

POST-COLD WAR JAPAN'S SECURITY POLICIES: LEAVING THE YOSHIDA DOCTRINE?

During the Cold War, Japan was aligned with western liberal democracies. However, it never actively sought to promote liberal values, partly due to its aggressive behavior during the Second World War. As a result, Japan focused on improving its image in the international community, especially among neighboring countries, and adopted a non-interference policy.

Doğukan Baş

PhD Student / Teaching Assistant, Department of Political Science and International Relations, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara, Türkiye

After experiencing defeat and bitter lessons from the Second World War, Japan made significant changes to its foreign policy. Japanese elites began pursuing a pacifist and peaceful foreign policy, known as the Yoshida Doctrine,¹ which was built on three main pillars: alliance with the US, relations with East and Southeast Asian countries, and involvement with the United Nations. Relations with the US provided security, while relations with Asia provided economic gains. Their foreign policy, centered on the United Nations, provided legitimacy.²

This pacifist and peaceful foreign policy was in line with the concept of 'civilian power', which was first introduced by the French scholar François Duchêne in his studies on the European Community³ and later developed by Maull in 1990.⁴ According to Maull,⁵ three conditions must be met to become a civilian power: cooperating with other countries to achieve international goals, using non-military means for national interests, and establishing supranational organizations to manage relations and problems in international politics or support the development of established ones.

However, with the end of the Cold War and the decline of US hegemony after the 2000s, the world entered a new era. What role should Japan play in this new world? Should it continue to act as a civilian power or strengthen its army and participate equally in all areas of interna-

tional politics like a 'normal' country?⁶ The Japanese security policy literature, which focuses on the post-Cold War period, addresses these questions. Some literature argues that Japan still has civilian power features, while the rest suggests that Japan is turning into a 'normal' state.⁷

This paper examines the questions that dominate the post-Cold War Japanese security policy literature. First, the paper presents Japan's characteristics of civilian power according to the literature. Second, the paper examines the literature that argues Japan is turning into a 'normal' state. Third, the paper discusses the Japanese foreign aid policy literature, which falls within the sphere of both sides. In the 'Conclusion' section, the paper evaluates the findings from the literature and the debate.

Japan as a Civilian Power

During the Cold War, Japan was aligned with western liberal democracies. However, it never actively sought to promote liberal values, partly due to its aggressive behavior during the Second World War. As a result, Japan focused on improving its image in the international community, especially among neighboring countries, and adopted a non-interference policy. However, this passive attitude was criticized by the western camp after the end of the Cold War, specifically regarding Japan's response to the Tiananmen Square incident and the Gulf War.⁸



Yoshida Shigeru, Japanese diplomat and Prime Minister of Japan (1946-1947 and 1948-1954) and the founder of post-WWII Japanese strategy known as the Yoshida Doctrine.

In response to these criticisms, the concept of ‘global civilian power’ emerged in Japan. This concept acknowledged Japan’s significant experience and prestige in using civilian means to pursue its international interests. As such, Japan was encouraged to continue to use economic and diplomatic means, while also emphasizing liberal values in its policies.⁹ However, with the decline of American hegemony and the rise of China in the twenty-first century, it became apparent that this concept would not suffice. In 2012, with the return of Shinzo Abe to power, Japan’s foreign policy shifted towards ‘strategic diplomacy’, which placed greater emphasis on the liberal international order.¹⁰ This emphasis was further strengthened with the publication of the 2013 National Security Strategy document, which highlighted Japan’s commitment to using non-military means to maintain the rules-based international order.¹¹

According to the literature, Japan’s efforts to secure the liberal international order through strategic diplomacy can be categorized into three main policy areas: policies towards China in response to its rise, policies towards the US in light of its declining hegemony, and Japan’s increasing multilateralism. The common goal of these policies is to preserve the status quo created by the liberal international order to safeguard both Japan’s security and economic interests.¹²

