
COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE: WHY THE
REINTERPRETATION OF ARTICLE 9 OF THE
JAPANESE CONSTITUTION WILL NOT LEAD TO
THE REVIVAL OF IMPERIAL JAPAN

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Abstract:

Japan has resisted participation in collective self-defense with its allies for decades, citing Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, the which renounces the right of Japan to conduct warfare. The interpretation that was used allowed Japan to practice individual self-defense, but did not allow for collective self-defense with allies. However, as of July 1st, 2014, Article 9 was reinterpreted to allow for collective self-defense as well. This decision was met with strong opposition from other countries in the East Asian region, such as China, South Korea, and North Korea. These countries worry that the reinterpretation of Article 9 is a step closer to a Japan with a normalized military and a future confrontation with Japan. However, upon analysis of the concerns that these countries have about Japan and the details of the current situation of Article 9, it becomes apparent that this reinterpretation presents no new threat to the East Asian region. International relations theory, specifically the theories of liberalism and realism, will be used to justify the reasons why, despite the reinterpretation, Japan will be no more of a threat to the region than it is currently. Though Japan's actions and decisions display elements of both liberalism and realism, liberalism better explains why Japan reinterpreted Article 9 to allow for collective self-defense after decades of resistance.

Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution is unique as it is the only clause in any state's constitution that officially renounces war as a means of settling international disputes. The exact wording of Article 9 is as follows:

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

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized ("The Constitution of Japan", Article 9).

As strict as the language of Article 9 seems to be, it has been consistently interpreted over time to allow Japan to engage in individual self-defense, but not "collective self-defense" with its allies. In other words, Japan can protect itself against direct attacks, but it cannot defend against attacks directed at allies. A common example of this dilemma is if North Korea were to fire missiles at Hawaii, the Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF) could not legally stop the missiles (Sultenfuss 2011, 3). However, on July 1st of 2014, the current administration in Japan reinterpreted Article 9 in a way that includes the right to "collective self-defense" (*Asian News Outlook*, July 4, 2014).

This reinterpretation has sparked a wave of criticism from Japan's neighboring countries in East Asia. For example, East Asian nations including China, North Korea, and South Korea are suspicious of any change to Article 9 due to Japan's actions during World War II (Robinson 2010, 313). Additionally, China and South Korea have argued that by virtue of having the JSDF, Japan has already rearmed in spite of Article 9 of its constitution (Port 2010, 27). They have also made it clear that they oppose any changes to Article 9 that loosen restrictions on Japan's Self-Defense Forces (Port 2010, 5-6). China has also voiced concerns that Japan is acting as a

“lackey” of the United States, which means that they believe that Japan is working to strengthen U.S. interests in the region (Dolan 1992, 395). The Japanese people themselves are worried about the prospect of becoming involved in foreign wars (Uleman 2006, 91). Nevertheless, this current reinterpretation of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution to allow for “collective self-defense” among its allies does not present a new military threat to East Asian countries.

First, Article 9 itself will be discussed, including the historical context behind its addition to the Japanese Constitution and its application and reinterpretation over time. Next, the concerns that neighboring countries have about this most recent reinterpretation will be discussed. Then, the paper will discuss international relations theory, specifically the theories of realism and liberalism. Both theories will be explained and applied to Japan’s actions in light of Article 9 in order to explain Japan’s reasoning behind this current interpretation. By this analysis, it will become apparent that this current interpretation to allow for collective self-defense among Japan’s allies does not present a new threat to countries in East Asia.

In the aftermath of World War II, the Allied Occupation force in Japan pressured the Japanese government to amend the 1889 Meiji Constitution. After the Japanese government submitted several unsatisfactory drafts to the Allied Occupation force, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, General MacArthur, oversaw the composition of an altogether new Japanese Constitution (Dolan 1992, 60). Because of the atrocities committed by the Japanese against the Chinese and the Korean people, as well as the experience of the U.S. Army fighting the Japanese across the Pacific Ocean, General MacArthur included Article 9 into the new constitution. He did this because of what he viewed as the necessity of suppressing the imperialistic behavior of the Japanese government (Middlebrooks 2008, 14). Because of this, proponents of revising Article 9 often refer to it as “U.S.-imposed” (Boyd 2005, 2). Another

commonly held view is that the Prime Minister of Japan at the time of the new constitution's composition, Shidehara Kijuro, made the suggestion to General MacArthur to include Article 9 in the new Japanese Constitution (Boyd 2005, 5). This would make Article 9 Japanese in origin as opposed to a "U.S.-imposed" article.

