, and by 2007 managed to create the *Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement*. This can be seen as the continuation of the Japanese strategy to maintaining a balance of influence in Southeast Asia, aiming at matching China's advances in maintain a regional balance of influence, rather than at fully containing China's ambitions. From 2005 onward, Japan has also conducted a series of militarily-oriented talks to bolster security cooperation between both countries, focusing especially on Japanese support and capacity building of the Philippine Coast Guard. Although the issue of China's rise was already a topic, both sides refrained from promoting any ideas of an anti-Chinese alliance in the making (Cruz de Castro 2009:709-713). With the continued escalation of the South China

Sea Dispute, China proceeded to push the Philippines closer to Japan and to the US. While Japan maintains that it does not take any position in the ongoing territorial dispute between China and the other various claimant states, Japan is, as always, concerned for the safety of its SLOCs and maritime freedom of navigation. In 2011, both nations created the *Japan-Philippines Strategic Partnership* and as a result of the 2012 Scarborough Shoal standoff between the PRC and the Philippines, Japan provided ten patrol vessels to support the Philippine Coast Guard (Ordaniel 2013; Sato 2013; Trajano 2013). In the following year, both countries continued to tighten their relations, with the Philippines potentially opening some military ports to USN and even JMSDF vessels, and both governments vowing close cooperation to ensure that regional territorial disputes are only solved by legal means (Amador III 2013). Still, it is considered unlikely that Japan-Philippine relations could evolve into a fully-fledged military alliance, moving beyond maritime security and law-enforcement or material support, since the negative reaction of the PRC is expected to be to severe (Sahashi 2013: 18).

A bilateral partnership between Japan and India was formed in the early 2000s. Diplomatic dialogue and negotiations persisted and have later-on intensified, including a 2+2 dialogue together with naval exercises since 2009. Japan's main interest in a security partnership with India is the ability to guarantee safety for the crucial SLOC stretching through the Indian Ocean (Naidu 2011: 12-13; Sahashi 2013: 14-15). The first major step was in establishing the *Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India* in 2008, and although the declaration calls for closer cooperation, military exchange and drills, it mainly concentrates on the fight against terrorism and piracy in the Indian Ocean (MoFA Japan 2008). Both countries also emphasized the fact that it is a *strategic* cooperation (Panda R. 2011: 4). China has, unsurprisingly, taken this as an alarming signal, fearing containment or encirclement through an Indo-Japanese alliance (Khan 2011: 23). Most recently, Japan and India took another big step towards each other in 2014, when their respective defense ministers approved expanded cooperation in the Indo-Japanese defense relationship, particularly in regard to maritime security, counter-terrorism and anti-piracy. Made possible by the relaxation of Japan's ban on arms trading, India will also be buying a number of maritime surveillance aircraft indigenously developed by Japan (Panda A. 2014a; Panda A. 2014b; MEA India 2014).

3.3.4 China and Potential Military Alliances

Over the course of the 1990s, China's position on security and diplomacy shifted towards a more regionalized and global approach. Leaving its former solitude behind, China has

established a number of thriving bilateral relationships all over the globe. While the United States were primarily focused on their military engagement in the Middle East and became enveloped in the global economic and financial crisis during the first decade of the 21st century, the PRC expanded globally, fanning out its diplomatic relationships and increasing its regional dominance, emerging as a new power in the east (Gill 2010: 1). Then again, China has had a long lasting animosity towards military alliances, originating in the bloc politics of the Cold War. Also, China, historically, has not had many military alliances with other foreign powers, only the Sino-North Korean partnership and a Sino-Russian security alliance for the short duration of ten years, from 1950 to 1960. In the early 90s, China's leadership made clear that they saw military alliances as a remnant of the past, as major proponents of the Cold War, and that the PRC would have no part in either military alliance, arms races or military expansion. Chu Shulong (1999) further explains that the Chinese national mentality, though not seeing China as the center of the world, still maintains that it is a big and great country, and therefore refuses to become either entangled with the problems of a smaller power, or to be regarded as a "smaller brother" itself. Lastly he maintains that, since the Chinese have mostly been on the opposing side to the US-led security network in East Asia, their experiences with alliances are mostly negative, being regarded as a cause for many East and Southeast Asian conflicts that also involved China (Chu 1999: 5-7).

3.3.4.1 China and North Korea

The diplomatic ties between the PRC and the DPRK originated in the formative era of East Asian communist regimes after the Pacific War. The close military partnership became obvious when Chinese forces of PLA volunteers intervened in the ongoing Korean War on behalf of North Korea in late 1950. Even before, the PRC leadership had enabled ethnic Korean regiments of the PLA that were previously engaged in the power struggle in China to return to North Korea with their weapons and equipment, virtually enabling Kim Il Sung to plan and execute his invasion of the South. Over the course of the Korean War and during the phase of negotiations to end the conflict, several disputes erupted between Kim Il Sung and the Chinese leadership, resulting in a cooling-down of bilateral relations. In 1956, the PRC reacted negatively to several high-level purges instigated by Kim, and when China later-on refused to release a number of victims of these purges who has managed to seek asylum in China, the discord resulted in a swift withdrawal of all PLA troops stationed in North Korea by 1958,

which on the other hand increased the DPRK's independence, but also hampered the military cooperation between both countries (Chen 2003: 4-6).

During the early 60s, Beijing and Moscow engaged in an ongoing debate on true communism, heavily straining the PRC-USSR relationship up to a point where the Chinese leadership considered the possibility of a Soviet attack. Isolated from the rest of the communist world, which had taken the Soviet Union's side, China again grew closer to North Korea, which officially remained neutral in the Sino-Soviet split, though unofficially Kim Il Sung leaned heavily towards China, due to his reservations and animosity towards the new Soviet stance against personality-cults (Chen 2003: 7). In 1961 Chinese and North Korean officials signed the *Sino-North Korean Mutual Aid and Cooperation Friendship Treaty*. In the second article of the treaty, both countries assure each other of immediate support through all necessary measures in case of any attack on either nation. The treaty itself is renewed every 20 years and can only be dissolved through a lengthy process, making it a very binding commitment that even exceeds the US-South Korean security alliance (Harrison 2002: 322).

Nonetheless, the China-North Korea relationship was riddled by continuous disputes and estrangement attributed to the diverging courses during the later years of the Cold War, China becoming a more open country and normalizing its relations to the West, while North Korea remained closed off and striving for its ideological self-sufficiency. Still, the PRC leadership continued to uphold its friendly relationship to Kim Jong Il's dictatorship, though not out of consideration for their security partnership, but rather due to the strategic significance attributed to a possible collapse of the DPRK, and also to maintain North Korea as a strategic buffer state. But the bilateral relations decreased further, although the PRC food supply helped to prevent the collapse of the country during the North Korean food-crisis in the 1990s (Chen 2003: 9). Especially with the North Korean insistence to continue its nuclear development and test program, China has turned to open criticism concerning its ally's actions, backed up by economic sanctions, reducing trade and energy supply to North Korea after the second and third nuclear weapon tests in 2009 and 2013. Nonetheless, these sanctions persisted for only a short time, and trade continued the same year. (Xu and Bajoria 2014). China's opposition and rejection of North Korea's nuclear ambitions is mainly based on its concerns for regional stability. Furthermore, the PRC leadership wants to avoid the possibility of a strong Japanese reaction towards continued North Korean belligerence, leading to a sped-up normalization of Japanese military stance that might thwart or collide with Chinese ambitions in the region (Nanto and Manyin 2010: 8).

With the recent development of the East Asian region, it is obvious that China and North Korea departed from their former relationship as military allies a long time ago. With North Korea becoming more erratic in its behavior, it is more of a risk factor for Beijing's regional ambitions and strategy than a reliable ally – this was made apparent by the existence of Chinese contingency plans to react to instability and collapse in North Korea by closing borders to prevent an increased influx of refugees, and by sending PLA troops to restore order (Glaser, Snyder and Park 2008: 17). Furthermore, the Chinese side has on several occasions expressed doubts about the security treaty of 1961, regarding it as a remnant of the Cold War. Reportedly, in 2002 the Chinese government even tried to revise the part of the document guaranteeing immediate military assistance, though the North Korean government rejected the proposed changes. Still, a scholarly debate has persisted, based upon the fear that North Korean nuclear ambitions could drag China into an international conflict, even though it is believed that the PRC government would still only act upon its treaty obligations after careful considerations and only if it were in China's strategic interest (Glaser and Billingsley 2012:7-8).

3.3.4.2 Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was created through security negotiations between Russia and other former Soviet states and China, in order to reduce potential friction and border disputes in the post-Cold War era. From 1996 onwards, the 'Shanghai Five' signed treaties for the reduction of military forces stationed on their borders, to establish closer cooperation and annual meetings. In a next step, the group expanded and in 2001 officially founded the SCO, aimed at containing the 'three evils': terrorism, separatism and extremism. The last phase followed in 2004, when the SCO increasingly strived for international recognition, after concentrating mainly on economic cooperation and countering the 'three evils' in the years before. Simultaneously the SCO started to establish itself as a counterweight to the West, winning over several Central Asian countries as members or observers after their governments were faced with continued Western criticism. Through Russian instigation the SCO developed a more anti-Western position, although all member states continue their own relations to Western nations and the SCO generally remains a tool to deal with Central Asian or domestic affairs in which outside interference is unwanted and rejected (de Haas 2007: 7-10). In its final form, the SCO is formed by six core members, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, with four observer states, Mongolia, Iran, Pakistan and India – thereby including four nuclear powers and a great military potential, especially by

numbers. Nonetheless, the SCO has repeatedly stated that, even as it was formed as a security cooperation against the 'three evils', it is primarily focused on economic cooperation and development (de Haas 2008: 15-16). Comparing the two main players of the SCO, Russia and China, this statement might be especially applicable to the latter. Russia is assumed to use the SCO to compete with the USA and NATO and to counter the development of US bases in Central Asia alongside the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. China, on the other hand, regards the Central Asian region mainly as a potential market for its expanding economy, much less as an area of military conflict. The establishment of the SCO enabled China to gain access to the region through means of *soft power* rather than engaging through military threats of comparable methods (Bailes and Dunay, 2007: 11-14).

In terms of military partnership, the SCO appeared to be partially divided due to the opposing views and intentions of Russia and the PRC. Although the members participated in joint military exercises and war games, China rejected the inclusion of forces of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a Russian led military alliance system made up of former Soviet states. In comparison to the SCO, the CSTO is a far more developed multilateral alliance, with an established and permanent military force, command staff and annual training exercises, and firmly under Russian control (Frost 2009 101-102). Chinese rejection of the participation of CSTO forces in the joint military exercise called 'Peace Mission 2007' was attributed to an intra-SCO power struggle between Russia and the PRC, and also to a lacking interest in future cooperation with the CSTO (de Haas 2007: 43-44). Even so, CSTO continuously tried to push for more cooperation between both networks, succeeding in negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding, which China had rejected previously. De Haas (2008) sees this Memorandum, together with several other smaller instances, as a sign for progress in the CSTO-SCO relationship, reasoning that closer ties between both organizations might strengthen the military aspect of the SCO. Especially in regard to the adoption of mechanisms such as a rapid respond force or closer military assistance, the already established components of the CSTO would facilitate a smooth transition (de Haas 2008: 23-24, 26). Contrary to this view, others expect that, even if there was continued security cooperation between China and Russia, there would not be an attempt to form a NATO-like alliance system in Central Asia. China has held a position against military alliance formations, and a deviation from that course could seriously damage China's reputation and hurt its image as a proponent of a multipolar world (Mitchell 2007: 142). Furthermore, the *Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation Between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation* of 2001 does not contain

any security guarantees that would bind either country with political or military obligations, but focuses more on the diplomatic and economic side of the partnership (Mitchell 2007: 144-145, Weitz 2008: 36).

The two facets of the relation between China and the SCO and Russia and China are the most apparent. Strategically, China has used the SCO as a tool to secure its Central Asia land borders during the onset of the 21st century, in an effort to regain the ability to refocus its military strength towards the Far East where it is engaged in a number of territorial disputes. Over the course of the Cold War and up into the 90s, PLA forces were stationed *en masse* along the Central Asian borders in an effort to discourage Soviet aggression. Furthermore, in 2006 the SCO helped to create an area free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia, thereby allowing China to reduce and redirect military resources towards other areas of conflict and to increase investment for economic development, while the SCO helps to maintain regional stability along the Central Asian border (de Haas 2007: 35). The second major aspect of the Russo-Chinese relationship is the arms trade and military technology transfer. Following the end of the Cold War, the PRC started a lasting campaign to modernize the PLA and its respective branches. Due to arms embargos from the US and the EU, Russia was China's only alternative to quickly gain a lot of high-tech equipment, while Russia profited from selling off surplus Soviet weaponry, especially maritime vessels, aircrafts and missile technology. As a downside, China was thereby able to quickly develop the necessary expertise to now compete with Russia on the international market, straining Sino-Russian relations to some degree. By 2007, arms trade between China and Russia had markedly decreased, which was attributed to Chinese reverse engineering of Russian imports, and the improved capacities of the Chinese defense industry (Brækhus and Øverland 2007: 52-54; Jakobson, Holtom, Knox and Peng 2011: 13-14; Paramonov and Strokov 2006: 8).

Most recently, with the steady escalation of the East and South China Sea Disputes over the last years, and the eruption of the Crimea conflict and the fighting in eastern Ukraine connected to Russia, Sino-Russian relations have experienced a small revival. Under President Xi Jinping the PRC is increasing efforts to further establish a new Asian security structure that would exclude the United States, to limit their power and influence in the region. The basis for this new network would most likely be the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building measures in Asia (CICA) group, that also includes Russia and Iran, while the US or Japan only remain observer states. Even though the Chinese side has called for the creation of a security response center and for increased defense consultation, it is seen as unlikely that a real security

alliance could develop out of CICA (The Japan Times 2014a). Coincidentally, the 2014 SCO military drills, called *Peace Mission 2014* held in China, were reported to be significantly larger than the previous, annually shrinking, military exercises. While the reason for this sudden increase in manpower and quality equipment at the war games is unknown, it is partially attributed to a general rapprochement between the PRC and Russia in light of recent eruption of regional flashpoints and the growing rivalry towards the west. Furthermore the most obvious answer would be a joint show of force toward the conflict in Ukraine and towards US and EU sanctions against Russia. Still, it is believed that, while both countries seem to strive towards closer military and political cooperation, a real alliance would be unlikely, since the points of interest of both nations are too different, and China still opposes military alliances (Kucera 2014).

3.3.5 Analysis

If seen side-by-side, Japan and China both hold rather different positions in terms of alliances. A direct comparison clearly shows that Japan is more prone to engage in diplomatic behavior associated with alliance building, and does, most importantly, maintain a defensive alliance with the United States, dedicated to the security of the Japanese territory. China, on the other hand, has a more reluctant approach towards military alliances of any sort.

Of all the Japanese foreign relations analyzed, the US-Japan security treaty does, without question, fulfill all requirements to speak of it as a defensive alliance, as well as to regard it as a politically relevant alliance under Senese and Vasquez' (2008) framework, especially with the United States' more recent reassurance that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are covered by the US-Japan security partnership, in case a militarized crisis should erupt. Furthermore, the recent developments in 2015 have caused Japan and the US to move even closer together. With the lessening of restrictions on collective self-defense and the new Defense Guidelines, Japan appears to be on the path to become a more "normal" nation in a conventional sense, and thereby also a "normal" alliance partner, sharing greater burdens with the United States (Bendini 2015: 17-18). Equally obvious is the assumption that there is no relevant kind of security relationship between Japan and the ROK. While the ROK shares a comparable relationship with the United States, there is no relevant kind of closer security ties with Japan.

After the US-Japan Alliance, the strategic partnership between Australia and Japan is the most refined and extensive one. Through the JDSC, the ACSA and ISA both nations have a broad basis for security cooperation, strengthened by their bilateral relationships to the United States. While it has been noted that in some instances there has been the wish to establish a formal defensive alliance, the actual defense relationship of both countries falls short of this designation. Neither does the JDSC contain a commitment to assist defensive efforts of either nation in case of an international dispute, nor has it any distinctive defensive focus against a particular threat. Furthermore, there is no mention of neutrality akin to a neutrality or non-aggression pact, although it may be possible to assume that several security treaties for close cooperation might express a similar position.

When conveyed in the three alliance types of the COW definition, the Japan-Australia relationship might be a détente. Though the wording of the JDSC does not explicitly contain consultation in case of an armed attack or crisis, it contains the "exchange of strategic assessments and related information" (MoFA Japan 2007) and the ACSA and ISA treaties both further enable those commitments.

The question whether Australia would fulfill the requirement of spatial adjacency in order to determine the political relevance of a Japan-Australia partnership appears to be somewhat complicated. Although both nations are considered to be part of the Asia Pacific region, Australia is far removed from Japan, and geographically separated by a number of other insular states, especially if focused on the territorial disputes in the East China Sea. The bulk of these Southeast Asian states also prevents the establishment of a direct regional connection between Australia and China via the South China Sea. Only the RAN's strategic focus on the South China Sea and Australia's uninhibited access to the Indian Ocean, and therefore to all important SLOC, might be seen as a strategically relevant factor in case of a conflict escalation between Japan and the PRC, with Australia aiding Japan.

Although the India-Japan relationship shares a Joint Agreement comparable to the Japan-Australia JDSC, it is much harder to clearly define the relevance and meaning of the Japan-India connection. While the partnership between Japan and Australia might be considered an entente, it is questionable whether the anti-piracy focused cooperation and joint-naval drills between the JMSDF and the Indian naval forces are to be seen as the same. Still, both countries maintain close cooperation and consulting, and furthermore engage in arms trade, a trend similar to the Japan-Australia relationship. In regard to political relevance, the question is equally complex as in the case of Australia. The Sino-Indian border is arguably too far away

from the East China Sea to exert an influence on potential maritime territorial crises. Furthermore, to matter from a military viewpoint, India and Japan would need a defensive alliance, which would enable India to threaten China's rear in case of an actual military crisis or war.