Japan’s China Policy

China has been labeled a ‘conditional supporter’ of the liberal international order as it is in favor of the global economic system, but not of liberal values.¹³ In contrast, China challenges liberal democracy with its state-led capitalism model and illiberal governance style.¹⁴ China also reinforces its illiberal governance through ‘illiberal innovation’ or ‘Digital Leninism’, where it uses technology to strengthen its one-party regime and exert authority over its citizens.¹⁵ Additionally, China spreads (mis)information and propaganda to cause the rise of populism in liberal democracies through the internet and other communication tools.¹⁶ In response, Japan employs civil means, such as technology and technology infrastructure, to thwart security-related technology espionage and increase its international influence on important social issues, including human rights and disaster relief.¹⁷

Diplomacy is another important civil means used by Japan against the rise of China. Japan has expanded its influence sphere from the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific and developed the ‘free and open Indo-Pacific’ vision to foster cooperation in the region with like-minded countries, such as Australia, India, and the US. The primary objective of this policy is to safeguard the order and rules established by the rules-based international order concerning the seas and trade, ensuring Japan’s economic se-

curity. While Japan works with like-minded countries, it does not directly impose democracy on countries in the Indo-Pacific region. Rather, Japan prioritizes these countries' compliance with international maritime and commercial law. Nonetheless, Japan continues to champion liberal values by setting an example for the region with its liberal democracy and robust free market economy. Japan's policymakers also have a distinct attitude towards democratization, recognizing that each country has different internal dynamics based on its history and culture. Thus, there is no need to impose Western-style democratization, which could push these countries into the authoritarian camp. They believe democratization will occur after economic development and the acceptance of the rule of law in these countries.¹⁸

Japan's US Policy

According to existing literature, Japan's main goal in its US policies has been to ensure the United States' continued presence in the Asia-Pacific, especially in the wake of the decline in US hegemony that began with the 2003 Iraq War and the 2008 global financial crisis, and was further exacerbated by Trump's election and the rise of populist rhetoric in the US.^{19,20} To achieve this objective, Japan has relied on diplomacy as a civil means of assuming more responsibility in the region.²¹

When Trump was elected, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pursued a strategy of establishing good personal relations

with him to maintain a strong relationship with the US. Although Japan was unable to prevent the US from withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and imposing new trade tariffs, it succeeded in preventing any radical shifts in US Asia-Pacific security policies.²²

With Biden's election as president, who is a supporter of the liberal international order, the US has signaled its renewed engagement in the region. Japan has taken on the role of building a bridge between Asia and the US and has worked to restore the United States' credibility, which was damaged during the Trump era. In turn, the US has supported Japan's 'free and open Indo-Pacific' vision, which some interpret as Japan taking on a leadership role in the region alongside the US.²³

Japan's Multilateralism

As previously mentioned, Japan has expanded its sphere of influence from the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific region and developed the 'free and open Indo-Pacific' vision to promote cooperation with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, and the US. Japan's efforts under this initiative have been most successful in its relations with Australia, with the two countries now having a quasi-alliance.²⁴ On the other hand, Japan's relationship with India has progressed mainly through foreign aid, with India becoming the largest recipient of Japanese aid in the 2000s, taking over from China.²⁵



However, perhaps most notably, Japan has successfully brought Australia, India, and the US together under the umbrella of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD).²⁶ Japan promotes this multilateral initiative using rhetoric around “shared liberal values, peace, stability, and prosperity” and emphasizes the purpose of protecting the rules-based international order.²⁷ In fact, the QUAD is seen as a necessity for the Japanese elite in East Asia, given the lack of an organization like NATO in the region.²⁸

In recent years, Japan has also made significant moves in the field of economics with initiatives such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). The CPTPP is particularly important to Japan because it marks the first time in its postwar history that Japan has taken the lead in multilateral trade liberalization.²⁹ These initiatives are seen as Japan taking a leadership role in the region “to safeguard the World Trade Organization, fight protectionism, and discipline China’s unfair trading practices.” Some have even argued that “never before had Japan been so consequential to the fate of the liberal trading order.”³⁰

In summary, based on the literature, Japan has developed the concepts of ‘global civilian power’ and ‘strategic diplomacy’ as a civilian power. The Japanese elite has utilized civilian means to preserve the status quo established by the liberal international order, which offers Japan security and economic prosperity.