Article 9 was revised before it was accepted. The original Article 9 was an outright ban on military capabilities. However, the Japanese government included the beginning sentence of the current version of Article 9 to put the rest of it into context. This was called the "Ashida Amendment", named for the author of the amendment, Ashida Hitoshi. Instead of an outright ban on military capabilities, Article 9 could be interpreted as a renunciation of war and belligerency of the state without precluding the right to self-defense (Middlebrooks 2008, 15). It is also interesting to note that while the new Japanese Constitution was originally written in English, the Japanese government officially uses the Japanese version. Even with the Ashida Amendment, the English version of the Japanese Constitution uses strict language that does not seem to allow for military capability at all. The Japanese version on the other hand uses more flexible language and clarifies that the military ban applies only to Japan engaging in offensive war (Port 2010, 21). With the Ashida Amendment, the new constitution went into effect on May 3, 1947 (Dolan 1992, 307).

Initially, Article 9 was applied very strictly. For instance, Prime Minister Shidehara believed that the Japanese renunciation of war and war potential meant that Japan could not even defend itself if it were attacked (Boyd 2005, 6). This sentiment carried over into the administration of Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru in 1948. Because Article 9 prevented Japan from maintaining a standing army, Japan would rely on the United States for military protection through the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty of 1951 (Smith 2006, 22). The main details of the treaty

are that the United States military would defend Japan in exchange for land for bases and supplies.

Shortly after the Korean War started, the United States began to pressure Japan to rearm so that Japan could contribute more to its own defense and the U.S. could send the soldiers stationed in Japan to Korea (Boyd 2005, 21). In response, the Japanese government established the National Police Reserve (NPR), which took over the defense of Japan while the U.S. troops were sent to Korea. Prime Minister Yoshida justified the establishment of the NPR by changing his own stance on Article 9, saying that renunciation of war as a means of settling international disputes does not prevent Japan from participating in its own self-defense (Middlebrooks 2008, 16). This decision was met with controversy within the Diet, which is the popularly elected legislative branch of the government. A lawsuit was brought against the constitutionality of the National Police Reserve by Diet representative Suzuki Shigesaburo, but the Supreme Court of Japan dismissed it for 'lack of relevance' (Peters 2010, 124).

When the U.S. pressured Japan to further increase its commitment to the Korean War effort, Yoshida expanded on his new position by saying that maintaining a domestic force for the purposes of self-defense does not violate Article 9. However, the U.S. demands for increased international military cooperation did violate Article 9 in Prime Minister Yoshida's view (Boyd 2005, 21). This developed into what became known as the Yoshida Doctrine, which became an important factor in Japanese politics on the issue of how to interpret Article 9. The Yoshida Doctrine makes the distinction between "self-defense", which is constitutional, and "collective self-defense", which was unconstitutional before the latest reinterpretation of Article 9. The Yoshida Doctrine came to be based on three principles:

1. Economic rehabilitation was the prime goal and cooperation with the U.S. was essential to achieve that goal;
2. Japan should be lightly armed and avoid international conflict. This would contribute to economic development and avoid internal struggles;
3. In exchange for security, Japan would provide bases for the United States military. (Port 2010, 58)

The Yoshida Doctrine became official government policy in regard to how Article 9 would be interpreted. Article 9 would henceforth be interpreted to allow Japan to defend itself while continuing to ban collective self-defense. The Japanese government used the Yoshida Doctrine as a shield against U.S. pressure to rearm and increase commitment abroad for U.S. led operations while also rearming strictly for Japan's defense. With the right of self-defense now guaranteed, the National Police Reserve developed into the Defense Agency in 1954. This established each of the branches of the modern Self-Defense Forces: the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF), the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF), and the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) (Dolan 1992, 429).

In 1952, Prime Minister Yoshida formed the Cabinet Legislation Bureau from the defunct Legislation Bureau, which had operated until General MacArthur dissolved it during the composition of the new constitution (Samuels 2004, 2). The Cabinet Legislation Bureau (CLB) is an advisory board to the Prime Minister and his Cabinet which provides legal opinions concerning the constitutionality of legislation and Cabinet orders, and has been the main interpreter of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution since the CLB was established (Sultenfuss 2011, 3). Even though the Constitution specifically grants the power of judicial review to the Japanese courts, the judiciary has generally ruled in favor of the government's position in cases involving Article 9, insisting that defense matters are best left to the executive branch of the government as well as insisting that the judiciary only has limited power over them (Sultenfuss

2011, 3-4). An example of this “judicial passivity” (Sultenfuss 2011, 8) comes from the 1959 Supreme Court decision of the case *Sakata v. Japan*, which states in regard to the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty:

Any legal determination as to whether the content of the treaty is constitutional or not is in many respects inseparably related to the high degree of political consideration on the part of the Cabinet which concluded the treaty and on the part of the Diet which approved it... unless the said treaty is obviously unconstitutional and void, it falls outside the purview of the power of judicial review granted to the court. (Milhaupt 2006, 215)

Because the judiciary prefers to leave questions relating to defense to the executive branch and the executive branch established the CLB to advise the Cabinet on matters regarding the constitutionality of legislation, the CLB acquired the de facto power to interpret Article 9 (Hagstrom 2010, 518). Some scholars also complain that due to the amount of oversight that the Cabinet Legislation Bureau wields over the Diet’s legislative process, the CLB holds almost absolute power over politicians (Duke 2001, 44). While the CLB’s rulings do not have the power of law, the Japanese government accepts CLB opinions as if they did have the power of law. A former CLB Director General Satou Tatsuo once stated that the views of the CLB are not legally binding, but are accepted as authoritative and politicians cannot easily overturn them (Samuels 2004, 2).