The Japan-Philippines relationship is most likely the least formalized and least defense policy-related relationship of those discussed. Only recently has the Security Partnership between both nations gained more traction, when the Philippines gave permission for some ports to be used by USN and JMSDF vessels. Furthermore, the transfer of older Japanese patrol boats to the Philippines underlines Japanese intentions to assist in capacity building and to bolster the Philippines to resist Chinese expansionism and assertiveness in the region. Still, both countries are far away from entering into any sort of formal military alliance. Nonetheless, the Philippines would make the best politically relevant alliance of all potential candidates. Though clearly a minor state, the Philippines are closest to the potential crisis area, they share a maritime border with the PRC and, on top of that, they share Japan's troubled history of territorial disputes with China.

Compared to Japan, China has less alliance-associated partnerships with other nations, mainly with Russia – mostly through the SCO, and with North Korea. Sino-Russian relations have had many ups and downs, particularly during the Cold War, and have only more recently taken a turn towards close cooperation, especially with China's increased interest in purchasing Soviet-made military hardware. Nonetheless, the relationship between both countries is not without complications due to the internal power struggle in the SCO, and also because of their differing strategic focus. As discussed before, the SCO does not work similar to the hub-and-spoke alliance network of the United States, and is not primarily thought out as a military alliance network. With some uncertainty, it could be reasoned that the relationship between the PRC and Russia, especially with recent joint war games and the increasing assertiveness of both countries in their respective regional crisis-prone flashpoints, possibly reaches the level of a entente. With Russia and the PRC both being major powers, their relationship would be regarded as a politically relevant alliance. Even though Russia is somewhat removed from the East China Sea, it still shares maritime borders with Japan, as well as their own ongoing territorial dispute.

The relationship of the PRC and the DPRK differs from Sino-Russian relations. All through the Cold War, China retained North Korea as an ally, and as a buffer state at its northeastern border. There can be no question that both nations are part of a defensive alliance,

as the text of the 1961 *Mutual Aid and Cooperation Friendship Treaty* defines their commitment to come to each other's help, militarily or otherwise. The attempts of the Chinese side to change the wording of the treaty to lessen their responsibilities, and the general cooling of Sino-North Korean relations over time, attributed to the more erratic foreign policy decisions of the DPRK, show a diverging course in regard to military cooperation, but since the treaty has not been revised it must still be considered as an active defensive alliance. In regard to political relevancy North Korea also needs to be considered. Even though it most likely doesn't maintain a naval force capable of interfering in clashes and crises around the Sino-Japanese territorial disputes, North Korea's nuclear ambitions and continuous missile tests, some aimed across the Sea of Japan (East Sea), might suffice to consider the DPRK a military component in an escalation between Japan and China.

3.4 Rivalry

In the discourse of Sino-Japanese relations, rivalry has been a term used in many instances throughout the decades. Without question, both nations do compete economically, and also for political dominance in the East Asian region - in some cases certainly to a degree that would warrant the label of a rivalry, especially taking into consideration the troubled historical relationship both countries share. Nonetheless, this chapter is going to examine a different, more narrowly defined form of rivalry between China and Japan, following the definition from Diehl and Goertz (2001) as discussed previously in chapter 2.1.3.5. To investigate the subject of a militarized rivalry between Japan and China, the spatial and temporal components of the relationship will be analyzed and put into context, as they have been partially covered in previous chapters. The remaining component of the enduring rivalry framework, the military competitiveness will be examined by using the parameters of the MID definition outlined in chapter 2.1.3.4 in order to gain sufficient data to categorize the Sino-Japanese relationship as either sporadic, proto- or enduring rivalry.

3.4.1 Spatial Consistency and Duration

It is rather obvious that Japan and China both qualify as state-level actors in an international system. The history and course of the Sino-Japanese relations discussed in chapter 3.2.2, in regard to the persistent territorial dispute in the East China Sea gives sufficient evidence for the consistency of the dispute. Still, the analysis of various bilateral relationships has shown that both countries are at least to some degree part of a bilateral or multilateral security alliance. Since this is certainly the case for Japan, because of the *Anpo* alliance, the question remains on whether the rivalry – should rivalry exist - between the PRC and Japan should be regarded as being dyadic, or if the rivalry actually exists between China and the US-Japan alliance. Arguably, the main source of the potential Japan-China rivalry would be the unresolved territorial dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and the East China Sea EEZ. Both issues are relevant to the respective national security and economic policies, but not related directly to US strategic interests. This assumption is supported by the fact that for the longest time the United States have sought to avoid any official comment on the issue of the ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, but only reaffirmed their commitment to defend Japan as provided by their security alliance (Manyin 2013: 5). The United States' continued avoidance of a strong and open position should be seen as indication that the potential rivalry associated with the Senkaku/Diaoyu and East China Sea Dispute is related to a dyadic Sino-Japanese relationship.

In order to establish a timeframe in which the duration of the rivalry can reach the minimal necessary extent to classify as enduring rivalry, this analysis will focus on the post-Cold War period and the early 21st century, up to 2014. The dispute between Japan and China started much earlier and experienced several flare-ups during the Cold War, but the signing of the 1978 *Treaty of Peace and Friendship* together with the informal shelving agreement provided for a decade without major incidents connected to the dormant territorial disputes. The re-ignition of the dispute in the 1990s and the continuous deterioration of the situation, coupled with the rise of China as a regional power, can be seen as a fitting starting point to measure for a rivalry relationship.

3.4.2 Military Competitiveness

To assess the degree of military competitiveness, this chapter will mainly focus on analyzing all potential instances of militarized confrontation between China and Japan during the selected timeframe. As a main source, the MID dataset (v.4.1) from the COW databank will be used, additionally Krista E. Wiegand (2009) provides an extensive list of Sino-Japanese military encounters associated with the territorial disputes in the East China Sea.

As shown in chapter 3.2, the history of the Sino-Japanese dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is filled with activists' landing attempts, clashes between coast guard vessels and fishing boats, and intrusions by naval ships and airplanes. However, the paramilitary character of maritime law enforcement seems to make it necessary to clearly differentiate between civil and military encounters, before focusing on individual cases.

The vast majority of confrontations in the vicinity of the disputed islands was between Chinese activists, protestors and fishing boats on one, and JCG vessels on the other side. Direct contact between both nations' military forces was restricted to a bare minimum, and is mostly found only in recent years. Arguably, incidents with civilian actors, as fishermen and protestors, will in most cases not constitute actions related to MIDs, although in some cases the involvement of civilians has caused reactions that were then classified as MID by the COW databank. Wiegand (2009: 179-180) classifies such instances in her listing as *diplomatic* actions, as opposed to *military* actions. A more complex question arises in regard to the coast guards. The various subsets in the three categories of MIDs all work with the term *military forces*, which should lead to the assumption that it only includes actions by those governmental entities denoted as armed forces, which are under the supervision of their respective defense ministry.

Still, several of the MIDs include coast guard or equivalent agencies, therefore, these groups should also be considered under certain circumstances. Since the bigger portion of interactions happen between civilian protestors and coast guard vessels, and do not include violence, use of weapons or the seizure or detainment of citizens or material, this group of incidents can be excluded from consideration for MIDs. Due to the paramilitary nature of most coast guards, armed encounters are still bound to happen, and do occur, which does in some cases lead to MID-like situations.

Overseen by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transportation and Tourism, the JCG is tasked with search and rescue, maritime patrols and as first responder to territorial incursions. In light of China's newfound assertiveness, the JCG cooperates and trains closely with the JMSDF and has received ever-growing funds and new vessels. Patrols to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands increased from three to 30 in recent years, though the JCG is tasked to act defensively in encounters with Chinese protestors in order to avoid collisions such as in September 2010 (International Crisis Group 2013: 41-42). The ships of the JCG are only lightly armed and unable to resist military vessels (Samuels 2007: 3). However, it has been proposed to transfer a number of mostly disarmed JMSDF destroyers scheduled to be retired to the coast guard, to establish a specialized patrol group for the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (Simpson 2013).

Traditionally, Chinese maritime security has been handled by five different agencies: the Maritime Police of the Border Control Department, the Maritime Safety Administration (CMSA), the FLEC, the General Administration of Customs and the State Oceanographic Administration, which includes the CMS. The Border Control Department operated armed and modified PLAN vessels, as does the CMS, while other agencies usually field unarmed ships. Inter-agency rivalries and unclear separation of tasks has led to issues, such as unarmed FLEC vessels being employed as escorts for fishing trawlers, resulting in confrontations with the JCG, for which other agencies would have been better suited. Overall, the CMSA made up the by far largest agency, while the CMS employed the biggest fleet of surveillance aircraft for maritime patrols (Goldstein 2010: 5-20). In 2013, these "five dragons", as the agencies were called, were restructured and merged into one unified China Coast Guard (CCG) under the oversight of the SOA in order to reduce bureaucratic hurdles, overlapping responsibilities, and to increase cooperation between the branches (International Crisis Group 2013: 37; The Economist 2013).

The complicated nature of and relationship between these agencies makes it obvious that it is difficult to downright dismiss or include maritime security agencies in possible MIDs. Much rather, cases in question should be examined carefully before any decision is made.

In order to research the topic of MIDs between Japan and China in a timeframe from 1990 to 2014, MID datasets[15] from the COW databank will be used in combination with Wiegand's (2009) list of China's diplomatic and militarized confrontations from 1978 to 2008. More recent data will be supplemented with analysis of additional sources.

1990s

The earliest possible incident during the 90s appears as a militarized confrontation listed by Wiegand (2009: 179) but missing from the COW MID v.2.1 dataset (Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996). The incident in question happened in December 1991, when armed ships fired warning shots at a Japanese fishing vessel near the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (Wiegand 2009: 179). The ship firing the warning shots on December 6, was operating under the Chinese flag, prompting the Japanese government to make inquiries about the incident. The Chinese side accepted responsibility for the attack, denoting it a mistakenly fired warning shots. Nonetheless, there had also been a number of previous attacks on Japanese fishing vessels in the area around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Since March 1991, there were 16 recorded incidents when Japanese vessels were searched or fired upon by unidentified ships, Chinese patrol boats or possibly, military crafts. On one occasion, a Japanese vessel was boarded and searched by unidentified individuals and at another encounter an unidentified vessel, manned by uniformed crew, shot at a Japanese fishing boat, to which the PRC admitted in July 1992 (Koo 2010: 120; Suganuma 2000: 233-234; Nickerson 1992). With the Chinese government acknowledging those actions, this series of incidents can be regarded as an MID, since it conforms to the category of *Use of Force* through the subset of *raid,* as it were Chinese armed forces firing on Japanese civilians.

The first MIDs noted in the COW MID v. 4.1 dataset are two incidents on August 21, 1995, when two Chinese fighter aircrafts crossed into the airspace of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, prompting Japan to scramble two of their own fighters. This actions constitute a *show of planes* in the *Display of Force* category of MIDs, as listed by the COW dataset (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015).

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[15] All datasets are available for download at http://cow.dss.ucdavis.edu/data-sets/MIDs

The following year a similar incident was also registered, this time as a *show of ships,* when two PLAN submarines were deployed to the area of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in August 1996 (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015).

Wiegand further identifies an incident not considered in the COW dataset that she also classified as an MID (2007: 13), when in September 1996, a group of PLAN vessels was deployed to waters near the disputed islands to conduct military drills, joint maneuvers with PLAAF and PLA Ground Force (PLAGF) forces and a mock blockade, aimed towards Japan (Wiegand 2009: 179; Carpenter 2000: 80). While Wiegand (2007: 13) considered this exercises a *Threat of Force*, maybe under the sub-category of *threat to blockade* it appears that a naval exercise is to be regarded first and foremost as a *Display of Force,* and due to the joint nature of the drills, including a *show of troops*, *show of ships* and *show of planes*. Following this incident, Wiegand also includes an event in October 1996, when the PLAN conducted naval surveillance around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (2007: 13; 2009: 179). Though arguably a relatively minor case, it might be considered as a *show of ships* projecting PRC naval power towards the disputed islands under Japanese *de facto* control and administration.

The last incident of the 1990's occurred between May and July 1999. While the COW MID dataset treats it as one event, Wiegand (2007: 13) classifies it as two separate MIDs. On May 14, 1999, a group of twelve PLAN vessels was sighted in the waters surrounding the disputed islands inside the Japanese EEZ and confronted by patrol vessels of the JMSDF before leaving. A similar event occurred on July 15, when a group of ten PLAN vessels was detected in the Senkaku/Diaoyu area, conducting military maneuvers (O'Shea 2012: 17-18; Wiegand 2011: 102,104; Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015). With both incidents occurring only one month apart, and being very much alike in terms of their appearance and course of action, it can be argued to group them together as a single MID, as done by the COW dataset. Both events are classified as *Displays of Force* through a *show of ships* (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015).

21ˢᵗ Century

The turn of the century brought a short period of relative calm in the waters around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, possibly because of the bilateral prior warning agreement (see chapter 3.2.2.5) implemented in 2001. The MID v.4.1 dataset cataloged a Sino-Japanese MID from July 23 in 2003 to March 27 the following year (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015).

Wiegand (2009: 179) mentions a number of incidents during this time, when government-backed Chinese activists attempted to land on the disputed islands, but classifies those as diplomatic confrontations rather than militarized ones. The MID v.4.1 dataset describes this MID as JCG vessels patrolling outside the Chinese EEZ and around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and ejecting or deterring Chinese activists from reaching the islands. Furthermore, there is mention of an alleged attack from Japanese ships and planes on two Chinese fishing vessels in the vicinity of the islands (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015). Although worded as an attack by Japanese warships in Chinese news media, reportedly only a water cannon was used by a Japanese vessel against the fishing boats. The whole incident received neither coverage by Japanese media nor an official statement (Ferguson 2004; ChinaDaily 2004). Whether it were the alleged warships or not might also be doubtable, due to the sensationalized title, and the fact that sources only depict JCG vessels in images of the news article and the JCG routinely uses water cannons in similar confrontations.

The end of the MID follows an incident where the JCG arrested and detained a number of Chinese nationals that managed to land on the islands on March 24, 2004 and were released two days later (Koo 2009: 225). While it is not sure whether the usage of a water cannon would warrant the classification as *raid* in the *Use of Force* category, the detaining of the Chinese activists over a duration of several days does fit the subcategory of *seizure* as which it is categorized by the COW dataset (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015).

Three militarized confrontations were recorded by Wiegand (2009: 179) in the later part of 2004, with only the last of them are being considered in the MID v.4.1 dataset. The first of this event was in July, when research ships, a PLAN vessel and a governmental survey ship were found separately operating inside the Japanese EEZ and very close to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. The second instance is only mentioned as Chinese naval ships entering disputed waters in October 2004. Even though the deployment of research ships should not be included/regarded, it could be argued that the several PLAN vessels operating in the disputed area were displaying the abilities and increased potential of the Chinese naval forces. Thus, this incident will be categorized as *Display of Force* (*show of ships*), as it is consistent with other actions. The last of the three incidents is also mentioned in the COW dataset as an MID. On November 10, 2004, a PLAN submarine, identified as a nuclear powered *Han*-class attack submarine was spotted inside Japanese territorial waters in the area off Ishigakijima of Okinawa prefecture. The discovery triggered a large-scale warning and the JMSDF proceeded to follow the Chinese submarine, which after two hours began to make its way out of Japanese territory.

The incident was later labeled an accident due to a technical error during a training mission by the Chinese government (Wiegand 2009: 179; Martin 2013; Curtin 2004). With the submarine in Japanese territorial waters the classification as *border violation* would be the first choice, since a single vessel might be insufficient to convincingly serve as *show of ships*. On the other hand, the demonstration of the PLANs ability to get its submarines close to the Japanese shoreline might speak against this assumption. Furthermore, the COW dataset coded the Chinese actions as a *show of ships* as the highest form of militarized behavior, while the Japanese reaction was coded as *alert* in the *Display of Force* category (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015). Wiegand (2009: 179) further mentions an incident in February 2005, when two PLAN destroyers were sent to the disputed waters surrounding the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, although no further information can be found in other listings or reports. This incident should most likely be considered a *show of ships*.

On September 9, 2005, a flotilla of five PLAN vessels, including a Soviet-build *Sovremenny*-class destroyer, was deployed to the Chunxiao gas fields, most likely as reaction to the rising tensions over exploration rights and ambitions in the area (Kim 2012: 299), mentioned as an MID in the COW dataset and by Wiegand (2009: 179). Allegedly, one of the PLAN vessels even aimed its guns at a Japanese surveillance plane monitoring the Chinese movements (Emmers 2010: 53-54). Such an explicit show of force classifies this incident as an MID through a *show of ships* (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015) and potentially through a *threat to use force* considering that aiming weapons on a foreign military craft is a clear threat. Nonetheless as this is only alleged, it will not be counted. Two months later, another Chinese vessel was spotted when violating Japanese waters in the same area, (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015) which can be considered a *border violation*.

Wiegand mentions another instance, when a research ship was found in Japanese waters in February 2007. This is not included in the MID v.4.1 dataset, most likely since a research ship is not considered enough of a military asset. Moreover, the COW MID datasets appear not to regard the waters around the disputed islands as proper Japanese territory, therefore, not counting such incidents as border violations. As a possible issue, Wiegand proposes an attempt to influence talks over natural gas development, which might indicate a more economic background for the survey vessel (2009: 180). For lack of militarized background this incident will not considered as an MID.

For April 2007 the MID v.4.1 dataset lists an MID including China, Taiwan and Japan, as a group of PLAN destroyers passed through Taiwanese and Japanese territorial waters and

continued along the eastern coast of Taiwan. As noted in the dataset, a clear intention of the Chinese side is missing as it is not linked to any particular issue, although, it was most likely intended to showcase Chinese naval prowess, therefore, being categorized as *show of ships* (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015).