Japan as a Military Power

The literature that argues Japan is no longer a civilian power, but rather a ‘normal’ state on the path towards becoming a military power, examines the reasons for this change under three main headings: international changes, domestic changes, and the alliance with the US.

Factors Facilitating Japan’s Change

The first factor is the shift that occurred in international politics. After Japan only provided financial support, but no military aid to the international coalition in the Gulf War, it faced criticism from the global community. Japan realized that it could not achieve prestige in international politics solely through civilian means. In fact, some Japanese diplomats argued that Japan’s reputation should not be tarnished like this again.³¹

Japan’s understanding of security also changed due to the shifting balance of power in its immediate surroundings. Incidents such as the 1993-94 North Korean missile crisis and China’s 1996 extensive military exercises in the Taiwan Strait taught the Japanese that the Cold War order was over, and they needed new security policies.³² Addi-

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tionally, the North Korean missile crisis demonstrated that Japan could not support its ally, the United States, in a potential war on the Korean peninsula, due to legal and military capability constraints.³³

Another international shift that contributed to the transformation of Japan is deglobalization in recent years. Thanks to globalization, Japan has experienced peace, stability, and economic growth within the international community. However, this order is now in jeopardy due to the emergence of competing economic blocs, state-led capitalist development models, technological competition, and an erosion of norms against the use of force to alter the status quo. If global rule-making breaks down, the Japanese people will be at risk of coercion, which would limit Japan’s autonomy and impoverish the nation.³⁴

The second factor that led Japan to change was the transformation in domestic affairs. Sociological changes played a significant role, with increasing threats from China and North Korea altering the public’s view of security policies.³⁵ The public has begun to view the government’s efforts to increase the power and capabilities of the Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF) in a more moderate light. Additionally, a positive attitude change towards the military has emerged, with the JSDF’s prestige increasing, particularly among new generations. JSDF’s efforts to demonstrate its changed outlook played an essential role in this. The military adopted liberal values after the war, including democratic values in its curriculum.³⁶

Another factor that contributed to the transformation of Japan was the ideological changes that occurred. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was previously dominated by pacifists, but this changed when the revisionists gained control of the party and power.³⁷ This group believed that the Yoshida Doctrine had collapsed, and therefore, Japan needed to adopt a more security-oriented approach.³⁸ Outside the LDP, the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), which was the strongest advocate of pacifism, also lost power. JSP gave up its anti-JSDF and anti-US alliance stances after the 1993 elections, in exchange for becoming a coalition partner with the LDP.³⁹ Moreover, the electoral system reform carried out in 1994 led to the dissolution of JSP in 1996.⁴⁰

Finally, institutional changes were also instrumental in Japan’s transformation. The power of the bureaucracy,

which had gained strength after the Second World War, was broken, and political control was established over it. The office of the prime minister was strengthened to enable more efficient responses to crises such as the North Korean missile crisis. Additionally, the Cabinet Legislation Bureau (CLB), which exercised bureaucratic control over the military, was weakened, and the Japan Defense Agency was transformed into the Ministry of Defense in 2007.⁴¹

The third factor that brought about a transformation in Japan was the shift in the US' alliance policy. With the end of the Cold War, the US began to view alliances more flexibly, based on the willingness of countries to work together towards mutual security. This meant that countries could now 'buy' their place in alliances by sharing risks and contributing to mutual security. Japan, as a result of this, was pressured to take on more military responsibility to maintain its alliance with the US.⁴²

This pressure, however, also sparked concerns among some groups in Japan about potential entrapment. They worried that Japan would become too closely bound to the US and be dragged into its conflicts. For the revisionists in power, however, this pressure presented an opportunity to make Japan's foreign policy more security-oriented.⁴³

These changes set the stage for the revisionists to 'normalize' Japan, first under Junichiro Koizumi's leadership from 2001 to 2006, and then under Shinzo Abe's tenure from 2006 to 2007, and again from 2012 to 2020. Abe's legacy in particular has been so significant that some have even begun referring to it as 'the Abe Doctrine',⁴⁴ and it continues under the leadership of Fumiyō Kishida. This normalization took place across three main areas: legal, foreign policy, and military.