The CLB has also consistently upheld the constitutionality of the Self-Defense Forces (Elkevizth 2012, 158). Additionally, they have clearly defined the conditions under which the JSDF can exercise self-defense. Those conditions are as follows:

1. There is an imminent and illegitimate act of aggression against Japan;
2. There is no appropriate means to deal with this aggression other than to resort to the right of self-defense; and
3. The use of armed strength is confined to the minimum necessary level.

(Milhaupt 2006, 206)

After detailing the condition under which the JSDF can exercise force in self-defense, the CLB then used these same conditions to declare that “collective self-defense” exceeded the minimum necessary level of force needed to defend Japan as written in the third condition (Sultenfuss 2011, 4). This interpretation also precluded armed participation in United Nations (UN) led peace-keeping operations (Elkevizth 2012, 171). Interestingly enough, international law technically grants Japan the right of collective self-defense as well as individual self-defense (Elkevizth 2012, 175). However, while the CLB acknowledged this fact, they still banned collective self-defense as a violation of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution (Elkevizth 2012, 176).

This has not completely prevented JSDF participation in overseas operations. In 1950 during the Korean War, General MacArthur ordered forty MSDF minesweepers to the coast of Korea to protect U.S. soldiers (Peters 2010, 135-136). During the 1960s, Prime Minister Satou Eisaku was able to resist U.S. pressure to provide direct assistance in the Vietnam War effort (Elkevizth 2012, 160). However, since that time the SDF has participated in a number of peace keeping operations in strictly noncombat roles, including operations in Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda, El Salvador, Nepal, the Golan Heights, and Iraq (Peters 2010, 6). During the Persian Gulf War, the JSDF deployed six minesweepers to aid the U.S. forces (Duke 2001, 12). Japan’s largest contribution to the Gulf War effort was in the form of large monetary donations to the United States to help fund military operations (Flath 2005, 223). This however led to criticisms of the Japanese government’s commitment to its alliance with the U.S., resulting in Japan being labeled as a “paycheck ally” (Clausen 2009, 5).

The criticism of the Japanese response to the Gulf War was one of many concerns that prompted Japan to take action to update its security policies (Duke 2001, 65). These concerns led Japan to pass a series of legislation to loosen restrictions on the activities of the JSDF. In 1992, the Japanese government passed the U.N. Peacekeeping Operations Cooperation Bill, which allowed the JSDF to participate in overseas operations in logistical and humanitarian roles (Robinson 2010, 314). The government has also been able to expand the capabilities of the JSDF by focusing on countering the threat of terrorism (Nanto 2006, 40). After the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro expanded the legal uses of the JSDF (Peters 2010, 242). The Antiterrorism Special Measures Law was passed one month after the 9/11 attacks to provide logistical support to U.S. soldiers in Iraq, and the Law Concerning Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq was passed in 2003 to allow JSDF presence in certain active combat regions (Peters 2010, 251-252). Also, the Japanese Defense Agency was upgraded to the Cabinet-level Ministry of Defense in 2007, which indicates that national security has become a significant issue for Japan again (Hagstrom 2010, 2). These decisions brought about controversy because of the Iraq War's unpopularity among the Japanese people as well as opinions of the limitations of JSDF involvement in the war (Peters 2010, 252). An example of this occurred in 2008 when the Japanese courts ruled against the Air Self-Defense Force, saying that airlifting foreign soldiers into combat zones is a violation of Article 9 (Peters 2010, 256). By July of 2014, the Japanese government under the administration of Abe Shinzou reinterpreted Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution to allow for collective self-defense among Japan's allies.

Now that the historical context of Article 9 has been outlined, the concerns held by the countries of East Asia about Japan reinterpreting Article 9 will be discussed. The specific

countries that will be discussed are China, South Korea, and North Korea. The decision to allow the JSDF to participate in collective defense sparked a wave of controversy among Japan's East Asian neighbors. These countries are suspicious of any loosening of restrictions on Japan's Self-Defense Forces (Port 2010, 5). The largest reason for this suspicion is the shared memory of World War II. The historical memory of the Pacific War is still at work in the minds of the citizens of these countries as well as in the minds of the Japanese. They remember the imperialistic Japan that invaded their countries and committed horrible war crimes against their fellow citizens. Though the peaceful Japan of today is not the same as it was during World War II, the fact remains that the war was not long ago and the memories are fresh in the minds of the survivors. During the incident known as the Rape of Nanking, the Japanese army sacked the Chinese city of Nanking and murdered over 200,000 people (Eykholt 1999, 71) over the course of a few weeks (Chang 1997, 5). Examples of the brutality of the Japanese army during this incident can be found in Iris Chang's book, *The Rape of Nanking*, "Tens of thousands of young men were rounded up and herded to the outer areas of the city, where they were mowed down by machine guns, used for bayonet practice, or soaked with gasoline and burned alive" (Chang 1997, 3). Additionally, hundreds of thousands of predominately Korean women were taken into sexual slavery by the Japanese army and were referred to as "comfort women" (Seaton 2005, 292). It is this Japan that the countries of East Asia fear will one day return if the Japanese government continues to loosen restrictions on its Self-Defense Forces.