In April 2010, two incidents occurred, when an anti-submarine helicopter of the PLAN approached the JMSDF destroyer *Suzunami* on April 8, ignoring warnings and calls from the vessel, and finally stopped dangerously close to the destroyer. A similar event happened on April 21, when a PLAN helicopter made flybys and circled over the JMSDF destroyer *Asayuki*, which was deployed to monitor a flotilla of approximately ten PLAN vessels, including submarines, two *Sovremenny*-class destroyers and various frigates, which had previously passed through the Strait of Miyako to conduct military exercises in the Western Pacific area close to Okinawa prefecture (O'Rourke 2010: 18; Ryall 2010; Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015). Since the encounters between the Japanese destroyers and the Chinese helicopters were in international waters, there can be no violation of airspace. Much rather, these actions are to be classified as *Display of Force*, particularly as *show of planes* (or aircrafts). Furthermore, the strong force of PLAN vessels can be seen as a *show of ships* directed towards Japan (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015).

The next event, linked to what is mostly called the "2010 Trawler Incident" spans from September 7, 2010, to November 28, 2010. A Chinese fishing boat was intercepted by JCG vessels around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and proceeded with, supposedly deliberate, ramming maneuvers against the Japanese crafts, which led to the seizing of crew and vessel. The continued tension over the arrest of the fishing boats captain, and the situation of the islands in general resulted in an increase of JCG vessels deployed to the disputed area, and the Chinese side stepping up their own naval patrols, and moreover, beginning to send FLEC vessels into the waters around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (Drifte 2013: 33-34). While the main altercation of this MID was the seizure of the fishing vessel by the JCG, the increase in deployed naval forces should also be considered. Therefore, this MID has been categorized as *Display of Force* (*show of ships*) as well as *Use of Force* through *seizure* (Palmer, D'Orazio, Kenwick and Lane 2015).

Following Japan's 2012 acquisition of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands from its former private owner, the situation developed into the so far most intricate and numerous series of incidents that might constitute an MID. From the final acquisition of the islands on September 12, to December 13, the JCG reported 17 intrusions of CMS and FLEC vessels into Japanese

territorial waters around the islands. On December 13, a CMS airplane entered the Japanese airspace over the islands, leading to the JASDF scrambling eight fighters in response (Fujita 2012; Przystup 2013: 114; Tatsumi 2013: 118). On January 19, PLAAF fighters responded to an intrusion by an US aircraft, resulting in them violating the Japanese airspace, leading to another scramble of JASDF fighters (International Crisis Group 2013: 46). In two other incidents, PLAN vessels did aim and firelock their shipboard weapons on a JMSDF helicopter at January 19, and on January 30, on the JMSDF destroyer *Yudachi* (Tatsumi 2013: 119). Over the year of 2013, Japanese patrols registered several unidentified submarines travelling along the limit of Japan's territorial waters, intrusions by CMS and FLEC vessels increased in number (Martin 2013), and on September 8, 2013, JASDF scrambled against two PLAAF bombers, in order to monitor their passing along the Japanese airspace, to conduct military drills above the Pacific. On September 9, several PLAAF bombers were patrolling outside Japanese airspace around Okinawa prefecture, while two PLAN destroyers passed close to Miyakojima *en route* to the Pacific. Simultaneously, unarmed military drones were detected after entering Japanese airspace over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands (Cole 2013; Rapp-Hooper 2013). Lastly, in May 2014, two PLAAF fighters, in a supposed attempt to deter and disperse, nearly collided with two Japanese surveillance planes, while the latter were monitoring Sino-Russian joint-military drills in the East China Sea in an area where the Chinese and Japanese ADIZ overlap (Richards 2014a). By September 2014, the tension in the East China Sea seemed to ease up to some degree, where both sides agreed to resume talks about the creation of a hotline as a direct link between defense officials, in order to avoid future near-collisions and potential militarized clashes (Richards 2014b). As this series of instances seems to be linked not only by the same issue - China's protest against the acquisition of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands by the government, and a continued attempt to subvert Japan's effective control of the islands - but also by their temporal occurrence. It appears reasonable to count the whole group of confrontations as one prolonged incident. Nonetheless, it is important to note that even though the most frequent actions were *border violations* by air and by sea, there were also a *show of ships* and *show of planes* for the *Display of Force* category. Lastly, some of the most severe incidents, when PLAN forces aimed and fire-locked their weapons on JMSDF crafts might be considered (unspoken) *threats to use force* of the *Threat of Force* category.

3.4.3 Analysis

As the previous chapters have described the MIDs between Japan and China, in order to gain an understanding of military competitiveness, and the spatial consistency and duration of the rivalry relationship between both countries, this analysis shall take all three factors into consideration to categorize these relations as either isolated, proto- or enduring rivalry.

The issue of space and duration is rather easily answered as Japan and China are undoubtedly maritime neighbors. Furthermore, it has been repeatedly shown that both countries share a complicated history of continued disputes. However, in this thesis, the focus was laid on a duration of roughly the last 25 years - a period of increased diplomatic and militarized conflicts, and located directly after an internationally and regionally important change with the end of the Cold War.

Table 3 lists all MIDs during this period, together with the categorization of the MIDs as determined earlier.

Nr.	Date	Category	Subcategory
1	May-December 1991	Use of Force	Raid
2	August 1995	Display of Force	Show of planes, border violation
3	September 1996	Display of Force	Show of ships, show of troops, show of planes
4	October 1996	Display of Force	Border violation
5	May-July 1999	Display of Force	Show of ships
6	July 2003-March 2004	Use of Force	Seizure
7	October 2004	Display of Force	Show of ships
8	November 2004	Display of Force	Show of ships, border violation, alert
9	February 2005	Display of Force	Show of ships
10	September 2005	Display of Force	Show of ships, border violation
11	April 2007	Display of Force	Show of ships
12	April 2010	Display of Force	Show of planes, show of ships
13	September 2010-November 2010	Display & Use of Force	Show of ships, seizure
14	September 2012-September 2014	Display & Threat of Force	Border violation, show of ships, show of planes, threat to use force

Table 3. Sino-Japanese MIDs 1991-2014

Evidently the number of MIDs is relatively high and relatively consistent in the fashion they occur in, with the big majority being classified as *Displays of Force*, generally through Chinese naval vessels conducting military maneuvers directed towards Japan, increased assertiveness and various border violations. A minor part does also include *Threats of Force*, and on three occasions *Use of Force*: once an instance with Chinese naval vessels firing towards Japanese civilians and two occasions where JCG vessels seized Chinese fishing boats, crews or activists.

Therefore, it can be said that the Sino-Japanese relationship does qualify as an enduring rivalry in accordance with Diehl and Goertz' definition of "[…] enduring rivalries [as] any of those rivalries that involve six disputes or more *and* last for at least 20 years" (2001: 44). From the first of the observed MIDs in 1991, to the most recent, ending in 2014, the rivalry duration spans 23 years, extending over the definitions minimum. In addition, the number of MIDs reached twice the necessary limit.

While doubtlessly qualifying as enduring rivalry, it seems noteworthy that the militarized interactions between both nations are usually without any casualties and occupy the less-critical spheres of the various MID categories. Moreover, they seemed to some extent ritualized. Only in recent years more extreme spikes of tension and an increasing number of military participants took over the position formerly occupied by paramilitary or civilian maritime security agencies and coast guards. It remains to be seen if the recent easing of tension, following the last two-year MID, will bring a further de-escalation into this enduring Sino-Japanese rivalry.

3.5 Arms Race

This chapter will focus on the military modernization in Japan and China, particularly in the 21st century, to determine the existence of an ongoing arms race. As a first step, the background of the respective military modernizations and developments since the end of the Cold War will be analyzed, focusing mostly on doctrinal and organizational changes and strategic planning. The second part examines the military expenditure of both countries over the last decades. To determine whether possible military build-ups can be regarded as aimed towards each other, the qualitative and quantitative aspects of military acquisitions and their potential focus against rival military assets will be reviewed. Up to this point, this thesis has already confirmed several of Wallace and Meconis' (1995) arms race precursors, namely enduring rivalry, territorial dispute, inclusion of military great powers, which will therefore not be examined to a greater extent.

3.5.1 Chinese Military Modernization

Shortly before the end of the Cold War, Jiang Zemin assumed leadership of the PRC. Because he never served during the revolutionary period or in the PLA, it became necessary to cement his control over the military and to promote the image of a military leader. Jiang, as well as his successor Hu Jintao, concentrated on building personal relationships and loyalties within the ranks of the PLA by increasing funding, funneling resources and prioritizing military modernization. Military imports were increasingly provided by Russia, as the West proceeded with sanctions and arms embargos after the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989 (Fisher 2008: 24-25). After the late 80s, the PLA also underwent an unprecedented manpower reduction, which coincided with a relaxation of Russo-Chinese border tension through a number of agreements, military confidence-building and the downsizing of border troops (Gill 1998: 17). The decrease in personnel signified a considerable change to revolutionary PLA doctrine and organization, which used to rely heavily on huge troop numbers focusing on ground warfare under the concept of the *People's War*. The cutback and restructuring of troops allowed focusing the freed-up funds on much needed material-modernization and technology acquisition (Fisher 2008: 67).

The first steps for this change in military doctrine were made as early as 1985, when military planners realized that the threat of a large scale conflict was diminishing. Three main requirements for national security planning after the Cold War were identified: The maintenance of a military force capable of protecting China's sovereignty and enforcing its

territorial claims, the capability to deter the US, and the facilitation of the inclusion of the PRC in a new regional security structure by the PLA. After analyzing the US military potential during the First Gulf War in 1993 the PLA's main task became the preparation for two possible wartime scenarios: Engagements at the borders, over territorial disputes and local conflicts conducted with high tech capabilities and, more unlikely, conventional war at full scale, potentially including the use of WMDs. The latter was only expected in case of Taiwan declaring independence, resulting in an US reaction to a Chinese intervention (Dutta 1998: 94, 96).

The new requirements went hand in hand with a shift in perceived threats due to the relaxation of Russo-Chinese relations and the transformation of the international political structure in the early 90s. Russia still remained a possible threat, mainly because of the instability between the former Soviet states along the Chinese border. Also, rising tension with Islamic fundamentalist minorities within China and in Central Asia presented a new threat. To the east, Japan posed a security issue, as it expanded its defensive ties with the US and became more involved in PKOs, while modernizing the JSDF. The perceived threat posed by the US began to increase with the end of the Cold War due to sanctions related to the Tiananmen Square Massacre, renewed security alliances and US-Taiwan ties, prohibiting China to forcefully annex the renegade island. Lastly, the PRC continued to perceive most other neighbors as threats - primarily India and Vietnam, with which it had previous military conflicts and territorial disputes. In regard to the Korean peninsula, political instability was seen as the biggest risk factor, where a collapse of the DPRK was expected to result in a flood of refugees on the Chinese border (Morimoto 1998: 39-40).

During the early 90s, Chinese strategic view began to gradually shift from its traditional land-based approach towards the sea. While initially only tasked with coastal defense, the PLANs capabilities increased together with the importance of oversea trade and offshore energy imports. Under the *People's War* doctrine, maritime borders only functioned as a sort of defensive moat. Strategists began to emphasize the importance of a change in Chinese perception of the ocean and the importance of naval defense, control of the Chinese EEZ, and protection of economic and strategic interests and resources on sea. The focal shift toward the ocean was reinforced by the assessment of US capabilities in the First Gulf War and during the 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis, which showed the superiority of USN vessels. This resulted in the PLAN supplementing their forces with Soviet built naval vessels, sold by Russia, in order to swiftly modernize and replace obsolete ships (Chin 2007: 30; Fravel and Liebman 2011: 42;

Office of Naval Intelligence 2009: 5-6). Naval authors and military researchers emphasized the establishment of a "sea consciousness" among the Chinese citizens, attempting to increase interest in maritime issues ranging from economics to territorial disputes (Hartnett and Vellucci 2011: 88-90). A few years earlier, the concept of the *First* and *Second Island Chain* became popularized in Chinese strategic thinking and shaped it from this point on. The network of islands and archipelagos running from the Aleutians to the Philippines, enclosing the East and South China Sea in two long lines of American or American-allied bases delimited the scope of PLAN operations, served as a constant reminder of the United States' Cold War containment strategy, and was perceived as an enduring threat, that justified an increased naval modernization (Yoshihara 2012: 294-298).

3.5.1.1 Modernization in the 21st Century

David Shambaugh categorizes China's military modernization from the end of the 90s to 2005 into two groups. Those are, firstly, contextual drivers such as Taiwanese striving for independence, improving relations to ASEAN and South Korea and worsening relations to Japan and Taiwan, Chinese ambitions as global power, the threat of an escalation of the DPRK nuclear program, the PRCs growing need for energy imports and the repositioning of the US and its allies around China. Taiwan and the US bases along the two *Island Chains* were the most important out of these, followed by the growing relevance of energy supply, after the PRC overtook Japan as second biggest oil importer in 2003 (2005:68-78). The second group are direct drivers, which are "[…] money, technology, politics and doctrine" (Shambaugh 2005: 78). The PLA budget underwent several changes from the late 90s to the early 21st century in order to reduce discrepancies between official and actual budget, banning the PLA from commercially earning money and becoming more transparent to allow easier modernization and better use of all resources. In domestic politics, the Hu government followed Jiang's policy in prioritizing military modernization (2005: 82). Military doctrine and policy, and the military industrial complex were the other two direct drivers. From the *People's War* doctrine, the PLA went through several stages, arriving at the current *Limited War Under High Technology and Information Conditions* doctrine, which adapts to cyber warfare and high-tech equipment. Likewise, the defense policy continued the trend of reducing manpower while upgrading PLAN and PLAAF equipment and nuclear forces. After 2001, the military-industrial complex grew more important, as selective modernization, civil-military integration and reverse engineering of foreign technology allowed the Chinese defense sector to start to provide domestically

produced ships, planes and sophisticated weapons to the PLA, which ended the strong reliance on Russian military-imports (2005: 84-87). Richard A. Bitzinger explained the Asia Pacific military modernization somewhat similar to the direct drivers by focusing on defense spending, arms imports and advancement of military affairs. All three factors can be observed in China's 21st century military development. As main driver, China's growing economy and rising GDP enables the PRC to increase the defense budget and focus on modernization, while the international arms market also reacts to the growing buying ability of the PRC. Fierce competition and numerous willing providers have made Asia the number two region for arms trading, with China being the second largest importer of military equipment and technology between 2001 and 2008 (Bitzinger 2010:85-87). The revolution of military affairs, a "[…] process of discontinuous and disruptive change in the nature of warfare" (Bitzinger 2010: 89), influenced Chinese military development, as the new nature of warfare in the 21st century focuses on information technology and network-centered warfare, power projection, joint operations, and mobility and precision, which are all force multipliers for countries developing and modernizing their armed forces (Bitzinger 2010: 89-90).

These drivers possibly contributed to the revision of the PLA's *Historic Mission* announced by Hu Jintao in 2004, which focused mainly on expanding the PLA's tasks beyond national defense and on increasing its not war-related duties (Godwin 2010: 45), as seen in military-civilian cooperation in evacuating Chinese nationals from Libya in 2011 (DoD USA 2012: 4) and participating in UN PKOs in South Sudan in 2012 (DoD US 2013: 2).

Nonetheless, even with the *New Historic Mission* the core concerns for the PLA stayed the same during the first decade of the 21st century. Strategic planning was dominated by cross-strait relations and the anticipation of instability on the Korean peninsula. The South China Sea Dispute, the US and Japan were categorized as long-term strategic concerns. The latter was assessed and criticized in the 2004 and 2006 defense white papers in regard to the strengthening of *Anpo* and tendencies towards collective self-defense, even though defense ministerial exchanges, PLAN and JMSDF port-calls and bilateral observation of military drills, led to a general relaxation of Sino-Japanese relations and an omission of criticism in later defense white papers. These developments also show the growing trend of PLA involvement in foreign policy as part of the *New Historic Mission*. Godwin concludes that with the exception of unlikely escalations in the Koreas or Taiwan, China did not expect any major or minor conflicts during the 2004-2010 period and was mainly focused on long-term strategic goals and deterring any potential crises (Godwin 2010: 59-64, 82-84, 86-87).

The 2010 US *Pivot to Asia*, a move to reposition US forces in face of China's new competitive power and to limit China's strategic space, rapidly moved up on the agenda of China's strategic long-term issues. Under Xi Jinping, the PRC became more assertive towards US reestablishment attempts, wanting to avoid being backed into a corner by passive diplomacy (Ji 2013: 147). Assertive behavior was also increased in regard to the East and South China Sea Disputes. This was linked to UN deadlines for clarifications of territorial claims, but also just a simple reaction to perceived provocations. Pressure from nationalistic factions within the leadership and uncontrolled or unsanctioned actions by regional governments and local groups were also associated with the more aggressive posture (Swaine et al. 2013: 33).

The 2010 and 2012 defense white papers addresses the reestablishment of the US interests in the Asian Pacific, noting that the strategic situation in the area has become more volatile (MoD China 2011a: Chapter 1; MoD China 2013: Chapter 1). The 2010 and 2012 white papers also outlined China's new national defense objectives: "Safeguarding national sovereignty, security and interests of national development", "Maintaining social harmony and stability", "Accelerating the modernization of national defense and the armed forces" and "Maintaining world peace and stability" (MoD China 2011b: Chapter 2). Swaine et al. see involvement of the US-Japan coalition in all four major national defense objectives outlined in the 2010 and subsequent 2012 defense white papers. *Safeguarding national sovereignty* relates closely to the US-Japan alliance, as they are the most likely threat along the eastern coastline of the PRC. Countering local conflicts to *maintain social harmony and stability* could also partially aim towards Japan, as Swaine et al. cite territorial disputes as one form of these conflicts. *Accelerating defense modernization* and project power to secure Chinese SLOC might also conflict with Japanese or US interests, as it could be perceived as threatening by other countries and their SLOC security. Lastly, *maintaining world peace* through participation in PKOs is the least likely objective to conflict or influence the US-Japan alliance, though it might also increase Chinese power projection (Swaine et al. 2013: 35-36).