Japan's Change

For the LDP leadership to 'normalize' their country, they must establish the necessary constitutional framework. This means that they must revise the constitution, particularly Article Nine, which renounces Japan's right to engage in war in international disputes and prohibits the country from possessing land, air, and naval forces.⁴⁵ However, due to a lack of political power, the LDP was unable to revise the constitution until after the July 2016 and October 2017 elections, when they achieved a two-thirds majority in the Japanese diet with the support of their coalition partner, the Komei Party. However, the Komei Party opposes any changes to Article Nine and is content with adding new provisions to the current constitution. As a result, the revisionists failed to revise the constitution despite their majority in the diet.⁴⁶

So why do the revisionists want to revise the constitution? The first reason is related to the socio-psychological dimension of national pride.⁴⁷ According to the

revisionists, the constitution was imposed on Japan by the United States, making it 'un-Japanese.' They argue that the constitution damages Japanese patriotism and creates the impression that Japan is an aggressive state that is only restrained by constitutional restrictions. Thus, a new constitution that emphasizes Japanese traditions and culture is needed to demonstrate that Japan is actually a peaceful state. The second reason for revision is due to the security concerns of LDP elites, who fear the changing balance of power in East Asia resulting from China's rise and the security threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons program and missile tests.⁴⁸

However, at present, the most important reason for revision is the first one, as the security aspect has largely been addressed by the 2015 Security Legislation, which is constituted of:

"Two separate bills entitled 'International Peace Support Law' and 'Legislation for Peace and Security.' The Security Legislation essentially overturns the long-standing interpretation on the exercise of collective self-defense⁴⁹ without revising the constitution, and establishes new situations for which the SDF can be mobilized: in cases where another country that has a close connection to Japan is attacked and, in consequence, the existence of Japan is threatened, the scope of which includes 'Japanese people's lives, liberties and right to seek happiness'. It also expands the scope of the SDF's logistical support to foreign forces and its peacekeeping activities, and removes the geographical restriction (previously, the area surrounding Japan) on its military operations."⁵⁰

The process of change in Japan did not occur overnight, but rather was a gradual evolution led by the country's elite. After the Cold War, external factors played a significant role in paving the way for Japan's transformation. In response to criticism after the Gulf War, the Japanese government introduced the 'International Peace Cooperation Law' in 1992, which allowed the JSDF to participate in UN missions, provided that they do not engage in the use of force. The successful overseas missions of the JSDF without any conflict further strengthened the government's position.⁵¹

As mentioned above, the US changed its understanding of the alliance with Japan and started to 'marketize' it. The Japanese government, bolstered by the success of the UN missions, aimed to demonstrate that Japan was a reliable ally to the United States. After Japan failed to support the US in the North Korean missile crisis of 1993-94, attempts were made to take on more responsibility in the alliance with the US. In September 1996, the first meeting of 'the bilateral Security Consultative Committee' was held, involving the US secretaries of defense and state, the Japanese minister of foreign affairs, and the director general of the Japan Defense Agency, also known as the '2+2' meeting. One year later, the new 'Defense

Cooperation Guidelines' were approved, and later revised in 2004, which allowed Japan to supply American forces with ammunition not only during routine training but also in the event of an armed attack.⁵²

The foreign policy of Japan towards an alliance with the United States is influenced by a variety of factors, including the strengthening of the office of the prime minister. During his time in office, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi exercised his authority to actively support the United States in both the aftermath of 9/11 and during the Iraq War. Koizumi wasted no time in issuing six initiatives, including the protection of US forces in Japan and the potential dispatch of Japanese personnel overseas, within an hour of the 9/11 attacks.⁵³ He also established an 'Iraq Response Office' to examine economic, humanitarian, and reconstruction assistance, as well as the disposal of weapons of mass destruction and landmine removal. JSDF personnel were sent to Iraq as soon as the UN resolution for the rebuilding of Iraq was passed, and civilian bureaucrats were dispatched to support the US-led administration in Baghdad.⁵⁴