This memory is kept alive by the controversial actions of Japan's leaders, such as the prime minister's visits to Yasukuni Shrine and the Japanese textbook controversy of 2001 concerning events that took place during World War II (Robinson 2010, 317). The Yasukuni Shrine is a Shinto shrine in Japan that serves as a national monument for Japanese soldiers that

fought for their country. It is said to enshrine the spirits of all soldiers that sacrificed their lives for Japan (Pye 2003, 52). The Japanese visit Yasukuni Shrine to honor fallen relatives and friends. It seems only natural that public officials would also want to visit to honor their ancestors. However, the problem is that 14 Class-A war criminals are also enshrined, including some that were involved in the brutality of the Japanese army in Asia (Seaton 2005, 299). Because of this fact, the people of China and Korea as a whole feel that official visits to Yasukuni Shrine by Japanese leaders such as the prime minister is veneration of the people who committed atrocities against them as well as a refusal to accept responsibility for the actions of the Japanese soldiers during the war (Seaton 2005, 288). The current Prime Minister, Abe Shinzou, claims that his visits are for the purposes of remembering those who have fallen in war and praying for world peace, but Japan's neighbors are not convinced and continue to be offended by every official visit to the shrine (Panda 2013, 1).

The Japanese textbook controversy also caused a lot of outrage. Since the end of World War II, most Japanese students have been taught that Japan fought "an atrocity-soaked war of aggression" (Seaton 2005, 288). However, in 2001 a nationalistic group called the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform felt that the educational system was teaching a "masochistic" view of history to the Japanese students (Schneider 2008, 110). The organization designed a middle school textbook with the goal of improving Japan's image and increasing patriotism among the Japanese students (Schneider 2008, 114). The resulting textbook was heavily criticized domestically as well as internationally for portraying a sanitized version of the events of the Pacific War. For example, there were no references to "comfort women" at all. Also, while the Rape of Nanking, referred to as the "Nanking Incident" in the textbook, was mentioned, it was not explained in significant detail (Schneider 2008, 117). This prompted

accusations that Japan was again trying to obscure history and refuse to accept responsibility for the actions of its army during World War II (Seaton 2005, 287-288). These actions coupled with the latest reinterpretation of Article 9 of Japan's Constitution loosening restrictions on the JSDF give the impression of a gradually remilitarizing Japan, which would create the possibility of the reemergence of a nationalistic and imperialistic Japan.

Each country also has individual concerns about Japan that affect their standpoints on the issue of reinterpreting Article 9 of Japan's Constitution. China is the largest source of imports to Japan (Katz 2013, 2). Also, Japan is the largest source of foreign investment in China (Katz 2013, 4). However, despite this the two countries are politically at odds. These political issues include Japan's attachment to the United States, the Taiwan Strait situation, and the Senkaku Islands dispute. China is concerned about Japan's close relationship with the United States (Dolan 1992, 395). The American military has been defending Japan since the end of World War II because of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. During the Cold War, Japan was an important block against the rise of Communism, which took hold of China (Miscamble 1992, 275). In China's view, the U.S. has been using this treaty to manipulate the East Asian region for its own benefit. Japan is seen as a lackey of the United States, acting in the interests of America instead of the interests of East Asia. There is some concern among scholars that the economic relationship between Japan and China will cause Japan to shift its focus from the United States to China, but the political issues will need to be resolved first (Robinson 2010, 316).

The issue of the United States is related to the issue of the Taiwan Strait. The problem with the Taiwan Strait is that there are two Chinas: The People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland and the Republic of China (ROC) in Taiwan (Drifte 2014, 3). Back during the revolution in China, the Communist army overthrew the Nationalist government. The

Nationalists then moved to Taiwan and set up a government separate from the one on the mainland. The PRC still claims that Taiwan is a part of their territory and desires to have it returned (Robinson 2010, 317). However, the U.S. Navy is stationed close by in Japan and act as a deterrent to any military action that the PRC could otherwise take (Drifte 2014, 3). If it came to war, the U.S. would defend Taiwan from mainland China. Now that Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution has been reinterpreted, Japan would defend the U.S. Navy, resulting in China and Japan engaging in battle once again.