Even with these suspected underlying connections, the 2010 defense white paper firmly states that "China unswervingly maintains its fine cultural traditions and its belief in valuing peace above all else, advocating the settlement of disputes through peaceful means, prudence on the issue of war, and the strategy of 'attacking only after being attacked'" (MoD China 2011b: Chapter 2). This position can be attributed to the longstanding concept of *Active Defense*, stemming from Maoist strategy, which has been reaffirmed during the last decades (Swaine et al. 36-37). *Active Defense* means initially assuming a strong defensive position and allowing an

enemy to strike first, but then shifting to offensive tactics, challenging the attacker at every opportunity. While this doctrine fits very well with the proclamation made in the defense white paper, it is noteworthy that every threat to the national sovereignty of the PRC is regarded as an attack in terms of the Chinese strategy. Thus, Taiwan declaring independence or other territorial issues would all constitute potential attacks on Chinese sovereignty, qualifying as aggression, and subsequently leading to pre-emptive "defensive" attacks by the PRC (Diakidis 2009: 10-11). Some analysts concluded that even political violations and other non-military actions could be considered threatening to the Chinese sovereignty and therefore warrant a "defensive" attack from the PLA (Swaine et al. 2013: 37).

3.5.2 Japanese Military Modernization

After the Japanese defeat in World War II, and over the duration of the Cold War, Japanese security policy was closely connected to the US posture in East Asia. The US forces were entrusted with major parts of Japanese national security. Equally influential were the prohibition of collective self-defense and other restrictions formulated by the Japanese postwar constitution. While the JSDF was allowed to support their American allies when attacked on Japanese soil, or during an attack on Japan (when US forces would aid the Japanese defense), the JSDF was never able to support its allied troops outside of Japanese territory. Japan also feared being too heavily involved in US military strategy, and getting entrapped in American Cold War politics. This even led the Japanese planners to increase the quality and size of the JSDF in the later years of the Cold War, in an attempt to deter USSR threats to Japanese SLOCs and airspace. While this build-up still served the US strategy, Japan's participation and general military role during the Cold War was limited to its immediate surrounding area. With these restrictions, Japanese foreign policy has mostly relied on utilizing economic and diplomatic power to further Japanese interests, a tactic that was also employed to minimize reliance on their US allies (Hughes 2005: 107-108). With the end of the Cold War, the DPRK became the primary strategic threat. Weariness over North Koreas nuclear ambitions grew steadily and Japan became aware of its susceptibility to missile strikes along its western shoreline. This was made abundantly clear when a North Korean *Nodong*-1 missile was launched into the Sea of Japan (East Sea) in May 1993. The following year, Japan became entangled in the first US-DPRK nuclear crisis, when the US requested of Japan to provide logistic support for its troops and to put military pressure on North Korea. The Japanese government was hesitant to commit to such bilateral defense cooperation and thereby exposed the inefficiency and hollowness of

the *Anpo* alliance. At the same time, Japan perceived retaliatory covert attacks from North Korean guerrillas on nuclear power facilities in Japan as a major threat. The threat by the DPRK reached its peak with the "*Taepodong* shock" in 1998. The launch of a *Taepodong*-1 missile into Japanese airspace once more exposed Japan's vulnerability to missile strikes. Furthermore, North Korean spy ships frequently intruded into Japanese territory between the late 1990s and the second nuclear crisis of 2002-2003 (Hughes 2004: 43-44).

China was likewise perceived as a threat to Japan's national security in the aftermath of the Cold War, though it represented more of a mid- to long-term concern. Two main issues were regarded as crucial drivers that increased the "China Threat". The PRC started a qualitative military build-up during the early 90s, while also increasing nuclear capabilities and resuming nuclear testing in 1995. In 1996, China fired ballistic missiles in an attempt to intimidate Taiwan, which hit inside the Japanese EEZ of Okinawa Prefecture. With a more assertive behavior and more frequent intrusions of so-called "research ships" and PLAN vessels in disputed territory, Japan interpreted China's willingness to deploy its armed forces outside of its own territories as threat to Japanese SLOCs. Closely connected, the second major issue was the tense situation in the Taiwan Strait. While the chance of a conflict outbreak was threatening enough for regional stability and Japanese security thinking, the involvement of the United States on the side of Taiwan was an additional complication that heightened the threat perception of China's behavior during the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1995-1996. The possibility of becoming involved in a clash between the US and the PRC seemed very real, once more iterating the fear of entanglement in US foreign policy. Thus, Japan had to walk a very narrow path to neither rebuff the United States or appear as an unreliable ally, nor to further strain relations with China (Hughes 2004: 44-46; 2005: 109).

As a result, the Japanese security policy was gradually adapted and revised. When the first Korean nuclear crisis of 1994-1995 exposed the emptiness of the US-Japan security relationship, the main focus of the revision was directed on improving the alliance. The first step was made through the revision of the NDPO in 1995, which called for stronger cooperation and for an additional clause that would allow the JSDF to render support in situations affecting the security and peace in areas surrounding Japan. In 1996 and 1997 respectively, followed the *Joint Declaration on Security* and the revision of the *Japan-US Guidelines for Defense Cooperation*, allowing closer cooperation with and logistical support through JSDF (see also chapter 3.3.1.1). Furthermore, Japan became more involved in international PKOs over the course of the 90s, expanding its security role and diversifying cooperation with parties outside

the bilateral US alliance. Still, Japanese involvement in PKOs was strictly limited to non-combat missions. Despite the revision and changes, Japan still shied away from true commitment. As cooperation was based on situational need rather than activities inside a defined region, it remained unclear whether Taiwan was covered by the revised guidelines (Hughes 2005: 112-114).

3.5.2.2 Modernization in the 21st Century

A second cycle of security policy changes and emerging modernization followed the American engagement in the Middle East and the global War on Terror. The US sought to increase interoperability with allied forces and to incorporate existing military bases into US strategy. Internally, Japan was influenced by discussions of "normalization" and the revision of Article 9 of the Japanese constitution to become a more active player in global security matters (Hughes 2008: 114-115). Under Prime Minister Koizumi, the internal power structure between various ministries became smoother and more streamlined. While the first Gulf War had highlighted the inability of Japan's bureaucracy, government and military to efficiently work with their ally, the Japanese support in the Iraq War showed a "normalization" of executive power and swifter coordination and flow of information between ministries, the Japan Defense Agency and the JSDF (Hughes 2004: 63-64). A proposal for the revision of the Japanese constitution was brought before the National Diet's Houses. It was aimed on enabling a more proactive and "normal" security posture, but was ultimately dismissed in 2005 (Hughes 2008: 115-116). The 2004 Araki Report and the new NDPG (previously called NDPO) underscored efforts of normalization, increased effectiveness and the changing regional security environment. Veiled by a neutral tone, worries about ongoing military modernization and the PRC as a destabilizing factor for regional security were mentioned, and increased participation in PKOs and support to US troops by Japan were requested. It was proposed to turn the JSDF in a modernized and flexible force, focused on rapid response, joint operations and improved interoperability. Not unlike the PLA, numbers and material would be reduced from their Cold War-state, while all branches would be refurbished and modernized. The JGSDF shifted from land-based defensive warfare to a more mobile, expeditionary force, capable of oversea deployment, similar to the JMSDF which aimed to support those growing expeditionary capabilities. The JASDF modernization was focused on increasing operational compatibility and R&D cooperation with US forces (Hughes 2008: 118-120). Initially motivated by North Korean nuclear ambition and testing during the 90s, Japan had also begun joint R&D on BMD together with the US. After

2003, Japan upgraded their BMD capabilities through the purchase and deployment of several additional variants of the American BMD system, land and sea based. The latter were deployed on Japanese destroyers, similar to the American Aegis BMD vessels, in an effort to create an integrated network of joint US and Japanese BMD. When the DPRK launched a ballistic missile in July 2006, Japan's concern over North Korean missiles seemed to be affirmed, leading to a sped-up deployment of land-based BMD batteries (Takahashi 2012: 10-11; Mochizuki 2007: 751). While mainly driven by North Korean missile launches, the establishment of Japanese BMD capabilities and the tightening of US-Japanese BMD cooperation did also carry considerable implications for Chinese security politics, as the Aegis BMD system could potentially serve as a defense for Taiwan against Chinese missiles in the event of crisis escalation. Even without a clear commitment of Japan to protect Taiwan from Chinese aggressions, the BMD capabilities still enabled the Japanese to effectively defend US troops operating from bases on Japanese soil (Mochizuki 2007: 752). In regard to North Korea and the threat of nuclear attacks on Japan, warranting those substantial shifts in alliance and military policy, as well as continuous military modernization of the JSDF, Hughes argues that the DPRK had been turned into a proxy threat for Japan, with "North Korea's role as a convenient threat to be manipulated to disguise the dual nature of changes in Japan's defense posture [and] justifications for BMD" (2009a: 305). North Korea's continuous threatening actions, ranging from nuclear testing to the abduction of Japanese citizens or intrusions from spy ships, did help Japanese politicians and media to create and promote a picture of the "North Korean Peril", which was additionally supported by the inclusion of the DPRK into the "Axis of Evil" as a terrorist state by the Bush administration. The 2006 launch of a *Taepodong*-1 missile, which hit the waters of the Sea of Japan (East Sea), was also perceived as an obvious sign of North Korean danger and belligerency toward Japan, even though the actual impact zone of the missile test was situated closer to China, Russia and South Korea, than Japan (Hughes 2009a: 302-303). Hughes maintains that the threat of North Korea, while certainly legitimate, was additionally increased or "super-sized" in order to enable changes in the Japanese security policy that would otherwise have come in conflict with constitutional restrictions, for example the Japanese participation in US BMD in the East Asian region, which comes very close to collective self-defense. Furthermore, the super-sizing justifies the conventional modernization of the JSDF and the JCG. Ultimately, claiming to focus on deterring North Korea opened the possibility to concentrate on developing capabilities more suitable to counter the Chinese military modernization and build-up, while avoiding to publically name the PRC as the real reason or

threat to Japanese long-term strategy (Hughes 2009a: 308, 311). Russia's recent recurrence as a more assertive, more powerful military actor became clear when in 2008 a strategic bomber violated Japanese airspace, prompting the JASDF to scramble fighters. Furthermore, Russia opposed US-Japanese cooperation in BMD in East Asia, and escalated the crisis in Georgia with military force in August 2008. These developments, together with the still persisting territorial dispute over the Southern Kuril Islands (Northern Territories) put Russia third on Japan's list of potential security risks, while also acting as a driver for further military modernization and a security policy reform (Hughes 2009b: 4).

A third cycle of security policy change was initiated with the consecutive revisions of the NDPG of 2010 and 2013 under the leadership of Prime Minister Abe. In the 2010 NDPG the concept of a *Dynamic Defense Force* appeared which required the JSDF to employ advanced technology, intelligence gathering, joint operations and general mobility and flexibility. Through a process of selection and concentration the JSDF was to be transformed into a military entity that would provide all necessary functions for the defense of Japan and Japanese interests, while utilizing limited resources and improving the efficiency and general structure of the defense forces (MoD Japan 2012a: 115; Satake 2012: 147-148). The 2013 NDPG was compiled by the National Security Council (JNSC), which was newly established by the Abe administration in the same year. Together with the 2013 NDPG, the JNSC also formulated the first National Security Strategy for Japan. The 2013 NDPG included an increase in defense spending, decided upon in an earlier document, thereby differing from the two previous NDPGs, which focused more on reducing expenses. Still, the 2013 NDPG continued the concept of the *Dynamic Defense Force*, emphasizing mainly modernization of the JMSDF and JASDF, and on improving joint operability (NIDS 2014: 55-58).

Over the duration of the last few years, Japan's threat perception has become more focused on China. Nonetheless, it had been avoided to officially identify China as a threat to Japanese security in order to preserve already tense diplomatic relations. Until 2012, Japan's defense white papers were mainly concerned with North Korean aggression and nuclear ambitions when addressing the East Asian security environment. Although the military modernization of the PLA was acknowledged, and the lack of transparency often mentioned, the general assessments were neutral (MoD Japan 2008: 3; 2009: 4; 2010: 5; 2011: 23; 2012b: 3). The last three white papers issued by the Ministry of Defense diverged from their previous, mostly similar, tone. The white papers note China's recent assertiveness in the waters of the East China Sea, and mention several occasions when Chinese military forces either intruded

into Japanese airspace or waters, or aimed and locked their weapons on Japanese vessels. Furthermore, the 2014 white paper identified China's efforts to increase its Anti Access / Area Denial capabilities to prevent the deployment of foreign military forces in China's areas of interest. The recent white papers call for a close surveillance of Chinese actions and trends, as they are very worrying and of absolute importance for Japan (MoD Japan 2013a: 3; 2014a: 4; 2015: 3).

The most recent step in modernizing and changing security policy was Japan's repositioning in regard to the question of collective self-defense. Traditionally, the Japanese government had interpreted Article 9 of the Japanese constitution as prohibiting Japan from conducting collective self-defense. This interpretation was based on the assumption that any collective self-defense arrangement could lead to Japanese involvement in the defense of another state while not being attacked itself, which would contradict the constitutional demand to only use the lowest level of military force possible in order to defend Japan. Following the deeper involvement with the US since the September 11th attacks, the debate on amending the constitution in order to allow a reinterpretation or a change in favor of collective self-defense had intensified, partly also due to American pressure (Middlebrooks 2008: 24-25). Under Prime Minister Abe, Japan took a first step towards collective self-defense in July 2014 with a cabinet decision for a constitutional reinterpretation, against much internal resistance. Naturally, China and South Korea voiced protest and called for caution. Especially the PRC warned Japan not to endanger regional security and peace (Glosserman 2014: 1). The cabinet decision was based on the understanding that even though Article 9 bans the use of force in international relations other than in defense of Japan, Article 13 of the Constitution is calling the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness the prime objective of the government. Therefore, Article 9 cannot "[…] prohibit Japan from taking measures of self-defense necessary to maintain its peace and security and to ensure its survival" (MoFA Japan 2014). The cabinet decision was affirmed by both houses of the Japanese government in 2014 and 2015 and included in the 2015 Security Bill (Liff 2013: 87-88; Chanlett-Avery et al. 2015: 19). Even though this reinterpretation enables Japan to directly support US troops in the area, the new changes are bound to a number of conditions limiting the actual abilities of such operations. Japan is only allowed to support allies with a very close relationship (meaning only the United States) and only if life, liberty and happiness of Japanese citizens are endangered. All other means of dealing with the crisis must be considered first, before resorting to the use of the JSDF. Lastly, all military actions and the use of force must be kept to a bare minimum. While those restrictions could surely limit

defensive efforts, all three of them are very loosely defined, leaving ample room for individual reinterpretation of their meaning and extent (Glosserman 2014: 1). Nonetheless, the permission of collective self-defense is an additional important step in Japan's military cooperation with the United States and in becoming a more "normal" state.

3.5.3 Military Expenditure

In order to assess the scope and possible growth of the military expenditure of Japan and China, data will be provided from the SIPRI military expenditure data. The expenditure includes costs for personnel, maintenance and operation, procurement, R&D as well as military construction and military aid. Excluded are only expenses for civil defense and previous military activities. It should also be noted that in the case of China the provided data is an estimation by SIPRI (SIPRI 2014), as Chinese information on military expenditure often lacks transparency. Furthermore, China's official defense spending statistics do not include several of the components usually included by other countries. Those categories are believed to be arms import procurement and aid from foreign countries, expenses for paramilitary forces, expenses for nuclear forces, R&D, governmental subsidies and PLA fundraising. Thus, the estimates for the Chinese military budget are in most cases considerably higher than official numbers (Cordesman, Hess and Yarosh 2013: 105-106).
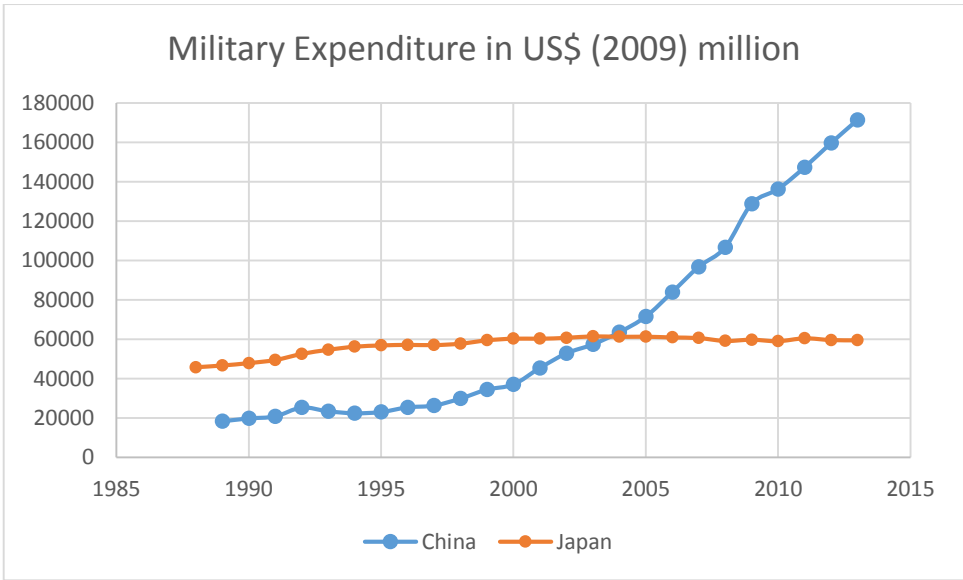

Figure 4. Sino-Japanese Military Expenditure 1988-2013

Source: SIPRI 2012

Figure 4 shows the annual military expenditure of China and Japan converted to US$ (at constant 2009 value) over the duration of the last few decades. Two diverging trends are evident, Japanese expenditure remains near-constant over the whole duration, while Chinese military expenditure begins at a much lower level at the start of the post-Cold War period, but gradually increases to surpass Japanese spending in 2004 and onward. While the growth of China's military expenses is considerable, it appears to do so in a very continuous fashion with only one sudden steeper increase around 2009. But, if comparing the GDP percentage dedicated to defense expenses, shown in Figure 5, both countries demonstrate only slight variations and differences.