The Japanese public and media generally welcomed the increasingly security-oriented foreign policy of Japan, as well as the expansion of the JSDF's capacity and capabilities over time. Sociological changes played a key role in enabling the shifts in the 1990s and during the Koizumi era, which continued under Abe.⁵⁵

Shinzo Abe believed that Japanese foreign policy needed to be more security-focused because American hegemony was declining, the liberal international order was weakening, and the balance of power in East Asia was deteriorating. Japan could no longer afford to take a passive stance in response to these challenges. Instead, it should adopt a more proactive role in the international community, defend the right of collective self-defense, and eliminate constitutional limitations. Improving the capacity of the JSDF would allow Japan to be more active in its alliance with the US, demonstrate greater leadership in East Asia and beyond, and meet the demands of the current geopolitical climate.⁵⁶

As previously mentioned, while the Abe administration was unable to remove constitutional restrictions, it did secure the right to collective self-defense through the 2015 Security Legislation. During the Abe period, serious investments were made to enhance the land, air, and naval forces of the JSDF, which allowed Japan to improve its military capacity and play a more active role in its alliance with the US.⁵⁷ Japan's military strategy also underwent significant changes during this period. The previous resistance-oriented static understanding of the Cold War era was abandoned, and a proactive repel-oriented approach was adopted instead.⁵⁸ To increase deterrence, investments were made in preventing possible ballistic missile attacks on enemy territory. These changes in understanding and strategy transformed Japan into a country that is more militarily responsible in its alliance with

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the US.⁵⁹ Furthermore, to assert greater leadership in East Asia and beyond, Japan sought to improve its relations with other like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region, as previously explained.

The legacy of Abe was carried on by Prime Minister Fumiyo Kishida (2021-present), who broke records by approving ¥6.82 trillion in defense spending in the fiscal year 2023, surpassing the one percent threshold.^{60,61} Most notably, the Kishida government plans to raise its defense spending to 2 percent of GDP by 2027, which translates to a 60 percent increase over five years. As a result, Japan will have the third-largest defense budget in the world.⁶² The decision to increase defense spending was made on December 23, 2022. A week before this decision, the Kishida administration unveiled three new documents, which included a new National Security Strategy, a new National Defense Strategy (the first since 2013), and a new Defense Capability Construction Plan. During the press conference, the prime minister stated that these documents were created to address the "changes in the balance of power in the international community and divisions within globalization." In fact, in 2022, both Prime Minister Kishida and several other high-ranking politicians have acknowledged that globalization and interdependence alone cannot guarantee peace and development worldwide.⁶³

In summary, while revisionists were unable to achieve their ultimate goal of revising the constitution, they did achieve their objective of ending the debate on collective self-defense in 2015. By acknowledging the changing balance of power in world politics and East Asia, they were able to increase the capacity and capabilities of the Japanese military, remove legal restrictions, and make significant changes in military strategy and defense understanding. These efforts enabled Japan to play a more active role in its alliance with the US and assert greater leadership in the region.

Japan as a Donor

Japan was one of the countries that received the most aid following the devastation of the Second World War. However, in 1954, while still receiving assistance, Japan

began providing official aid in the form of war reparations. In 1958, Japan made its first non-war reparation aid to India, and by the 1960s, it had become the first major donor to combine its foreign aid program with its economic interests. In the 1970s, foreign aid began to serve security policies within the framework of the concept of ‘comprehensive national security’, and by the late 1970s, it had become a part of Japan’s alliance with the US. By 1989, Japan had become a top donor.⁶⁴ During the Cold War, Japan’s main form of international cooperation was official development assistance (ODA).^{65,66} However, the economic crisis that Japan experienced in the 1990s caused the ODA budget to fall. The Japanese government realized that it could not contribute to the international order by simply writing a check.⁶⁷ As a result, significant changes took place in Japan’s foreign aid policy with the end of the Cold War.⁶⁸