The nearby threat of the U.S. Navy also deters armed conflict over the ownership of the Senkaku Islands. For many years, China ignored the Senkaku Islands, called Diaoyu in Chinese. However, after it was discovered that the islands contained valuable natural resources such as oil, both China and Taiwan claimed that the islands belong to them (Gurtov 2014, 1). The point of contention is whether or not Japan needed to return the islands to China because of the San Francisco peace treaty. The treaty states that all territories taken by Imperial Japan were to be returned to the countries that lost them. The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were not specifically mentioned in the treaty (Drifte 2014, 2-3). China claims that the islands were a part of the territory of Taiwan and, therefore, are subject to the treaty. Japan, on the other hand, claims that the islands belong to the Ryukyu Island chain and were given back when the Ryukyu Islands were returned to Japan. There is very little solid evidence to support either claim, but because Japan had been using the islands for decades without protest, they have a slightly stronger claim (Drifte 2014, 1). China only pressed its claim in 1971 after the oil was found, even though the Japanese have inhabited them since at least 1895 (Van Dyke 2007, 175). This island dispute is a major point of contention between the peoples of Japan and China and is often used by both governments to stir up nationalistic sentiments in their citizens. These are the issues that

contribute to the suspicions that the Chinese have about Japan changing the way that their SDF operates.

South Korea is similar to China in that the historical memory of World War II is a large factor in their political relationship with Japan (Manosevitz 2003, 804). During the war, Japan conquered and occupied all of Korea (Cooney 2008, 179). The Korean people suffered because of the brutality of the Japanese army. As mentioned before, the majority of the comfort women taken by the Japanese army were Korean. In addition to that, the Japanese soldiers occupying Korea attempted to extinguish Korean culture as a whole by super-imposing Japanese culture on the Korean people (Cooney 2008, 175). Examples of this include tearing down Korean structures and erecting Japanese ones in their place, building the Japanese government building in front of a famous Korean palace, and making the study of the Japanese language in schools mandatory while making the study of the Korean language illegal (Cooney 2008, 175). If the fact that the Japanese army committed atrocities such as these at all was not enough, the South Korean government complains that the Japanese government has never officially apologized for their actions (*The Economist* 1998, 1). While individual Japanese political leaders, citizens, and organizations have expressed remorse and apologized for the actions of the Japanese army, the people of South Korea feel that the Japanese government as a whole has not attempted to make amends in any sincere or meaningful manner (Cooney 2008, 183). For this reason, many South Koreans still view Japan as a potential threat. However, South Korea and Japan are both allies of the United States (Manosevitz 2003, 802). The memory of the war, the lack of sincere apology from the Japanese government, and other issues such as the territorial dispute with Japan over Dokdo Island currently prevent the possibility of an alliance between Japan and South Korea

themselves (Van Dyke 2007, 158). Even so, both countries have an interest in maintaining good relationships with their mutual ally.

North Korea, on the other hand, has not had normal relations with Japan since the country was founded (Manyin 2002, 1). North Korea and Japan have held meetings to negotiate normalizing relations, but no agreement has been reached as of yet (Manyin 2002, 2). The main problem is that North Korea demands reparations and an official apology from the Japanese government, and will not agree to normalize relations until their conditions are satisfied (Manyin 2002, 3). The Japanese government, on the other hand, refuses to make an official apology and will only offer “economic assistance” instead of reparations (Berkofsky 2010, 5). South Korea and Japan came to an agreement normalize relations in 1965 which included economic assistance from Japan, but North Korea refused a similar offer because the Japanese government would not acknowledge the economic assistance package as reparations or compensation for Japanese actions during the war (Manosevitz 2003, 805). In addition to that, there are many important issues that add even more tension to North Korea’s relationship with Japan, including investigations into the kidnappings of Japanese citizens by North Korean agents in the 1970s and 1980s and North Korean missile testing near Japan (Cooney 2008, 180). Also, North Korea is not on good terms with the United States, so the fact that Japan has a close relationship with the U.S. makes negotiations with North Korea even more difficult (Manosevitz 2003, 806).

These are the main issues that are on the minds of the citizens of China, South Korea, and North Korea when they protest any suggested change to the limitations of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces. With the exception of a few key territorial disputes, the majority of the problems between these countries and Japan are related to the actions of the Japanese Army during World War II and the unwillingness of the Japanese government to adequately apologize or make

amends for those actions. From the perspective of these countries, reinterpreting Article 9 to allow for collective self-defense brings Japan one step closer to having a normal military again, which they believe would bring with it the possibility of a return to an aggressive, imperialistic Japan (Robinson 2010, 317).

However, this most recent interpretation does not actually present any new threat to the countries of East Asia. The details of the July 2014 reinterpretation do not give the Japanese Self-Defense Forces the right to declare war or invade other countries. It simply allows the JSDF to defend their allies (i.e. the United States) if they are attacked. Additionally, the modern Japan is a very different country than it was during World War II. The Japanese people of today are a lot less willing to go to war than they were in the past (Hagstrom 2010, 515). It is also not in Japan's political or economic interests to wage war with its East Asian neighbors.