For China, the GDP share decreased after the Cold War, presumably correlating with China's reemergence as a major economic player. Japan, which has a formal limit of 1% of its GDP usable for defense spending, remained somewhat under the 1% mark during the 90s, and continued with a constant 1% during the 21st century.
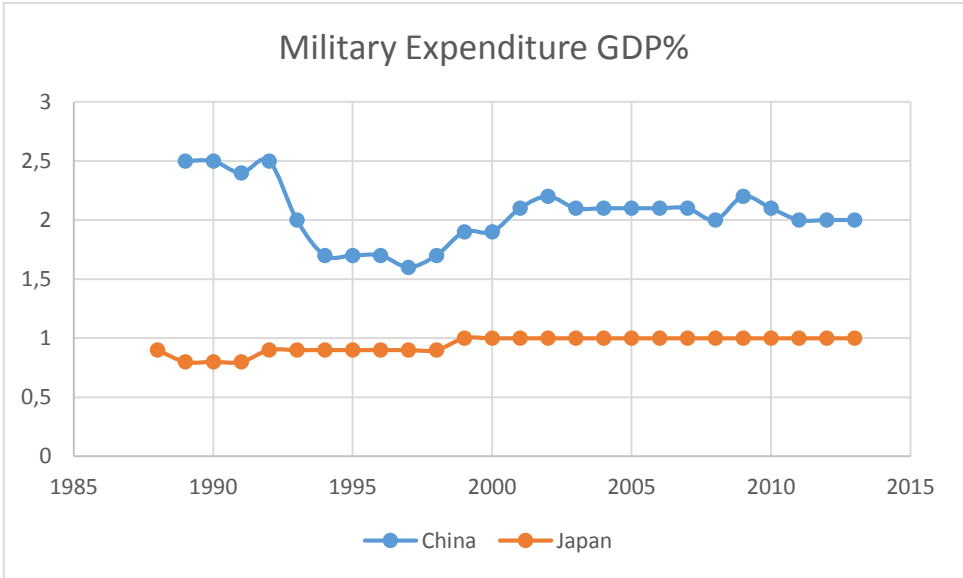

Figure 5. Sino-Japanese Military Expenditure in GDP percentage 1988-2013

Source: SIPRI 2012

While Japan is bound by its self-proclaimed 1% limitation, it has been reported that other ways are being employed to bypass this limit. Related budgets, such as that of the JCG, which remains the number one actor in Sino-Japanese altercations in the East China Sea, have been expanded. Furthermore, Japan has, beginning during the 70s, continuously spread the costs for big procurement projects over several years, thereby being able to keep annual spending under the 1% limit. Due to this practice, which allowed for flexibility in big modernization projects and

a qualitative build-up, Japan has been "[…] building up large-scale future payments equivalent to 60%-plus of defence expenditure" (Hughes 2009b: 89).

In comparison, Chinese military expenditure is not bound by any formal limitations, still the military expenditure share of the GDP remained somewhat constant. Official policy considerers military modernization (and expenses) as linked to economic development, thus growth appears at the same rate as economic growth (Perlo-Freeman 2014). Looking at the data provided by SIPRI, there is no indication of an acceleration of military expenditure. On its own, Chinese expenditure has increased significantly, but without a visible influence on Japanese spending.

3.5.4 Qualitative and Quantitative Build-up

3.5.4.1 Ground Forces

As mentioned earlier, with the end of the Cold War, Chinese military planning shifted towards a large-scale reduction and restructuring of the PLAGF. This change was aimed on transitioning from a regionally focused defense to a more mobile defense character, with emphasis on joint operations with other branches, rapid assaults, special operations and mechanization (Fisher 2008: 75). With this new structure, the PLAGF conformed to the doctrine of *Local Wars under Conditions of Informatization*. Through higher mobility it also became able to better react to regional crises. Since the late 80s, there has been a constant decline in army personnel, but also a general reduction of organizational formation such as infantry divisions and brigades. In between 1985 and 2013, about 50% of PLAGF personnel was reduced, and most of military hardware provided by the USSR was replaced by modern systems. Equipment modernization has been focused on artillery since the mid-90s, and since 2000, on tanks and armored personnel carriers. Since the start of the modernization, more than 30% of tanks and 45% of personnel carriers meet modern high-tech standards. These modern weapon systems are mainly concentrated in the regions close to Korea, Taiwan and around Beijing, enabling the PLAGF to quickly respond to the most likely regional contingencies. Still, the PLAGF is not an overall modern force, as it has been noted that modernization is mostly contained to troops and equipment that could potentially be involved in a crisis or conflict with Taiwan (Cordesman 2014: 195-215).

During the Cold War the JGSDF mission was relatively clear cut, with the Soviet Union being the main (potential) opponent and the JGSDF were primarily preparing to defend against

an invasion from the north (Middlebrooks 2008: 31). In post-Cold War years, the JGSDF had to face the fact that any quantitative modernization or expansion of its force had become extremely difficult, especially due to limitations brought about by Japan's economic stagnation during the 90s (Hughes 2004: 76). With the turn of the millennium and in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, the JGSDF was gradually adapted to the new security environment. Instead of quantitative expansion, full focus was put on qualitative improvement, especially with the procurement of new main battle tanks and artillery, while the overall number of these weapon platforms was gradually reduced. As Japan's strategic focus began to include PKOs, the JGSDF began to turn into a more expeditionary oriented force, while its mission began to change from pure national defense to counterterrorism, counter-proliferation and PKOs (Middlebrooks 2008: 31; Hughes 2004: 79). More recently, the equipment of the JGSDF was further optimized for operations against non-traditional threats in areas such as Iraq or Afghanistan. In 2007, a Central Readiness Group was established by combining several elite components already in existence, in order to create a mobile, rapid reaction force to counter terrorism and guerrilla attacks and to deal with nuclear or biological threats (Hughes 2009b: 90). In response to China's increased assertiveness in the East China Sea, the JGSDF has established a marine regiment, tasked with defending or potentially retaking Japanese islands. The marine regiment is highly reliant on joint operations with JMSDF and JASDF and is modeled after the US Marines as an amphibious expeditionary force (Mizokami 2012; 2013). Planned since 2010, in 2014 work on a remote but permanent costal monitoring and radar station on Yonagunijima, off the coast of Taiwan, began. The station, to be operational in 2015, will be manned by a detachment of 100 to 200 JGSDF troops, tasked with monitoring Chinese military activity in the vicinity of the island (Smith 2013b: 70; Kallender-Umezu 2013; The Japan Times 2014b). Furthermore, Japan has planned to move JGSDF mobile costal batteries for surface-to-ship missiles to Kyūshū and to Miyakojima, in an attempt to bolster costal defenses in face of China's continuous intrusions and growing assertiveness (LaGrone 2014).

3.5.4.2 Air Forces

The PLAAF is, like all other Chinese military branches, still in a transition period in order to conform to the new concept of *Local Wars under Conditions of Informatization*, transforming from a force composed of mainly antiquated single-purpose aircrafts into a modern air force with emphasis on multi-role air crafts and increased surveillance and electronic warfare capabilities. Thus, the overall number of planes was constantly reduced, the decrease mostly

concentrated on fighters and bombers, while other new aircraft types were introduced or their number increased. Figure 6 shows the overall development between 1985 and 2014. Notably, not only the overall number of planes decreased, but the focus moved toward a more diverse composition. Omitted are the various new special-mission aircraft purchased and developed in much smaller number. Those are mainly electronic warfare, early warning and tanker aircrafts, which all have increased in number since 2000-2005 (Cordesman 2014: 262; 264-267).
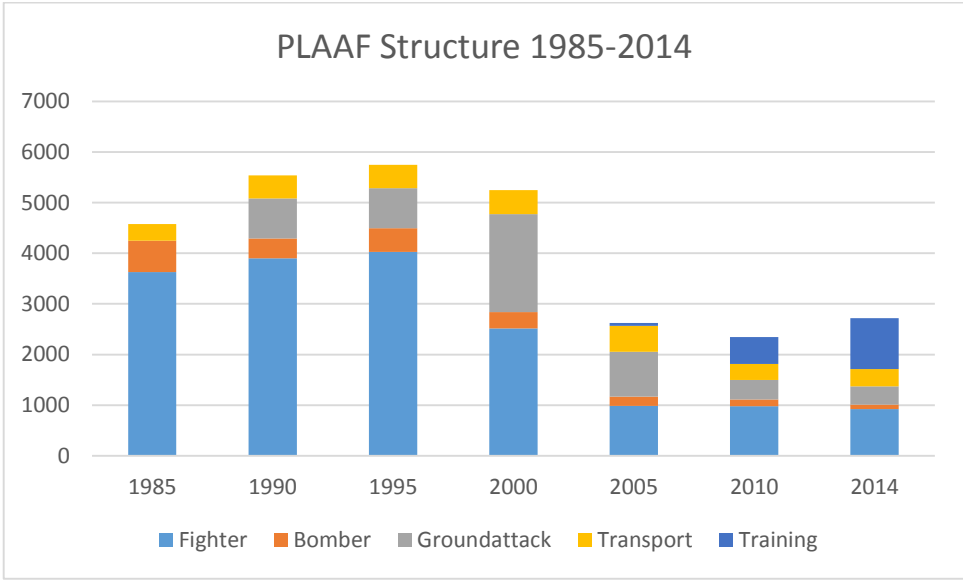

Figure 6. PLAAF Structure 1985-2014

Source: Cordesman 2014: 264-267

In addition to this general trend towards modernization, quantitative downscaling and qualitative upgrading, the PLAAF has become increasingly focused on developing stealth capabilities. While the main frontline aircraft remain a mixture of indigenously produced and Russian fourth generation[16] fighters, in 2011, China revealed the indigenously developed and produced J-20 stealth fighter, followed up by another aircraft revealed in 2012, commonly named J-31. Both aircraft are not expected to enter service before 2018, but with these multi-role stealth fighters the PLAAF's ability for power projection and regional precision strikes will increase exponentially. Furthermore, the PLAAF increasingly includes unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) into their service to improve low visibility aerial surveillance and long-range strike capabilities (DoD USA 2013: 66-67; Cordesman 20114: 276-278).

The JASDF entered the post-Cold War environment mainly with American-built aircraft, enabling better cross-service compatibility. During the 90s, new, jointly produced F-2 fighter

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[16] Fourth generation describes modern aircraft without stealth capabilities, while fifth generation aircraft are considered stealth fighters, such as the American F-22 Raptor or F-35 Lightning II

jets based off an existing American fighter design were introduced. While there was a quantitative reduction of equipment, there was also a qualitative increase. The biggest step in modernization for the JASDF was the prolonged discussion over the introduction of a new fifth generation fighter. In 2011, the decision was made in favor of the American built F-35 Lightning II, a fifth generation fighter with an additional vertical landing ability, although Japan only decided to purchase the regular variant, without vertical landing option. The F-35 is expected to work in unison with the ship-based Aegis BMD system, thus greatly increasing its effectivity and reach. Furthermore, the fact that JASDF and US Air Force employ the same equipment means easier supply and maintenance when both branches perform joint missions. Over the next five years 28 F-35 will be put into service by the JASDF, with an expected overall number of 42 in the future (Defense Industry Daily 2014; BBC 2011; Brown and Azuma 2011; GlobalSecurity.org 2014; Waldron 2012; Hughes 2009b: 7-9; Takahashi 2014). Beyond the purchase of these new fighters, Japan has also begun to venture into the field of UAVs, planning to purchase three *Global Hawk* drones for surveillance purposes that will markedly improve the JASDF ability to monitor vast sea regions from high altitudes (Sonoda 2013). Since 2008 the JASDF has also begun to field tanker planes for mid-air refueling, which increases the reach of aerial patrols as well as power projection capabilities (Middlebrooks 2008: 34; Hughes 2009b: 7). In the most recent Mid-Term Defense Program for FY 2014-2018 it was noted that an additional fighter squadron will be deployed to the Naha Airbase at Okinawa. Furthermore, an additional new airborne early warning squadron will be operating out of the same base (MoD 2013b: 5-8; MoD 2014b: 135), supposedly in respond to China's increasing assertiveness and the establishment of China's ADIZ over the East China Sea. Overall the JASDF modernization is focused on achieving stealth capabilities and on increasing aerial early warning and reconnaissance abilities, especially in the East China Sea.

3.5.4.3 Naval Forces

Throughout the Cold War the PLAN mainly served in the role of a *Fortress Fleet*, a naval force used in close connection with costal fortifications, remaining under the protection of land-based weapons while still being able to repel amphibious assaults on the coastline. While the PLAN was used more offensively against smaller nations maritime forces in the South China Sea during the 70s and 80s, the PLAN reverted to this initial strategy during the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1996 (Kotani 2013: 7). A little earlier, the official naval strategy had changed towards *Offshore Defense* which called for the thorough modernization of the whole naval force to

deliver more power projection capabilities (Cordesman 2014: 224). The priority was given to quality, rather than quantity. It has also been noted that, with increasing quality, the number of naval vessels (e.g. submarines and patrol crafts) has decreased from the Cold War level (O'Rourke 2014: 3). Figure 7 shows the increase and decrease of selected naval vessels over the last two decades.
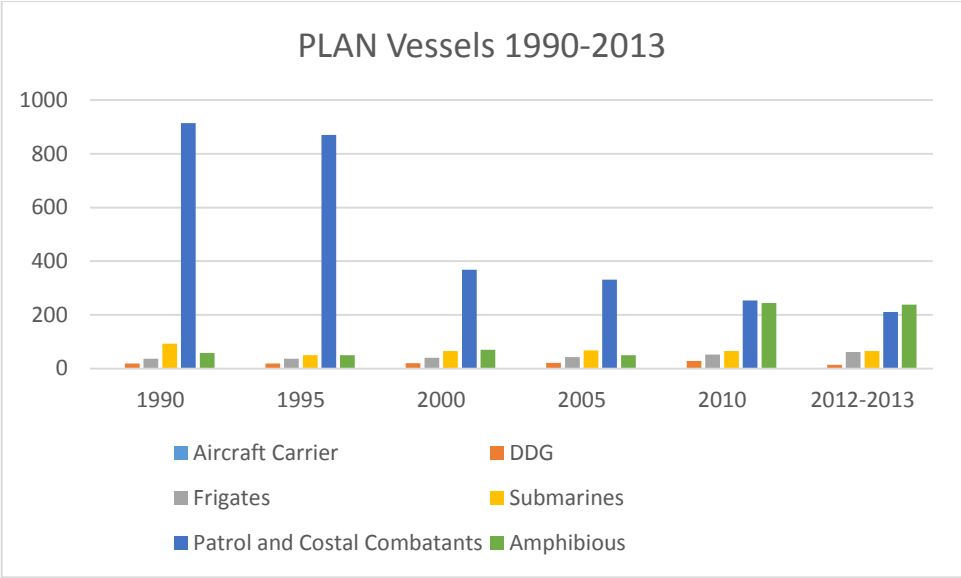

Figure 7. PLAN Composition and Change 1990-2013

Source: Cordesman 2014: 233-236

In 1998, China acquired a Soviet-built, non-nuclear powered, partially completed aircraft carrier from Ukraine through a tourist and amusement agency for a low price. This was one of the first successful deals after a series of unsuccessful attempts on buying other Soviet carriers from Russia in the early 1990s. The unfinished carrier named *Varyag* was towed to the port facilities of Dalian in 2002, still under the guise of being converted into a tourist attraction and floating casino (Storey and You 2003: 81-83). Until 2004, officials continuously stated that China was not looking to build aircraft carriers, in 2005 *Varyag* was put into a dry dock for refitting and modernization the following year. From this point onward, the official position on aircraft carriers had changed considerably, as China began to produce an indigenous carrier-based fighter aircraft based on a Russian design (Kostecka 2011: 12-13). The aircraft carrier was commissioned into PLAN service in late 2012 under the name *Liaoning*, serving primarily as a training ship to enable naval pilots to gain proficiency in landing on aircraft carrier decks, and to train crews in handling carrier operations. Reportedly China is constructing three indigenously developed aircraft carriers of a comparable size to *Liaoning*, in order to commission up to four carrier battle groups in the near future, with some ambitious sources

estimating the first carrier to be finished by 2018 (O'Rourke 2014: 15-19). Even with aircraft carriers being the most prominent naval vessel any navy could deploy, the fact that *Liaoning* is primarily a training ship partially lessens its importance in regard to Sino-Japanese relations. Furthermore, the previously discussed areas of Sino-Japanese rivalry and MIDs are all located very close to Chinese and Japanese homeland, and within reach of land-based aerial patrols, thus making the deployment of an aircraft carrier somewhat unnecessary. Li and Weuve assume the five main missions for Chinese carriers are SLOC protection, deployment to overseas crisis locations, EEZ and territorial enforcement, aid and disaster relief and lastly as support for an invasion of Taiwan (2010: 26-27). Still, it has also been supposed that the early carrier program of the PLAN was partially motivated by the development of carriers by India or carrier-related vessels such as the Japanese *Hyuga*-class helicopter destroyer (DDH) between 1999 and 2006. Besides *Liaoning*, China has produced six different classes of indigenously designed destroyers since the early 90s, all with only a limited number of vessels built in each class. Together those destroyers form the bulk of the PLANs modern anti-ship line-up. The newly developed destroyers employ radar systems similar to the Aegis Combat System used by the US and its allies. The newest class of destroyers is most exclusively focused on anti-air warfare, thus markedly increasing China's naval air defense capabilities (O'Rourke 2014: 25-27; Bussert 2005; WantChinaTimes 2014). Furthermore, the PLAN commissioned four new classes of indigenous frigates, capable of deploying a great variation of weapon systems and also with improved anti-air warfare capabilities (O'Rourke 2014: 28). Another big area of modernization is the PLAN submarine fleet. As with the vessels previously discussed, China employs a strategy of mixing foreign/Russian designs with improved domestic designs. Since the 1990s China has bought and put twelve Soviet/Russian *Kilo*-class submarines into service, which formed the first step of overall modernization of the submarine forces. The PLAN has also developed four new classes of vessels, two conventional attack submarine classes, a nuclear attack submarine class and a nuclear ballistic missile submarine class capable of targeting the US West Coast while deployed in Chinese waters (O'Rourke 2014: 8-15). Quantity-wise, the submarine fleet is focused more on conventional vessels, a possible indicator for the PLANs attention on near seas, since far-sea operations require nuclear propulsion to operate independently over a long time. Still, the new indigenously developed conventional attack submarines employ an advanced propulsion system that enables them to operate an extended period submerged and undetected. The general focus on improving and modernizing the PLAN submarine fleet is assumed to be part of a wider trend including most of East, and especially,