ODA as a Civilian Mean

When the Tiananmen Square incident occurred, Japan maintained its policy of non-interference in other countries’ internal affairs, meaning that it did not want to change its stance towards China. However, due to significant pressure from the Western world, Japan halted new loan projects for China, its top foreign aid recipient during the 1990s, and suspended high-level interactions with China. Although these practices were short-lived, Japan subsequently introduced certain principles into its foreign aid policies. With the 1992 ODA Charter, liberal values such as democracy, human rights, and freedom began to receive greater emphasis in Japan’s foreign aid policies. As a result, Japan has been providing foreign aid to support democracy abroad, primarily by supporting elections, central and local state institutions, and the rule of law.⁶⁹

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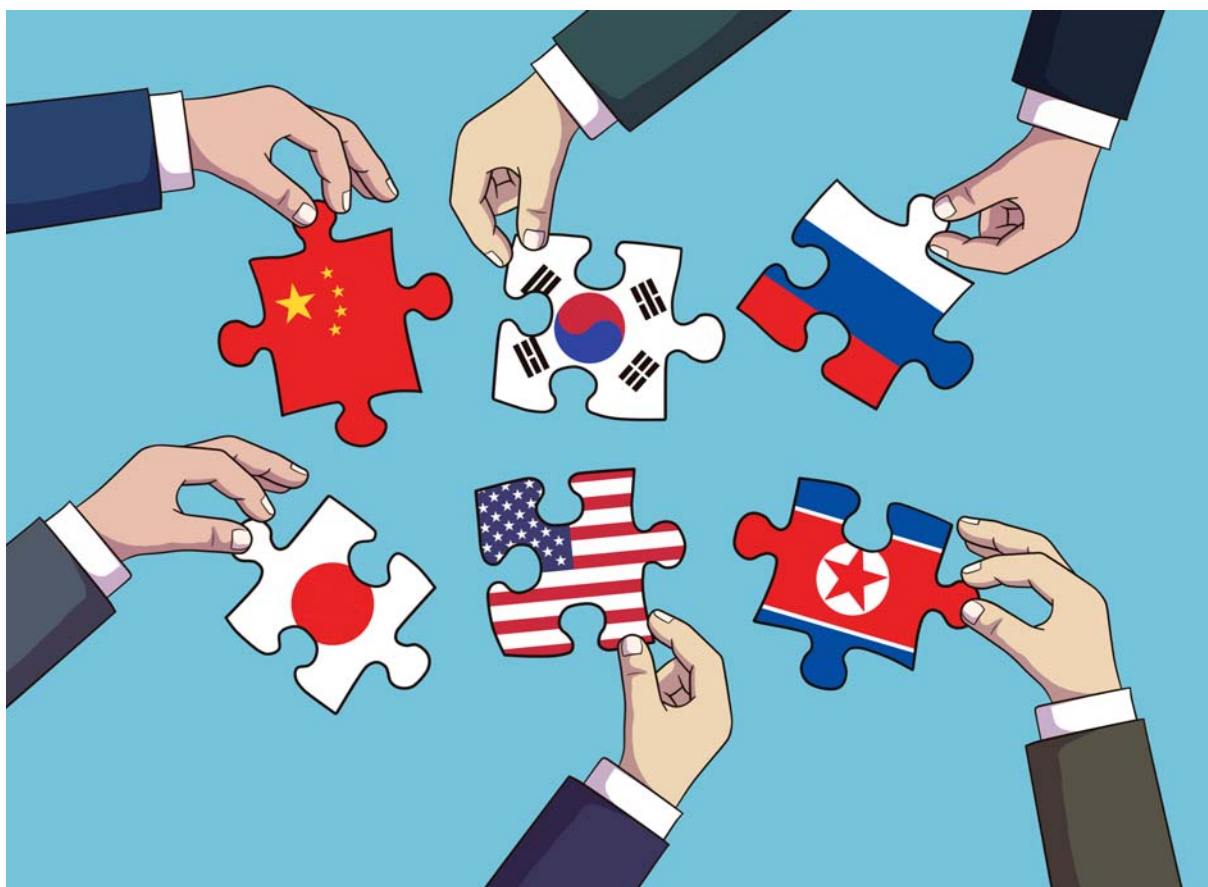
While Japan supports democracy and human rights in various regions of the world, it reduces its emphasis on democracy in its ODA policies towards Southeast Asia to avoid losing the region’s countries to China and to maintain balance in the region. Japan argues that interfering in the internal affairs of developing and undeveloped countries could push them towards authoritarianism. Instead of democracy, Japan focuses on promoting good governance, which includes transparency and accountability, in its foreign aid to the region. Japan believes that promoting good governance will eventually lead to democracy.⁷⁰ As a result of this policy, Japan remains an important economic aid and investment partner for countries in the region that do not want to be dominated by China.⁷¹