This reasoning can be justified using international relations theory, specifically the theories of liberalism and realism. Most of the information about international relations theory came from the 2014 textbook *Essential Readings in World Politics*. The textbook is a compilation of essays written by various political scientists, professors, and political philosophers about international relations. Unless otherwise indicated, the information about liberalism, realism, and constructivism came from this textbook.

According to Immanuel Kant, liberalism is the idea that countries with democratic values group together and form an international society of states that coexist peacefully with one another (*Essential Readings* 2014, 62). Kant defines a liberal republic as one that respects individualism and the legal equality of its citizens, and operates under a representative government with a separation of powers (*Essential Readings* 2014, 62). Michael W. Doyle adds

that other liberal values in addition to individual freedom include equality of opportunity, ownership of private property, and political participation (*Essential Readings* 2014, 57). An informed populace that elects their government representatives and can introduce or protest legislation will have a strong influence over government policy. Doyle also mentions that included in the theory of liberalism is the democratic peace theory, which states that liberal democratic countries are less likely to go to war, especially with each other (*Essential Readings* 2014, 61). This means that as the number of liberal states increases, then the possibility for global peace also increases. Jack Snyder says of liberalism that the spread of democracy, global economic ties, and participation in international organizations will strengthen peace (*Essential Readings* 2014, 7). These characteristics of liberalism would imply that a goal of international relations liberalism would be to maximize cooperation among states.

Jack Snyder also discusses realism, saying that international affairs from the perspective of realism is a struggle for power among self-interested states (*Essential Readings* 2014, 4). Hans Morgenthau suggests that realism has its roots in human nature (*Essential Readings* 2014, 32). Statesmen makes decisions that benefit the state itself so that the state can survive in an international environment with no centralized authority (*Essential Readings* 2014, 37). Morgenthau also discusses the concept that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power (*Essential Readings* 2014, 33). In other words, statesmen act to increase the power of the state in the international community so that it can survive and pursue its interests. John Mearsheimer states that according to realism, states always act in accordance with their own self-interests, and do not subordinate their interests to those of other states (*Essential Readings* 2014, 39). Countries go to war, make peace, form alliances, and enter into trade negotiations for the sake of the interests of the individual countries involved with little emphasis on how other

countries are affected. It is not unusual for states to seek opportunities to take advantage of other states and work to ensure that other states do not take advantage of them (*Essential Readings* 2014, 40). The primary goal of states in the theory of realism is survival (*Essential Readings* 2014, 38). Therefore, states tend to make decisions that maximize their security.

International relations theory can be applied to explain the reasoning behind why this reinterpretation of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution to allow for collective self-defense will not present a new threat to Japan's neighboring countries. Elements of both liberalism and realism can be found in Japan's political and economic decisions.

When Japan received its constitution after the war, the Japanese state was redesigned into a liberal democracy. With the experience of the devastating effects of World War II and the new constitution that included Article 9 outlawing war, Japan developed into a peaceful nation (Peters 2010, 5). Based on the actions of the Japanese government and organizations composed of the Japanese citizenry over the decades following the war, it seems unlikely that Japan will repeal Article 9 any time in the near future. Despite the United Nations allowing all countries the right of both individual and collective self-defense, the Japanese government resisted forming its own domestic self-defense force for a number of years (Peters 2010, 8). After Japan formed the National Police Reserve, which later developed into the Self-Defense Force, it operated under the Yoshida Doctrine, allowing the country to resist participation in collective self-defense for decades until the July 2014 reinterpretation of Article 9. Additionally, there are a large number of citizen groups devoted to preserving Article 9, collectively referred to as the Article 9 Association (Peters 2010, 244). There are also political groups such as the Clean Government Party that list preservation of Article 9 among their stated goals (Hagstrom 2010, 517).

Altogether, the existence of these organizations suggests that peace has become a Japanese cultural ideal and that they mean to protect it.

Furthermore, the theory of liberalism states that there is a peace that exists between democratic states. This would theoretically extend to countries such as the United States and South Korea. The United States is a close ally of Japan, but there are political issues preventing Japan and South Korea from creating a formal alliance, such as the lack of an official apology from Japan for World War II and Japan's textbook controversy. If Japan were to resolve these issues, then Japan and South Korea would be much more likely to form an alliance (Cooney 2008, 173).

However, the United States is an ally of both Japan and South Korea, and both countries have an interest in maintaining their alliance with the United States. From a realist perspective, both countries greatly benefit from their U.S. alliances, as the United States has been acting as a deterrent to countries that might seek to do harm to them (Peters 2010, 13). As their economies grew, they were able to devote more resources to their own defenses, but they still both continue to benefit from U.S. military protection (Manosevitz 2003, 802). Now that Japan can also defend the U.S. forces, the deterrent will be greater, lowering the likelihood that an armed conflict will break out in the East Asian region. If Japan and South Korea were able to settle their political differences and form an alliance, then they could defend each other as well.