Southeast Asia. Comparably low priced investments in submarines enable small countries to build the defensive capabilities of their naval forces through improving their ability of sea denial, which is equally important to China in case of a US cross-strait intervention.
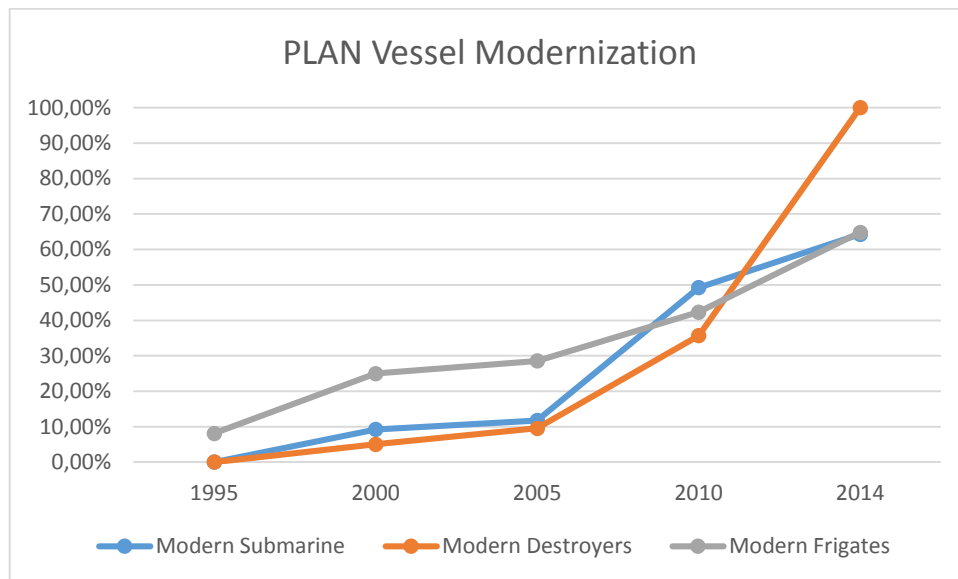

Figure 8. Modernization of PLAN Vessels

Source: Cordesman 2014: 246[17]

Figure 8 indicates the pace and the percentage of the naval modernization of the PLAN, showing the increase of modern vessels put into service. Modernity in this case is defined as multi-mission capable platforms able to fight in two or more warfare areas (meaning anti-air, anti-submarine, anti-ship,…) for surface combatants, and for submarines quiet propulsion and the ability to deploy anti-ship cruise missiles (Cordesman 2014: 241-242).

Similar to China and the PLAN, the JMSDF has been adapting to the new post-Cold War environment and to the requirements of the 21st century over the duration of the last 25 years, although the JMSDF modernization is noticed far less often. This might mainly be due to the fact that the overall quantitative dimension of the JMSDF generally remained constant, or even decreased to some degree. Figure 9 shows the relative linearity of the force composition of the JMSDF, underscoring the fact that there is no quantitative growth of Japanese naval forces. While not quantitative, quality-wise the JMSDF has eagerly expanded its capabilities since the early 90s. Due to the restrictions imposed by Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, Japan's defense forces are not allowed to operate equipment and vessels that are considered to have "war potential".

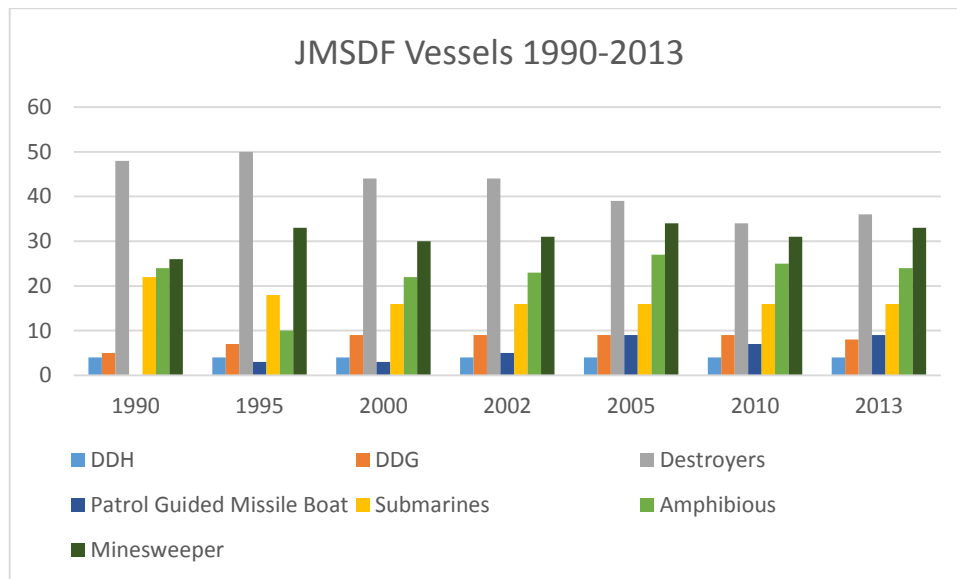[17] Reproduction of Cordesman's figure

These would mainly be aircraft carriers, nuclear capabilities, long-range bombers and so forth. To make up for the lack of aircraft carriers and nuclear-powered submarines, Japan relies on the close cooperation with US forces. While the term "helicopter destroyer" usually denotes a destroyer-type vessel with a landing pad and hangar for one or two helicopters on its rear deck, the JMSDF newest classes are constructed as flattops, looking more like small aircraft carriers than conventional destroyers. As early as 1993, Japan began to plan a flattop transport vessel, designated *Ōsumi*-class tank landing ship, which entered service around 2000, seen as somewhat of a precursor to Japan's new DDHs (Koda 2011: 46-47). These DDHs, the *Hyūga*-class with two ships commissioned in 2009 and 2011, and the brand-new *Izumo*-class with one ship launched in 2014 and another one under construction, appear very similar to smaller aircraft carriers, although they lack catapults and starting ramps necessary for launching aircrafts. Nonetheless, these ships could be used to carry vertical starting aircrafts, such as the F-35B, though Japan has only ordered the F-35A variant, which is unable to operate from carriers (Wallace 2013). The main mission of these new ships is anti-submarine warfare, and secondarily, to assist in PKOs and for humanitarian aid missions (Giarra 2012: 51). While the role and number of vessels is consistent with earlier JMSDF ships, it is obvious that the new flattop "destroyers" are capable of carrying a much bigger number of helicopters, thus increasing their operational capabilities and the overall quality of the JMSDF anti-submarine warfare. Concerning other surface combatants, Japan started to utilize the Aegis BMD system in 1986, for which it developed a new class of guided missile destroyer (DDG), similar to USN

DDGs. The JMSDF has continuously phased out older vessels and sought to maintain four escort flotillas, each including two missile destroyers, but has otherwise remained linear in its makeup (Middlebrooks 2008: 31-33; Patalano 2014a: 430-431). More recently, it was reported that the JMSDF planned to speed up the procurement of two additional DDGs, equipped with the Aegis BMD system, to boost the overall number of Aegis DDGs from the current six to eight. Orders for these two ships are to be placed in 2015 and 2016 and are expected to enter service in 2020 and 2021 (Kallender-Umezu 2014a; 2014b). Reportedly, the decision to purchase these ships was hastened by the increased missile testing of the DPRK in 2014 (Keck 2014a). Beyond that, the construction of new DDGs is not very surprising, since the two oldest, without Aegis capabilities, are close to the end of their service lifespan and will be retired with the commissioning of the new ships, keeping the overall number of DDGs constant (Kallender-Umezu 2014b). Overall, the new NDPG announced an increase in the total numbers of destroyers, from the current 47 to 54 ships, with emphasis on smaller, more mobile vessels, fitting into the new vision of a *Dynamic Joint Defense Force* (MoD Japan 2014b: 148-155).

Lastly, as seen in Figure 9, the number of Japanese submarines has remained constant at sixteen since the end of the Cold War.
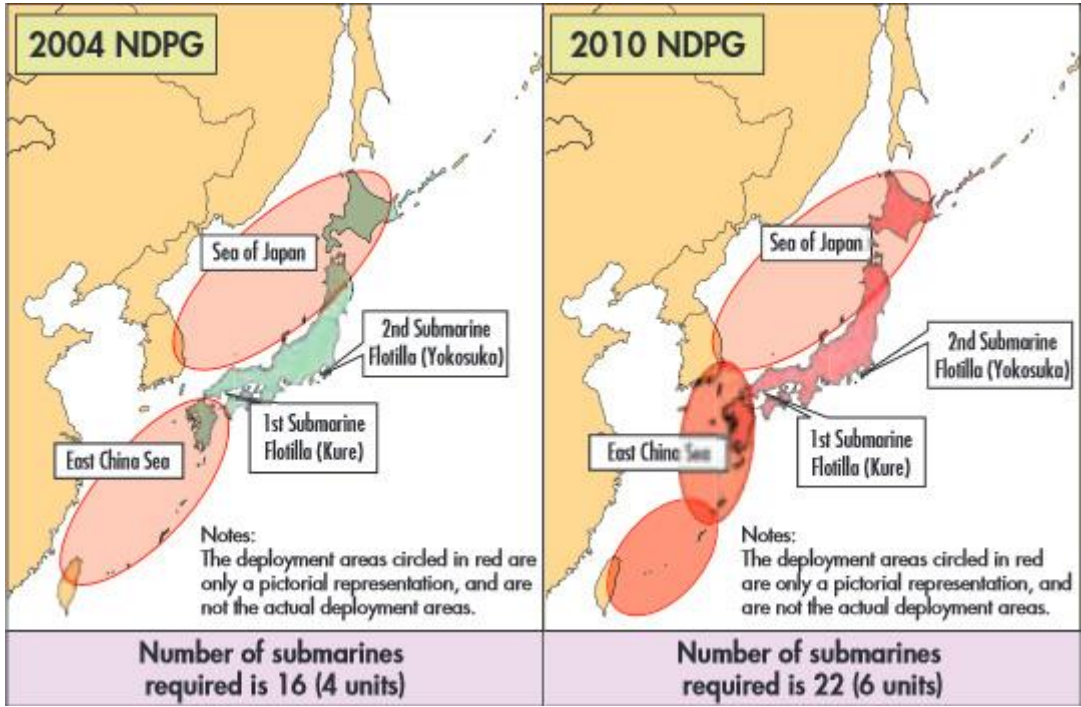

Figure 10. Shift in JMSDF Submarine Patrol Area

Source: MoD Japan 2012a: 124[18]

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[18] Graphic was changed by the author

In 2012 it was announced that the JMSDF would deploy 22 submarines in the future. This enlargement would partially be facilitated by commissioning several new boats of the *Sōryū*-class, while delaying the retirement of older *Oyashio*-class vessels. Usually the JMSDF retires their submarines fairly early in their service history, roughly after only eighteen years, and produce one new submarine per year, so that retiring boats are constantly replaced. The boats selected for longer service will be refurbished, and will enable the JMSDF to finish the enlargement of its submarine fleet within a few years (Mizokami 2013; Giarra 2012: 51-52). Already in the 2010 NDPG a change in submarine patrol areas and the subsequently necessary increase in the JMSDF submarine fleet had been outlined. Figure 10 shows that this shift is concentrated on creating a separate patrol area in the southwestern part of Okinawa, in order to better handle Chinese assertiveness around the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (MoD Japan 2012a: 123).

3.5.5 Analysis

Earlier this thesis has discussed a potential enduring rivalry between Japan and China, concluding that there is enough evidence to support this classification. Likewise, the arms race definition calls for a conscious rivalry between two or more participants in an arms race. Even though the enduring rivalry definition might seem to suffice, it is also important to take into account that its definition mainly focuses on a fixed number of MIDs in a specific timeframe to determine the existence of this particular rivalry. Beyond that, it seems appropriate to also include other factors to answer whether there is a consciousness for a rivalry between Japan and China, especially since both nations have various other territorial disputes connected to a multitude of MIDs with other countries.

The analysis of the drivers for strategic development and military modernization of each respective country has made clear that, especially during the 90s, China, as well as Japan, were both influenced by other outside actors. The PRC mainly reacted to the perceived threat posed by the US, especially following the Gulf War, prompting the PRC to rethink and redevelop their overall strategy and direction of their armed forces. The prime driver was, and still is, the Taiwan contingency and deterring American power-projection. Japan was mainly influenced by the rising threat of North Korean ballistic missiles. The 21st century has brought some change, though China's main focus seems to remain Taiwan. The commissioning of *Liaoning* was without question a major milestone for the PLA, though the efforts to develop aircraft carriers seem also be focused mainly on deterring the US and on strengthening the PLANs power-

projection in the South China Sea, where China is entangled in a multitude of territorial disputes with smaller and militarily less powerful nations. The biggest change came with Japan's shift towards a harsher line against China, identifying its neighbor as one of its major security concerns in its more recent defense white papers. Likewise, Japan has adapted its defense posture towards the PRC, reacting to the Chinese increase in equipment quality, capabilities and assertiveness, as exemplified by the reorganization of submarine patrol areas and the subsequent increase in the number of submarines, as well as the general focus on increasing patrol and surveillance capabilities, especially in the dispute-prone southwestern area of Japan's territory. In all likelihood, the two new DDH classes of the JMSDF, which are a considerable upgrade in anti-submarine warfare capability, can be seen as a reaction on the swift and continuous modernization of the PLAN submarine fleet during the last decades.

In 2015, a strong focus was put on Japan's revision of its stance on collective self-defense. The transition started in 2014 and was finalized with the passing of a Security Bill by the Upper House of Japan's parliament in September 2015. This, together with the new Defense Guidelines for the *Anpo* alliance has garnered negative reactions by South Korea and China, which both fear a shift to a more aggressive and warlike Japan. While these concerns might be comprehensible to some degree, the overall consensus among researchers and analysts seems to be that these developments were a foreseeable result of a longer development, rather than a sudden reversal and escalation. Ben-Ari sees the reinterpretation of Article 9 as a process that started with the end of the Cold War and has seen many gradual steps with different PKOs, upgrading the Defense Agency to ministry-level and numerous smaller legal-changes (2015: 29). Also, the reinterpretation was characterized as an attempt to redefine Japan's global role, and to showcase Japan's slow reemergence as a "normal" country. The latter was most likely motivated by the growing assertiveness of the PRC and the DPRK. Nonetheless, it is seen as highly unlikely that these developments might signify a rise in Japan's militarism - mostly based on the strong opposition of the Japanese people to the reinterpretation of Article 9 as well as a general weariness of military power (Bendini 2015: 17-18). Liff notes that the new Defense Guidelines are a reaction to global security challenges, but at its core, mainly the formalization of "[…] key trends in U.S.–Japan cooperation which alliance watchers have observed for years" (2015: 88).

One of the most notable facets, and one of the main topics when discussing arms races, is military expenditure. An arm race requires both nations military expenditure to rise swiftly and in an accelerating pattern. While it is evident that China's military expenditure has been on

a constant rise since the mid-90s, it has done so at a more constant pace. The expenditure has surpassed Japan's defense spending in 2004 and has increased to three times the amount allocated by Japan, but, as a comparison of the GDP percentage of both countries military expenditure shows, this increase of Chinese defense spending is mainly due to its rise as an economic power, with the actual share of military expenditure decreasing in the late 90s and holding at a constant rate throughout the 21st century. Japan has not had any big changes in its military expenditure, but neither did it experience a comparable economic upturn as China did. Japan's GDP percentage of its military expenditure remains constant in accordance to a self-imposed tradition of keeping defense spending under or at one percent.

In regard to a quantitative and qualitative build-up, both countries armed services have been subject to overall reductions in manpower and equipment quantity. The PLA has also undergone a major modernization of all branches, catching up and transforming into a modern armed force, rather than a qualitative build-up aimed against Japan. The US remain the main driver against which upgrades are directed, especially modernization of the PLAN and the PLAAF. Japan, being a close ally to the US, is certainly included in planning and strategic consideration, but doesn't appear to be a major focus. In turn, Japan might compete with China in regard to stealth aircrafts, as it decided to order a number of F-35 stealth jets around the same time as China revealed its indigenously produces stealth fighters. Furthermore, Japan deviated from its usual pattern of naval vessel retirement, as the number of submarines was increased. Overall the JSDF modernization measures still appear to be part of Japan's constant renewal of equipment to keep up with modern technology rather than to directly counter or surpass the PRC, although some instances show that Japan is, without question, adapting to the PLA's restructuring and modernization.

In conclusion, it has been shown that most of the arms race criteria are either inconclusive or not fulfilled. Going beyond the enduring rivalry definition, only Japan declares China a concern for its national security. China's modernization is mainly directed towards denying access to the US or to gain more power projection capabilities, Japan on the other hand, is reacting mainly to China's military modernization and assertiveness. In regard to military expenditure neither country qualifies, similarly there is a lack of competition for quantity or quality, and the overall modernization measures are either to keep up with new technologies or to catch up to the current standard. Therefore it has to be asserted that there is no current arms race between Japan and China, even though most of Wallace and Meconis (1995) arms race precursors are still in place.

3.6. Hardliners and Accommodationists in Power

In an effort to determine whether the current political leaders of Japan and China can be categorized as hardliners or as accommodationists in accordance to the previously provided definitions, the following chapter will concentrate on analyzing three main topics: nationalism, military affairs and diplomacy/foreign policy of either leader. It should be noted that it is difficult to reach a definitive result given that both politicians, especially Xi Jinping, have only been in power for a short time, limiting accessible data and examples. Furthermore, the constrictions of this paper prevent from compiling a more in-depth analysis of both characters.