ODA as a Military Mean

The revisionists made four significant moves to securitize Japan’s ODA. First, they reorganized the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which manages ODA, and appointed people who were sympathetic to the LDP’s security-oriented foreign policies to head it. This was done through the strengthening of the office of prime minister and the establishment of control over the bureaucracy.⁷² Second, as part of Abe’s security reforms, the National Security Council (NSC) was established in December 2013, and the National Security Strategy (NSS) was published for the first time in the same year. The NSS acknowledged peacebuilding as an essential part of Japan’s security policies and emphasized the importance of ODA in this regard.⁷³ Third, in 2014, “Abe lifted Japan’s three-decade-long self-imposed ban on weapon exports.”⁷⁴ Finally, the renewal of the ODA Charter in 2015 marked the completion of the process of making ODA a part of Japan’s security policies.⁷⁵

Japan views ODA as a means to protect the ‘open, free, and peaceful’ order in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea from China’s ‘rule of might’.⁷⁶ These regions are critical to Japan for several reasons. Firstly, there is a territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands with China, which Japan administers, but China claims sovereignty over.⁷⁷ Secondly, the South China Sea boasts an abundance of natural resources such as oil, gas, and fisheries, and serves as a critical conduit for one-third of the world’s trade, including 90% of Japan’s oil imports. Therefore, the sea holds immense economic significance for Japan.⁷⁸ Thirdly, Southeast Asia is an integral part of Japan’s backyard from a geographical, historical, and economic standpoint. As such, Japan is keen on maintaining its presence in the region and preventing China from gaining an upper hand.⁷⁹

To safeguard its interests, Japan took measures such as signing an ODA loan agreement with the Philippines for ¥18.7 billion on 13 December 2013, which provided



ten new patrol vessels, and a non-project grant agreement with Vietnam on 1 August of the following year, worth ¥500 million for the provision of six refurbished vessels. The Japanese government has defended this use of ODA, stating that the coast guard falls under civilian jurisdiction as part of law enforcement, and hence the support is not military.⁸⁰ The strategy to enhance coastguard capacity makes sense in two ways: firstly, coastguards play a crucial role in territorial disputes, and secondly, their use prevents wider military tension from escalating.⁸¹

However, despite the 2013 NSS making ODA an essential component of peacekeeping, Japan did not employ it militarily in UN peacekeeping operations. Even though the United Nations has been at the center of Japan's multilateral policies since 1957, there has been a significant decline in Japan's participation in UN missions in recent times.⁸² It was expected that Prime Minister Abe's 'proactive contribution to peace' discourse would result in more involvement, but over time, the UN peacekeeping's place in security policies decreased, and participation eventually came to a standstill. The US withdrawal from UN peacekeeping operations in 2017 also contributed to this decision. Instead, Japan directed its capacity and resources towards homeland security.⁸³

In summary, as a response to the changing conditions in international politics following the Cold War, Japan altered its foreign aid policies. Japan employed ODA both as a civilian and military measure against China's challenges that threatened Japan's economic and security interests in East Asia.

Conclusion

As we examine the literature, it becomes clear that Japan is undergoing a transformation. This transformation is due to the weakening of the liberal international order, brought about by the decline of American hegemony and the changing balance of power in East Asia. Japan has responded to these changes by transforming its security policies through both civilian and military means.