It is also important to understand that although the JSDF is now able to participate in collective self-defense with the United States, realistically it is still the U.S. in that alliance that is the primary military threat to countries that would seek to harm them (Katz 2013, 1). The U.S. has had a strong military presence in the region since the end of World War II. Since the signing

of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty of 1951, Japan has relied on the protection of the U.S. armed forces, making the U.S. military the first line of defense against threats to Japan (Duke 2001, 7). Since the JSDF was founded, it has only been allowed to defend Japan from direct threats against it in order to take some of the burden of the defense of Japan from their U.S. allies (Duke 2001, 73). Now that Article 9 has been reinterpreted, the only aspect of this situation that has changed is that Japan can now defend its allies such as U.S. from threats as well.

Furthermore, the United States Constitution does not restrict the U.S. military as Japan's constitution restricts the JSDF. The United States has had the ability to go to war with other countries before and after the Japanese government's reinterpretation of Article 9. For example, if China were to attempt to militarily seize Taiwan or the Senkaku Islands, China would have to face the U.S. military in combat (Arai 2013, 90). The JSDF would at least defend the Senkaku Islands, but that threat also existed before the reinterpretation, as defense of the islands would be considered self-defense, as the Japanese consider the islands to be Japanese territory. Other than that situation, the JSDF would now at most protect its U.S. allies in the area if it were done for the sake of protecting Japan. Similarly, although North Korea has valid concerns about a possible invasion from the United States, the country should still not be concerned about an invasion from Japan. The reinterpretation of Article 9 specifically allows for collective self-defense, not cooperative military incursions into foreign countries with its allies.

Another mechanism that brings countries together according to liberalism is trade. This is especially true for the economic relationship between China and Japan. Despite political tensions, the two countries trade massively and depend on one another for economic success (Katz 2013, 2). In 2013, Japanese exports to China totaled 18.1% of all Japanese exports and Japanese imports from China totaled 21.7% of all Japanese imports (Shimizu 2014, 1). South

Korea also trades heavily with Japan. In 2000, Japanese exports to South Korea totaled 6.4% of Japan's exports and increased to 8.1% in 2010 (Mukoyama 2012, 7). In 2000, Japanese imports from South Korea totaled 4.9% of Japanese imports and decreased to 4.1% in 2010 (Mukoyama 2012, 8). Although the amount of Japanese imports from South Korea is relatively small, South Korea imports from Japan consist of over 15% of South Korean imports in 2010 (Mukoyama 2012, 1). North Korea, on the other hand, has yet to normalize relations with Japan, so they do not benefit trade with Japan.

Also, from a realist perspective, if Japan were to go to war with China or South Korea, then the massive amount of trade that the Japanese economy benefits from would become unavailable. In addition, if Japan were to have instigated the war, they would lose credibility within the international community, resulting in fewer opportunities for trade other countries globally. So, it is in the best interests of the state of Japan to maintain peaceful relations with its East Asian neighbors especially in order to continue receiving the economic benefits of those relationships as well as maximizing their opportunities to begin or improve their economic relationships with other countries as well.

Japan has also been engaging in diplomacy and trade with other countries in the East Asian region in addition to China and South Korea. From a liberalist perspective, Japan wishes to strengthen the economies of the other countries in East Asia to create a prosperous East Asian region (Thomsen 1999, 5). This has been a desire of Japan's since the Japanese invasion of mainland Asia during World War II (Swan 1996, 139). However, instead of directly conquering the region through force and developing it in accordance with Japan's own specific interests as they tried to do during World War II, they are now helping to develop the region through trade agreements and overseas development assistance in the form of large sums of financial aid

(Taniguchi 2010, 2). Japan is also participating in cooperative military exercises and sharing military technology with many of these countries (Wallace 2013, 489). If Japan helps the region become successful, then they will be viewed as a friend in the international community as opposed to a threat based upon their past actions.

Japan has realist motivations for aiding the development of East Asia as well. Japan wishes to strengthen its ties with the rest of the East Asian countries and help them to develop economically and militarily in order to counterbalance the economic and military expansion of China (Wallace 2013, 484). Doing so will ensure that China cannot easily take advantage of the smaller countries in the region (Wallace 2013, 485). Japan will also be viewed as a more viable geopolitical alternative to China for those countries (Wallace 2013, 492). Also, the Japanese government realizes that they have historically relied a little too much on their alliance with the United States, putting Japan in a dangerous position if the U.S. were to focus less on their alliance with Japan or even abandon them in the future (Wallace 2013, 481). Japan's desire to improve relations with their Asian neighbors in order to hedge against both China and the U.S. make the possibility of another military conquest of East Asia even more unlikely.