3.6.1 Abe Shinzō

Born into an influential family of former politicians and prime ministers, and elected as the youngest prime minister in Japan's post-war history, Abe Shinzō took over leadership of the Japanese government after the resignation of his mentor Koizumi Junichirō in 2006. Abe's first term as prime minister lasted less than a year, when he stepped down due to health reasons. Nevertheless, he made a comeback when he soundly defeated his opponents in the 2012 election, ending the Democratic Party of Japan's brief rule since 2009 (Inoguchi 2014:101-102).

Despite being sometimes called a "hawk" or hardliner in various articles and news reports, there seems to be no general consensus as to where to put Abe. His stances on Japan's military role and on diplomatic and security issues with China put him squarely into the nationalistic corner of Japanese politics (Saul 2013; Tisdall 2013). However, it is also important to note that, while portrait in western media as "hawk", the common conception of militarists differs in the context of Japan, due to Japan's constitutional pacifism. Thus actions perceived or described as "hawkish" in Japan, would most likely garner considerable less attention in other nations (Pryor 2013). Abe has been continuously associated with revisionist issues in regard to the Pacific War. Throughout his political career he has been member and director of a number of right-wing committees and groups aimed on denouncing the Pacific War as a war of aggression, war crimes such as the Nanjing Massacre or the existence of sex slavery in the Imperial Army (i.e. the comfort women). Furthermore, some of these groups particularly focused on changing Japan's history textbooks in order to propagate the aforementioned revisionist view of Japanese history (Narusawa 2013). Also, an analysis of the cabinet members of the (second) Abe government show that most of his ministers are selected from members of

similar groups, mainly groups concerning constitutional revision, history textbooks, the Yasukuni Shrine and Shintō (Penney 2013).

Shortly before being elected prime minister for the first time, Abe had published a book titled *Utsukushii Kuni e* (Towards a beautiful country) in which he shared his personal belief system and his vision of Japan's future. Primarily, these ideas were for Japan to be proud of its history and culture as well as its various achievements in technology and economics. Moreover, he called for Japan to become a truly sovereign country that would not need to accept being humiliated by other nations and that "[t]o defend its honor, its territory, and its properties, Japan should strengthen its Self-Defense Forces [and] to navigate in the jungle of nations, Japan should enhance its U.S. ties" (Inoguchi 2013: 105).

One of the big issues connected to nationalism and conservative politicians in Japan is visiting the Yasukuni Shrine. Koizumi garnered much attention and criticism with his visits during his premiership, and Abe has been a supporter of Yasukuni pilgrimages before his first election in 2006. As prime minister, however, he refrained from visiting the shrine, officially adopting a stance of "strategic ambiguity", declining to comment on whether he would visit the shrine. This decision enabled a temporary thawing of Sino-Japanese relations, as Abe was able to downplay the Yasukuni issue in general (Mochizuki and Parkinson Porter 2013: 35-36; Kuroki 2013: 210). During his campaign for his second term as prime minister, "[…] Abe frequently expressed his regret about not making a pilgrimage to Yasukuni while prime minister the first time around […]" (Mochizui and Parkinson Porter 2013: 36). Nonetheless, he again refrained from visiting the shrine after his election, but numerous members of the national diet and of his cabinet chose to make pilgrimages, which generated international outrage all the same. This anger was worsened by a comment sharing his view that Japan did not wage an aggressive war during the Pacific War. Abe also sought to issue a new official statement concerning this topic, which would be more future-oriented, opposed to the initially 1995 Murayama Statement, which was more apologetic (Mochizuki and Parkinson Porter 2013: 36).

In regard to military affairs and defense, Abe continuously worked to guide Japan in the direction mentioned in his book. His focus on strengthening the JSDF began with the upgrading of the Japan Defense Agency to the Ministry of Defense in 2007, and during his second term as prime minister it became more far reaching. In a second attempt, Abe was able to push for the establishment of a new National Security Council in 2013, which he had already tried during his first term. He furthermore attempted to increase the defense budget, though he was restricted by growing expenditure for the social welfare program (Mochizuki and Parkinson Porter 2013:

28). Additional funding and vessels also were funneled towards the JCG in 2013 (Green 2013: 5). The JSDF were continuously developed into a more amphibious and jointly operating service, capable of dealing with Chinese aggression. In general the defense focus was aimed towards China and the southwestern portion of Japanese maritime territory. Another major step was the, earlier discussed, constitutional reinterpretation in order to enable the JSDF to exercise collective self-defense, which also allows for a stronger cooperation with the United States. Beyond constitutional reinterpretation, Abe is known for his ambition to revise Japan's post-war constitution, especially in regard to the restriction of Article 9 (Mochizuki and Parkinson Porter 2013: 28-33). While not revised, Abe managed to get a reinterpretation of Article 9 approved by the Lower House in 2014 and by the Upper House in 2015. The reinterpretation allows collective self-defense, an important step to politically normalize and militarily strengthen Japan (Bendini 2015: 16-18; Borah 2015).

While Abe's approach to nationalism and defense policy have been relatively in accordance with hardliner characteristics, he is less easily classified when reviewing his approach to diplomacy and foreign policy. Early on, Abe has exhibited a very uncompromising and tough stance, especially towards North Korea. Before being elected for his first term, Abe gained a reputation on being tough on the DPRK when he accompanied then Prime Minister Koizumi to talks with Kim Jong-Il. As Abe was very involved in the issue of Japanese abductees held by North Korea, he spoke against the signing of the Pyongyang Declaration. When elected prime minister, he continued in his stance against North Korea, pressing for continuous UN sanctions in face of North Korean nuclear tests, while also unilaterally imposing sanctions on the DPRK (Stengel 2007: 56-57). In turn, Abe has shown himself to be more accommodating and compromising towards China, especially in his second term. After his first election, he was described as being more hawkish and competitive against China, but this view gradually changed as he arranged a summit between the Chinese and Japanese leadership (Mochizuki 2007: 768). As mentioned earlier, Abe also refrained from visiting the Yasukuni Shrine since being elected, and actively tried to open dialogue with Xi Jinping during his second term. In order to enable such a meeting, which finally took place during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in 2014, it was reported that Abe needed to give big concessions to the PRC in regard to the Senkaku/Diaoyu territorial dispute. The main concession was reportedly Japan's stance on whether a dispute exists or not, meaning that Japan had to acknowledge that China also had a claim on the islands. Still, before the meeting, Abe reiterated that the islands are sovereign Japanese territory, and that there would be no concession on Japanese sovereignty

(Keck 2014b). Later on, it was reported that Abe did indeed not cave to Chinese demands, nor acknowledge that China has a valid claim on the islands, but that both sides had recognized their differing opinions (Keck 2014c).

3.6.2 Xi Jinping

In November 2012, after Hu Jintao resigned at the end of his second term in office, Xi Jinping was elected General Secretary of the Communist Party and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, and a few months later he also assumed the position of President of the PRC. Xi was born as son of a famous communist guerrilla fighter, thus growing up among the young elite of Chinese society, the children of famous and influential revolutionaries, who mostly follow in their parent's footsteps as politicians and in the military leadership. He did not serve in the PLA but climbed the political latter all the same, serving as Vice President of the PRC before assuming his current positons. In the run-up to his election, there had been various speculations concerning potential change he could bring to the Chinese political structure. Some saw Xi as a liberal reformer, while others expected a more hawkish nationalist. Soon after his election, Xi proved his dedication to reforms, announcing rigorous anti-corruption campaigns up to the highest echelons of the government. He furthermore began to promote his primary political idea during one of his first visits to various military bases around the country. His plans have become known as the "Chinese Dream", which is regarded as a version of the "American Dream" by many western journalists, which Xi supported during foreign visits. While this analogy is most certainly true in some parts, domestically the differences to the western concept were emphasized, as China seeks to reach prosperity for the whole nation (opposed to an individualistic approach) and does rely on its own strength, without exploiting other nations. The whole "Chinese Dream" calls for a rejuvenation and strengthening of the Chinese nation, continuing its economic growth and increasing the living standard for Chinese citizens, but also assuming the role of the foremost global power (Teufel-Dreyer 2013). While not as blatantly nationalistic or a historical revisionist as Abe Shinzō, Xi has also been criticized, most notably by President Obama, for increased nationalism and subsequently worrying China's neighbors. China's approach to the territorial disputes in the South and East China Sea as well as its approach in dealing with the other claimants is the obvious reason for these concerns (Panda A. 2014c).

As mentioned earlier, Xi did not serve in the PLA, but grew up amongst other privileged offspring, who by now climbed to high positions within the military hierarchy, thus giving Xi

a network of good connections to the armed forces. Furthermore, after assuming his leadership role, Xi started off visiting military facilities and holding speeches, tightening his hold on the PLA. Interpreting the "Chinese Dream", the armed forces have begun to dream their own "Strong Army Dream". In unison with the preceding military modernization, the "Strong Army Dream" builds on further strengthening and expanding the PLA, and an increase of assertive operations, as well as, championed by the PLAN, an expansion of blue water capabilities and upgraded protection for disputed territories. Though not directly formulated by Xi himself, the Central Military Commission, under his leadership, rapidly absorbed the idea of a "Strong Army Dream" (Miller 2013: 1-3). Xi also promoted the establishment of the National Security Commission (CNSC) shortly after his election, supposedly as a tool to consolidate his power early on, and also to better support his "Chinese Dream". The CNSC, akin to the US National Security Council, is an institution that handles all national security affairs. In a first step, the CNSC was mainly aimed on handling domestic security, counter-terrorism and operations against separatists. In a wider sense, the combination of several governmental branches under the CNSC makes it a versatile instrument to increase China's power projection abilities, and to strengthen the coordination of Chinese agencies. Unified leadership would decrease bureaucratic hurdles and rivalries that often limit Chinese responses in case of territorial disputes. In terms of power projection, the CNSC is aimed on enabling a combination of law enforcement or paramilitary forces and economic measures to enforce Chinese positions overseas, especially in case of the territorial disputes in the South China Sea (Qin 2014: 1-3; Miyamoto 2013: 4-5).

Apart from continued military modernization, a more unified security leadership bundled under Xi's supervision, one of his most noteworthy defense- and military affairs-related decision was the unilateral establishment of the Chinese ADIZ in November 2013. Although the ADIZ concept had already been brought up in 2008, it had been denied, but under Xi the proposal was resubmitted and approved. The ADIZ goes hand in hand with an increase of the security role of the PLAAF. The scope of Chinese air defense has been moved from territorial airspace towards the *First Island Chain* and in a limited capacity towards the *Second Island Chain*. This development has been described as a simultaneous preparation for offensive and defensive operations (Yamaguchi 2014: 1-2).

From the very beginning, Xi Jinping's foreign policy has been focused on establishing the PRC as a nation that has left the mantle of a rising power behind. Now he seeks to confirm China's status as a global power, demanding parity with the United States while naming Russia

the PRC's most important strategic partner (Godement 2013: 6). Xi has also committed China's foreign policy to more proactivity and initiative, whereas previously, the emphasis had lain on Deng Xiaoping's "bide our time and do little things" credo. To achieve more proactivity and initiative, Xi seeks to check the US pivot to East Asia while remaining non-confrontational. The objectives are to respect each other's core interests, but also to create a new periphery advantageous to China, keeping US influence at bay. The Chinese core interests, which naturally include disputed territories and sovereignty, still remain the highest importance. While Xi highlighted peaceful development, he also stressed that China would never give in on questions concerning core interests. The establishment of the ADIZ or the deployment of oil-rigs in contested areas of the South China Sea are seen as direct result of this new, more proactive and tough stance towards countries rivaling Chinese interests (Yamaguchi 2013: 2-3). Diplomatically, Xi has displayed a tough and less accommodating position. In late 2014, China released a statement which explained that the PRC would not accept any international arbitration in the case of the South China Sea Dispute, demanded by the Philippines in accordance with UNCLOS (Teufel-Dreyer 2013: 5; Tiezzi 2014). Moreover, Xi had continuously refused meeting Abe Shinzō since the latter came into power again, up to the very icy meeting of both leaders at the APEC conference in Beijing, 2014. As discussed earlier, this meeting was also only made possible by Japan appearing to make concessions in regard to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and Japanese recognition of Chines claims. Still, overall it has been noted that Xi Jinping appears to adhere to the concept of "peaceful development" heralded over a decade ago, and certainly does not seek to turn into a regionally or globally disruptive power (Johnson 2014: 2).

3.6.3 Analysis

The previous two insights on Abe Shinzō and Xi Jinping have shown that both personalities share a number of similar characteristics, believes and political positions, albeit essentially being adversaries in the row between Japan and China. They are seen as strong popular leaders following more moderate predecessors, and both are viewed as reformers, although their reforms are focused on different issues.

Both men have put forth an ideal vision and path for the future of their nation, Abe in his book and Xi in form of the "Chinese Dream", the ultimate objectives being economic success and to firmly establish their respective country in the league of international power players, without accepting perceived humiliation by other countries. For China this means

overcoming their "century of humiliation" and for Japan leaving its World War II-past behind. Both leaders have been described as nationalists, although Abe to a much more visible extent, due to his historical revisionism. Xi in turn seems to rely on nationalism more as a tool to consolidate his power and for popular appeal. In regard to sovereignty issues, both appear to be adamant in their conviction to repel all perceived incursions and threats, and overall the issue of the Sino-Japanese territorial disputes ranks very high on each politician's agenda. Even though Abe and Xi's rhetoric leaves no question on their hardline position on the disputed islands, both are reluctant to commit to actual military force. Xi reiterates the "peaceful development"-credo and Abe continuously sought formal talks with his Chinese counterpart. Furthermore, both nations mainly rely on their civilian or paramilitary forces in form of the CCG and JCG to conduct their oceanic patrols, which further limits the risk of escalation. Nonetheless, both leaders have put much focus on building up their countries military forces, Xi continuing the long lasting modernization and build-up of the PLA with the "Strong Army Dream", and Abe, who most recently approved an increase of the Japanese defense budget in January 2015, in order to further bolster the JSDF against China and North Korea (Panda A. 2015b). Diplomatically, both leaders have a tough image. Abe for his defiance in face of the North Korean abductee issue, Xi with his avoidance of Abe's attempts for an official meeting or for declining the Philippine's call for international arbitration in the case of the South China Sea Dispute. Still, both sides have also been accommodating towards each other, as Japan seemed to be willing to accept the existence of a territorial dispute in order to secure the 2014 Abe-Xi meeting. Xi is also actively trying to avoid conflict with the United States, and to work toward a win-win situation acceptable for both sides.

Overall both leaders seem to fit more into the hardliner than into the accommodationist category. However, they have very moderate tendencies, although those are sometimes overshadowed by nationalistic philosophies and rather uncompromising positions on territorial issues. Even as China under Xi's rule seems to rely heavier on power projection and the threat of military actions in dealings in the South China Sea, the signs of moderation as well as the lack of further escalation of the current situation make it hard to clearly categorize neither Xi nor Abe as hardline politicians. As the framework leaves no third option or possibilities of selecting different levels of hardliner or accommodationist, it appears to be most fitting to mark this last step to war as inconclusive, and to leave the classification of both leaders open to future analysis.

3.7 Findings

The analysis of the five steps in regard to the PRC and Japan has yielded numerous insights into the dynamic and development of the persisting conflict between both nations. Overall, the Sino-Japanese dyad only fulfills part of the necessary requirements of the Steps to War theory.

In chapter 3.2 it has been shown that, even though Japan officially negates the existence of a dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands with the PRC, there is ample evidence to satisfy the definition of territorial disputes, starting in December 1971. It is mainly based on conflicting interpretations of legal proceedings and the imprecise wording of treaties dating back to the 19th century and thus fulfills the first Step to War.

The second Step to War, discussed in chapter 3.3, the formation of politically relevant alliances, is less conclusive. While it has been shown that Japan is actively seeking closer ties with potential security partners on an above-regional level, the only formalized defensive alliance remains the *Anpo* alliance. Beyond that, security cooperation is mainly restricted to anti-piracy, anti-terrorism and PKOs. China on the other hand, traditionally opposed to security alliances, has only maintained its relationship with North Korea, though the developments of the last decades have lessened the military component of this defensive alliance. Other than that, China is heavily involved in the SCO, thus maintaining close ties with Russia. In light of the growing political resistance and fallout from western countries due to Chinese and Russian assertiveness in territorial issues, Sino-Russian cooperation has recently increased, especially in the realm of arms- and military technology trade. Still, it has to be noted that, even though both sides of the Sino-Japanese dyad show heightened interest in forming new security partnerships of varying levels, the only defensive alliances were formed several decades before the onset of the Senkaku/Diaoyu territorial dispute. Nonetheless, China and Japan both have politically relevant alliances, thus reaching the requirements for the second Step to War.

In chapter 3.4 the relationship between both countries was classified as an enduring rivalry. The analysis of the MIDs in the 23 year period from the end of the Cold War up to 2014 shows twice the necessary number of disputes to qualify for the enduring category, making this step one of the most distinctive one. However, it needs to be considered that the MIDs, though very frequent, almost never exceed the Display of Force category. Overall the MIDs follow a consistent course, while escalations including Use of Force are very rare cases of seizures of vessels violating maritime borders. Only the MID from September 2012 to 2014 has seen an increase of hostility with the aiming of military weaponry onto other vessels, constituting

Display and Threat of Force. Even so, the Sino-Japanese dyad unquestionably qualifies as an enduring rivalry, thus concluding the third Step to War.

The in-depth analysis of Chinese and Japanese military strategy and planning, military expenditure and qualitative and quantitative composition of their armed forces has led to the conclusion that both countries are not participating in an arms race in accordance with the parameters laid out in chapter 2.1.4.3. Both countries are continuously conducting qualitative military modernizations, and in case of the PRC also steadily increasing the military budget. However, the missing exponential expenditure growth and solid indication that both nations perceive each other as imminent threats to their security, mark those developments as parallel modernization attempts in order to adapt to the changed security environment of the 21st century, rather than an arms race. Thus, the requirements for the fourth Step to War are not fulfilled.