The goal of these policies is to balance China in the region, protect the rules-based international order, demonstrate its reliability as a US ally, and ensure its own economic and military security. The civilian means employed by Japan include technology, diplomacy, economy, and foreign aid, while the military means consist of the JSDF, whose capacity and capabilities have been increased

through investments made possible by an increase in the defense budget and new legal regulations. Furthermore, ODA has been securitized and is now being used to build the capacity of regional law enforcement agencies.

While legal regulations and military investments suggest that Japan no longer wants to remain a 'civilian power', Japan's foreign policy still aligns with Maull's concept of civilian power in many ways, as evidenced by the literature. Firstly, Japan still collaborates with other nations, such as the United States, to attain international objectives. Secondly, Japan endeavors to address issues and maintain relationships in international politics through supranational organizations like the UN or CPTPP. However, despite continuing to use non-military tools to safeguard its national interests, Japan is now more comfortable using military means than in the past. Therefore, Japan can no longer be classified as solely a 'civilian power'. Those who assert that Japan remains a civilian power should question why a civilian power is investing significant financial and legal resources to enhance the capacity and capability of its armed forces.

Although Japan will have the third-largest defense

budget by 2027, it is important to note that currently, its military activities remain very cautious and defensive. Japan does not use its military power in a 'normal' way, as it still prefers to support the coastguard capacities of regional countries in order to prevent wider military tension. Therefore, despite these changes, it is still too early to define Japan as a 'military power'. However, as the Kishida government has emphasized throughout 2022, Japanese leadership has long held the belief that trade alone cannot ensure security. As a result, the government has been steadily implementing policies aimed at shifting Japan away from being solely a trading state. This momentum is growing stronger with each passing day.

To conclude, Japanese elites hold the belief that the notion of relying solely on international law and trade to maintain international order and peace is inadequate to ensure Japan's security. Consequently, they have gone beyond the guidelines of the Yoshida Doctrine, although its influence has not been entirely discarded. Japanese elites remain hesitant to completely abandon the Yoshida Doctrine, particularly when it comes to employing military means in foreign policy.

Endnotes

- 1 Ellis S. Krauss and Hanns W. Maull, "Germany, Japan and the Fate of International Order", *Survival*, Vol. 62, No. 3, 2020, p. 159. The Yoshida doctrine, also known as the 1955 system, focused on creating wealth and technological independence under the doctrine of "rich nation, strong army" but avoided the military component. The aim was to protect Japan through trade, see Samuels, Richard J. (2007). *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*. Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press.
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- 4 Bahadır Pehlivan Türk, "Japan on the Borderlines: Is Japan Still a Civilian Power?", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 18, No. 71, 2021, p. 72.
- 5 Hanns W. Maull, "Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 69, No. 5, 1990, p. 92-93.
- 6 What is meant by the 'normal' country here is the discussion of whether Japan should take part in international politics, not only with non-military means but also with military means, like other sovereign countries, see Hagström, Linus (2015). "The 'abnormal' state: Identity, norm/exception and Japan", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 122-145.
- 7 Krauss and Maull, "Germany, Japan and the Fate of International Order", p. 159-160.
- 8 Ichihara, "Universality to Plurality?", p. 138.
- 9 Ibid, p. 140-141.
- 10 The order that has dominated the world for more than seventy years, led by the United States through "anchoring the alliances, stabilizing the world economy, fostering cooperation and championing free world values", see Ikenberry, G. John (2018). "The End of Liberal International Order?" *International Affairs*, Vol. 94, No. 1, p. 7-23.
- 11 Ichihara, "Universality to Plurality?", p. 146.
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- 14 Adam P. Liff, "Proactive Stabilizer: Japan's Role in the Asia-Pacific Security Order", Yoichi Funabashi and G. John Ikenberry (eds.), *The Crisis of Liberal Internationalism: Japan and the World Order*, Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution, 2020, p. 49.
- 15 Funabashi and Ikenberry, "Introduction", p. 8.
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