Liberalism also states that participation in international institutions help to maintain peace. In addition to Japan's desire to strengthen the East Asian region, Japan is also a proponent of and an active participant in international institutions that unite countries globally. For example, Japan donates more money to the United Nations than any other country besides the United States (Marten-Zisk 2001, 22). Also, Japan demonstrated its commitment to global institutions during the 2008-2009 financial crisis when Japan provided the International Monetary Fund with \$100 billion (Grimes 2009, 44). Japan also participates in international economic summits, such as the G8 summit group and the G20 summit group (Dobson 2011,

242). They do have realist motivations for supporting international institutions as well, such as to globally increase Japan's influence and improve its image. However, from either a liberalist or a realist perspective, it would not benefit Japan to militarily or economically abuse any country in the international community. Doing so would damage Japan's image in the eyes of other countries, especially those of East Asia.

Using international relations theory to justify Japan's decisions and actions, it becomes apparent that Japan will not pose a threat to the East Asian region even with the July 2014 reinterpretation of Article 9. However, in regards to the July 2014 reinterpretation itself, liberalism explains the situation better than realism. Realism would predict that Japan would make decisions to maximize its security. This would mean that Japan would have theoretically kept using the old interpretation of Article 9 in order to avoid participation in collective self-defense. Instead, Article 9 was reinterpreted to allow for collective self-defense, creating more room for cooperation with the United States. This would suggest that liberalism better explains the reinterpretation of Article 9, as liberalism would predict closer cooperation among liberal democratic states.

Now, would it help to improve Japan's global image and international relationships in East Asia if the Japanese government officially apologized for their country's actions in World War II? It stands to reason that it would be helpful. It might also be helpful if they removed the Class-A war criminals from Yasukuni Shrine and stopped attempting to sanitize the content of their textbooks. However, the motivations behind these actions or lack of actions are ultimately for the purpose of improving Japan's image for the future. As Prime Minister Abe mentioned before, the government does not want to promote in the Japanese population a masochistic view of history (Schneider 2008, 110). They want their government officials to be able to honor

Japan's fallen soldiers without excluding anyone who died in service to the nation. They want to move forward into the future without burdening their citizens with the shame and guilt of their country's past actions under a different regime and to demonstrate that the Japan of today is not the empire-seeking Japan of the past (Cooney 2008, 186). Whether Japan is doing the right thing by not officially apologizing for World War II and attempting to leave the past behind them remains to be seen. However, it is apparent that if the reinterpretation of Article 9 to allow for collective self-defense is consistent with these goals, then it is not a step toward becoming a war-like state again. Therefore, the countries of East Asia have no reason to feel concerned about another military threat from Japan because of this reinterpretation.

Could issues such as the territorial disputes that Japan is involved in with countries like China and South Korea eventually lead to an armed conflict? It is possible, but it is not a new possibility. Even with the reinterpretation of Article 9, Japan still cannot legally use force to solve international disputes. However, if Japan or an ally such as the United States is attacked first, then Japan can certainly engage in military conflict to defend itself or its allies. The possibility of Japan fighting to defend itself existed before this reinterpretation. The only difference now is that Japan can defend its allies as well. Also, it is important to remember that Japan's ally, the United States, has always been perfectly capable of defend itself if it were attacked. So, the reinterpretation does not present any new threat to the countries of East Asia, even with the existence of issues such as territorial disputes with Japan.

Also, it should be pointed out that although this reinterpretation of Article 9 does not present a new military threat to the countries of East Asia, that does not mean that Japan will never again be a threat to the region. Japan is a peaceful country now, but the possibility exists in any country to become nationalistic and militaristic given the right circumstances. Japan may one

day completely repeal Article 9 and normalize their military. They may even drift apart from the United States and become more inclined to go to war for themselves. Political situations and public opinion change over time. When Japan first adopted its current constitution, many political leaders believed that Japan could not defend itself at all if it were attacked (Boyd 2005, 6). The decision to create a self-defense force was very controversial at the time that it was decided. Then, the opinion of how large the JSDF was allowed to be also changed over time, allowing the JSDF to expand (Dolan 1992, 429).

Countries such as China and South Korea complain that the existence of the JSDF at all is a contradiction Article 9 of Japan's constitution, but Japan sees itself as acting within the limits of its constitution even with the JSDF's gradual expansion (Port 2010, 27). If Japan were to decide to officially rearm in order to be able to go to war, it would have to actually revise its constitution to repeal Article 9 altogether (Boyd 2005, 21). Though this possibility may exist for the future, this reinterpretation of Article 9 is for the sake of collective self-defense with Japan's allies, not for revising the constitution to do away with Article 9 or for remilitarization. So, until the day comes when Japan decides to dispose of Article 9, countries in the East Asian region should not be concerned about an invasion from Japan.

So, the reinterpretation of Article 9 to allow for collective self-defense with its allies does not create a new military threat to the region of East Asia. Japan is no more threatening than it was before this reinterpretation, and the U.S. is no less threatening. If the Japanese government were to officially apologize for Japan's actions during World War II and stop attempting to sanitize the content of their textbooks, then political relations with countries like China, South Korea, and even North Korea would improve. They may even be willing to find solutions for

their various territorial disputes. However, even without apologizing, allowing Japan to participate in collective self-defense is definitely not a step toward the revival of Imperial Japan.

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