In the last part of the empirical analysis, the examination of the two political leaders of China and Japan has led to inconclusive results. Both men appear more as hardliners than accommodationists and could most likely be described as rather moderate hardliners, but the lack of an option to factor in these variations makes it impossible to fit them in either category. It would either over- or understate their influence on the overall situation and thus falsify the Steps to War.

In conclusion, applying the Steps to War model to the Sino-Japanese dyad resulted in a risk level of three out of five according to the *Simple Risk Barometer for War*, a medium to high risk of crisis escalation, when taking into account that hardliners could neither be confirmed nor ruled out. If converted to the *Precise Risk Barometer*, the risk level would lie at .55, as the inconclusive hardliner and accommodationist component ceases to apply. Still, this can only serve as a theoretical illustration of the application of such a Barometer, since, as previously discussed, the *Precise Risk Barometer* is only applicable for dyads before 1945. As a comparison for the result of the *Simple Risk Barometer,* similar research by Maness and Valeriano (2012) arrived at a risk level of four for the Russo-Georgian dyad in 2012. The Russo-Ukrainian dyad was rated with a risk level of two, as at the time, the pro-Russian accommodationist Viktor Yanukovych had been elected (thus affecting the hardliner category) and Ukraine was not actively pushing for outside alliance. The escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian relationship in 2014 showed that, with the removal of Yanukovych and the ascension of a pro-Western government taking a hardline position toward Moscow, as well as the push towards Europe and western alliance systems, the Risk Barometer would likely also have changed to a four out of five.

4. Conclusion

In order to formulate a precise answer to the research questions posed in chapter 1, possible changes in strategic and military position both countries experienced over the first years of the 21st century need to be addressed as a first step. The examination of the territorial issues has shown that the overall situation of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute has not changed dramatically in the 21st century, compared to the 90s. While Chinese assertiveness has most certainly increased, all in all the MIDs have stayed relatively consistent in their composition and development. Only after the 2010 Trawler Incident do we see an alteration with increased hostility and confrontations between military vessels on both sides. Apart from the disputed islands directly, the establishment of the Chinese ADIZ over the East China Sea represents the biggest change to the strategic and military position in regard to the territorial issues. The overlapping claims on control over airspace are poised to increase military interaction between both countries' air forces, the JASDF reported a continuously increasing number of scrambles against Chinese aircrafts, with allegations of China treating the ADIZ as sovereign airspace being raised (Kotani 2014). In regard to alliances, although no new defensive alliances were added during the 21st century, both countries have strengthened their positions. Japan has not only managed to get the United States to officially commit to the defense of the Japanese administration of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and tightened the alliance relationship in the 2015 guidelines, but has also made major inroads in treaties with Australia and India and furthermore improved cooperation and support with the Philippines. These moves, though not comparable to a defensive commitment of any sorts, have not gone unnoticed by China, and increased cooperation and exchange could certainly serve as a stepping-stone for future Japanese ambitions to form even closer ties with those countries. The PRC has, while still maintaining its defensive alliance with the DPRK, experienced an episode of cooled-down relations with its neighbor. Beyond that, China has sought closer military ties with Russia, though not in form of an actual military treaty, but rather through military exercise and arms trading. With the SCO, and the continued alienation between Russia and the west over Moscow's approach towards the Ukrainian civil war, China has a potent tool to tighten cooperation with Russia in the future, if they are able to overcome SCO-internal power dynamics. Sino-Russian military drills conducted in the East China Sea in 2014 could be regarded as hint towards ambitions for closer naval cooperation between both nations in the near future. In terms of quality and quantity of military hardware there have been several

changes compared to the previous decade, with increased military expenditure (though only marginally in Japan) but with the budgets maintaining relatively constant GDP percentages. The 21st century has also seen a change in the official perception of China in Japan's military strategy, identifying Chinese assertiveness and military build-up as worrying, warranting closer surveillance. Both nations have adapted their military strategy towards the new security threats of the 21st century and work toward increasing joint operations between branches and integrating new technology. The adaption of high-tech equipment and vessels has also been a major component of the PLA's overall drive for modernization that started in the 90s and continues' up to this day. While both countries forces are continuously modernized and upgraded, the overall number of vessels and manpower has followed a decreasing trend, especially notable in China. Japan has remained more constant, routinely phasing out older equipment and step-by-step refocusing from ground defense towards naval capabilities, a trend similarly observed in China. With the assumption of power of Xi and Abe in 2012, both countries gained polarizing and ambitious leaders. Within the - up to now - short period of holding office, both men have committed to changes in their nations' previous course. Abe, consistently pursuing his economic program of "Abenomics" as well as constitutional amendments and changes in favor of a strengthened Japanese military posture and more leeway for JSDF operations, and Xi, promoting his "Chinese Dream" of economic strength and a regaining of the PRC's "spot in the sun" tethered to a modernized PLA capable of enforcing China's position and projecting power into regions of interest, both share several similarities in their visions for the future. Unfortunately, with both politicians being more hardliners than accommodating towards their counterparty, their administrations contained one of the longest and potentially dangerous MIDs and Sino-Japanese relations reached yet another low point. On the other hand, Xi and Abe have also shown their pragmatic side, as there were some attempts for de-escalation of the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute when the two leaders met for the first time. As discussed previously, it has to be taken into account that both men are most likely rather moderate hardliners that might not seek open conflict, while also balancing close to escalating the ongoing dispute in order to secure a beneficial position for their respective nation. Still, the rule of Xi and Abe can be seen as destabilizing for the security situation of the whole region, as MIDs aggravate, military reforms and modernization are further increasing and both countries vie for influence in various regions of interest, such as the South China Sea.

Several drivers for the further deterioration of Sino-Japanese relation and the strained military-strategic situation have been identified. The primary reason for the persisting strife

over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is the economic advantage associated with the ownership of the island group and how they affect the (disputed) delimitation of EEZs in the East China Sea. In comparison, strategic and social issues connected to the islands are of considerably lower importance, though still also relevant factors that influence the continuation of the dispute. While the strategic importance is closely related to economic considerations, the social value is mostly a factor affecting public opinion, thus creating pressure on the political leadership. In a broader sense, the enduring rivalry between both nations is also a strong drive on each country's military position and development, thus also influencing the military build-ups described earlier. This has been found to be more prevalent in case of Japan, as China is also, and most likely even stronger, influenced by its underlying antagonism towards the United States and the US pivot back to East Asia. Similarly, drivers for military modernization and restructuring differ from China to Japan. Although overall, the build-up of the PLA has been shown to be connected to territorial disputes and power projection, Japan is not the only influencing factor, as other unresolved questions of territorial sovereignty, such as Taiwan and the ongoing South China Sea dispute, have, at this point, a more volatile climate and grander implications for Chinese security policy. Japan on the other side is increasingly concerned with China's strides to establish itself as a modern military power, and has directed the efforts to restructure and continuously modernize and adapt the JSDF more towards China and PLA-related threats. This is especially the case in anti-submarine operations through increased JMSDF patrolling and monitoring of the East China Sea and away from more traditional areas of defense against North Korea and Russia. Partially, Japan's defense procurements are also influenced by the need to implement and continue operability between the JSDF and allied forces, which becomes more relevant with Japan's evolving designs for closer security relations with other partners of the American hub-and-spokes alliance system.

Through the *Simple Risk Barometer* it was determined that there is, at this point, a noticeable risk of escalation between China and Japan. As three out of five steps have been completed and one is currently rated as inconclusive, an obvious conclusion is that the onset of an arms race would push both countries further toward armed conflict. Beyond that, two other major threats are the continuation and worsening of the hardliner attitude of both nations' political leaders, and the establishment of new, additional defensive alliances with third-party countries around the East Asian and South East Asian region. Should Xi or Abe decide to follow more nationalistic courses, alienating their opponent, and hindering bilateral negotiations through uncooperative behavior, relations would certainly suffer seriously. Equally, formation

of politically relevant outside alliances by either country would further heighten the chances of war even more, as was determined by Senese and Vasquez, and as Maness and Valeriano (2012) found, even the attempt of making new alliances can put major strain on rivalries. Such actions might spur the other nation to increase its defensive stance, military activities and to more actively search for defensive partners themselves, creating a more constricted, more volatile and more dangerous regional environment.

Assessing the feasibility of the Steps to War theory in retrospect

Overall, the Steps to War have proven to be a very useful method of analysis for Sino-Japanese relations. The steps cover the main areas of contention between both states. While the assessment of each step enables you to understand the development of each particular situation, the steps as a whole provide an easy-to-use risk barometer capable of pinpointing the main issues between both countries, and highlighting which possible developments pose the biggest future risk for further escalation of the situation. Nonetheless, two separate problems have come to light over the course of the analysis. Since the Steps to War theory was developed mainly as a method of analysis for larger datasets and was oftentimes focused more on the pre-World War II era, some parameters appear to be less applicable in the particular case of China and Japan in the 21st century. Mainly, this relates to the classification of alliances, as they encompass defensive alliance, non-aggression pacts and ententes. While those separations lend themselves to the political landscape of post-Napoleonic and pre-World War II environments, modern treaties mostly seem to consist of joint security cooperation treaties and strategic partnerships rather than non-aggression pacts. While those more modern concepts are in many cases not primarily focused on deterring another party, but rather deal with security issues such as piracy, terrorism or PKOs, partnerships of this sort might still represent a distinct statement of strategic cooperation, which might be important to factor into considerations concerning a nations' alliance policies. Secondly, the fact that there is no further possibility to rate hardliners and accommodationists in power did complicate the assessment of the politicians in question. Both Xi and Abe exhibit hardliner behavior, but are overall rather moderate in their actions, compared to the hardliner and accommodationist definitions. Therefore the analysis became inconclusive, as without a way to factor in the more moderate tendencies, the final result would have appeared much harsher than it might be in reality. There would be no possibility to distinguish between a Hitler-Stalin and an Abe-Xi dynamic, when both would simply be seen as hardliners.

Assessing possible future developments and influences

At the current point, the three major influences on further development are most likely the South China Sea Dispute, the progression of changes in Japan's alliance structure, and lastly the future leadership paths of Xi and Abe.

With the relative calmness around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands after the 2012-2014 MID, the South China Sea Dispute has garnered most attention in regard to Asian territorial issues. In comparison to the Sino-Japanese dispute, the situation in the South China Sea appears even more complicated and intertwined, mainly due to the increased number of actors, and due to more violent historical clashes and skirmishes between the PRC and other claimants. While it is important to note that the South China Sea Dispute differs from the situation of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in several regards, it might serve as a useful comparison to determine China's willingness to use military force and push military engagements, and to derive an overall assessment of China's strategic approach toward disputed territory. The main difference to take into account is the geographic makeup of the disputed South China Sea area in comparison to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Whereas the multitude of island groups, shoals and archipelagos claimed and administered by various claimants allow China to continuously consolidate their hold on the area by building artificial islands and military bases, such tactics are impossible in the much more confined space around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. The military superiority of the PLA versus the Vietnamese or Philippine armed forces is also a diverging factor, compared to the Sino-Japanese dispute.

The year 2015 has also brought change in Japan's military relationship with the United States with the revelation of the New Defense Guidelines, allowing for closer cooperation. Paired with the return of US focus towards the Asia-Pacific region, this even tighter bond is certainly an influential factor in future developments. Likewise, the participation of JGSDF personnel in a joint US-Australian military exercise in July 2015 points towards a closer military cooperation between Japan and Australia in the face of China's growing assertiveness. The possibility of a future Japan-Australia alliance has the potential to become an influential factor in Sino-Japanese security relations. On December 23, some potential for tension reemerged around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Reportedly, a CCG vessel, for the first time armed, was sighted 18 miles from the islands, within the limit of the territorial waters (Taplin et al. 2015). On January 14, 2016, it was announced by Japan that henceforth the JMSDF will be employed in maritime policing around the disputed islands, in addition to the JCG. This change is aimed directly on countering armed incursions from coast guard and naval ships of

the PRC. Even though the JMSDF vessels would operate in a policing capacity under domestic law rather than militarily, it is clear to see that an increased involvement of military assets on both sides noticeably heightens the risk of armed confrontations, skirmishes or open conflict (Pollmann 2016).

During the 21st century, both countries have continued on a dangerous path close to conflict and armed confrontations. While their relationship appears to have a certain degree of ritualization, the last years have exemplified both nation's willingness to use more of their military capabilities. Whether it is an intensification of MIDs, assertive alliance-building or hardline politics, it appears that the China and Japan are set on a trajectory that is headed more towards a point-of-no-return rather than towards a permanent and peaceful solution for their ongoing antagonism.

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Appendix

A1. Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a risk analysis for the Sino-Japanese relationship in the 21st century. While Japan and the People's Republic of China continuously vie for ownership of the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea, protest and confrontations have increased in severity during the last decade and bilateral relations have deteriorated.

Therefore, this research aims at analyzing the changes in the military-strategic position of both nations over the course of the new millennium, at examining potential developments towards conflict and at assessing the current risk of escalation. Furthermore, the main drivers of, and biggest influences on, the military-strategic development are determined in order to identify the main threats for stability. This thesis utilizes the Steps to War theory as a main theoretical framework, according to which, territorial disputes, alliances, rivalry, arms races and hardliner in power are the five major factors that lead to war-onset. Each factor is discussed individually to provide the necessary background, and then the five steps are examined in regard to both nations, in order to find a definitive answer on whether these steps are currently in place or not.

The analysis of the Steps to War shows a medium to high risk of escalation. Three out of five steps, territorial dispute, alliances and rivalry, are confirmed by the research. It is show that there is currently no arms race between both nations, and the fifth step, hardliners in power remains inconclusive. The analysis of the Steps to War shows a medium to high risk of escalation. Three out of five steps, territorial dispute, alliances and rivalry, are confirmed by the research. It is show that there is currently no arms race between both nations, and the fifth step, hardliners in power remains inconclusive. These findings help pinpoint potential future catalysts, such as an increase in hardliner-behavior and alliance-building, as well as identify the drivers of the East China Sea Dispute and illustrate its slow intensification and militarization. However, the findings also put military build-ups into perspective, showing that they mostly are routine modernization to adapt to the current security environment.

Keywords: *Japan, China, Steps to War Theory, Territorial Dispute, East China Sea, Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, Alliance, Sino-Japanese Rivalry, Arms Race, Hardliners*

A2. Kurzzusammenfassung

Das Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es ein Risikoanalyse der Sino-Japanischen Beziehungen im 21. Jahrhundert zu erstellen. Während Japan und die Volksrepublik China fortwährend um die Besitzansprüche über die Senkaku/Diaoyu Inseln im Ostchinesischen Meer streiten, ist das Ausmaß an Protesten und Konfrontationen im letzten Jahrzehnt angestiegen und die bilateralen Beziehungen haben sich verschlechtert.

Aus diesem Grund analysiert diese Arbeit die Veränderungen der militärisch-strategischen Position beider Nationen seit der Jahrtausendwende, untersucht Konflikt gerichtete Entwicklungen und bewertet das momentane Eskalationsrisiko. Weiters werden die Haupteinflussfaktoren für militär-strategische Entwicklungen bestimmt, um die Hauptgefahren für die Stabilität für bilaterale Beziehungen zu eruieren. Der theoretische Rahmen dieser Arbeit stützt sich auf die *Steps to War* Theorie, welche besagt dass Territorialstreitigkeiten, Allianzen, Rivalitäten, Rüstungswettläufe und *hardliner* in Machtpositionen die fünf Hauptauslöser für Kriege sind. Diese fünf Bestandteile werden im Laufe der Arbeit einzeln diskutiert und für den Zweck dieser Arbeit passende Definitionen und Parameter erstellt. Anschließend wird jeder Schritt separat in Hinblick auf China und Japan untersucht um herauszufinden welche Schritte für den gewählten Zeitraum zutreffend sind.

Die Analyse der Steps to War zeigt ein mittleres bis hohes Risiko der Konflikteskalation. Drei der fünf Schritte, Territorialstreit, Allianzen und Rivalität werden bestätigt, ein Rüstungswettlauf hingegen konnte zum momentanen Zeitpunkt nicht festgestellt werden. Der letzte Schritt, *hardliner* in Machtpositionen lässt sich aus den vorliegenden Daten nicht eindeutig beantworten. Mithilfe dieser Arbeit lassen sich mögliche Katalysatoren, wie eine härtere Linie der Regierungen oder die Bildung neuer Bündnisse feststellen. Des Weiteren identifiziert die Arbeit die Haupttreiber in diesem Konflikt und zeigt dessen langsam fortschreitende Militarisierung auf. Allerdings lässt sich aus den Ergebnissen ablesen, dass es sich bei dem Großteil der Rüstungsanstrengungen beider Länger um routinemäßige Modernisierungen und Anpassungen an das Sicherheitsumfeld des 21. Jahrhunderts handelt.

Schlagwörter: *Japan, China, Steps to War Theorie, Territorialkonflikt, Ostchinesisches Meer, Senkaku/Diaoyu Inseln, Sino-Japanische Rivalität, Allianz, Rüstungswettlauf, Hardliner*

A3. Curriculum Vitae

Personal Information

Name:	Stefan Kolar
Date of birth:	10. December 1986
Place of birth:	Vienna
Citizenship:	Austria
Contact information:	0650 453 9930
	stefan_kolar@gmx.at

Education

<u>University of Vienna</u>

2011 - Present	East Asian Economy and Society, **Master of Arts**
2009 - 2014	History, **Bachelor of Arts**
2008 - 2009	International Development (individual diploma study program) – canceled
2006 - 2011	Japanese Studies, **Bachelor of Arts**

Language skills

German:	native speaker
English:	excellent (language study trip 2003: Valetta, Malta)
Japanese:	advanced
French:	good (language study trip 2004: Toulon, France)
Korean:	basic
Latin:	basic