



IMPACTS OF THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S AMBIGUITY
ON JAPAN'S SECURITY POLICY

BY

MR. SONYA HENG

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (ASIA PACIFIC STUDIES)
COLLEGE OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2017
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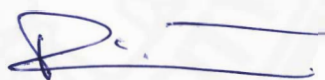
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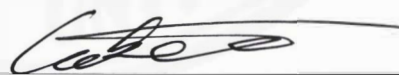
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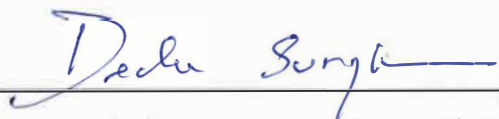
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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to seek the impacts of the Obama administration's ambiguity on Japan's security policy that guides the development of Japan Self-Defense Force. The significance of the study lies on the fact that most studies focused mainly only on the nature of the US ambiguity and rationales behind that, yet few of them touched on its impacts on broader regional security context. Also, Japan's security policy has been mostly linked to North Korean threat and China's assertiveness. Instead, this paper provides a groundbreaking linkage between the Obama administration's ambiguity and the change in the security policy of Japan.

To reach the findings, the paper identifies the existence of Obama's ambiguity in the form of simultaneous "China Engagement" diplomacy" and "China Containment" diplomacy in the context of Japan's security. Based on the author's designed framework and study of official security policies of Japan, finally, the paper argues that Obama's ambiguity in the context of Japan's security did exist, and it affected Japan's security policy in two ways in the form of "dilemma of deterrence". On the one hand, "China Engagement" diplomacy" unintentionally pushed Japan to unilaterally restructure its self-defense policies, while on the other hand, "China Containment" diplomacy intentionally upgraded Japan's self-defense capacities through bilateral cooperation under the military aspect of the US Rebalance to Asia.

Either way would have inevitable implications on regional security as Japan is one of the key players in the region.

Keywords: Ambiguity, Japan Self-Defense Force, Security Policy, “China Engagement” diplomacy, “China Containment” diplomacy, Dilemma of Deterrence.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Symbols/Abbreviations	Terms
A2/AD	Anti-Access and Anti-Denial
ADIZ	Air Defense Identification Zone
ASDF	Air Self-Defense Force
ASW	Anti-Submarine Warfare
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD)
DDC	Dynamic Defense Cooperation
GSDF	Ground Self-Defense Force
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Planning
JSDF	Japanese Self-Defense Force
MSDF	Maritime Self-Defense Force
NDPG	National Defense Program Guidelines
NSC-J	National Security Council of Japan
NSS	National Security Strategy
PKO	(United Nations) Peacekeeping Operation
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review Report
SDF	Self-Defense Force
The US	The United States of America
UAV	Unmanned Air Vehicles

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

After the end of the Cold War, the international structure appears to be one dominated by the United States (US). Economically, it shares the largest GDP (34.32% of the world total in 2017 data) and establishes economic deals with many countries (Chang, 2017). Militarily, it has the most powerful army with the highest military expenditure (37% of the world total in 2015 data) supported by military bases across the world (nearly 800 bases) (Project, 2015) (Vine, 2015). Therefore, it is still valid for the economic historian and a leading architect of the Marshall Plan, Charles P. Kindleberger to argue in his “Hegemonic Stability Theory” that the US could be the global hegemon critical to the global peace and security (Webb & Krasner, 1989, pp. 183-198).

Through the lens of hegemonic stability theory, it is interesting to look at East Asia, in which major US allies, South Korea, Japan, and the Republic of China (Taiwan) are located. The role of the US in the region had been proved to be important in strengthening the ties among these allies, particularly amidst the potential threats from their adversaries such as North Korea and the recent rise of Mainland China.

Regarding US-Japan alliance, even though the US had been constraining Japan’s military capacity since the end of World War II, the Obama administration found it increasingly necessary to update its allies, including Japan, militarily, due to two main reasons. The first reason was to elevate Japan’s decreased geo-strategic importance for the US due to the emerging strategic importance of other US allies and the development of China’s Anti Access/ Anti Denial (A2AD) strategy (Daniel Katz, 2010) (Dian, 2013, p. 06). The second reason was the fact that Japan could not solely upgrade its own military capacity without the US assistance due to the restricted defense expenditure and limited defense production.

However, while providing stability, the US's regional engagement also brought about uncertainty. It is notable that during the Obama administration, the US had been ambiguous in terms of its foreign policy towards China, which could have affected the confidence of its allies.

The administration's preoccupation in the Middle East and its obvious indecisiveness to deal with the Syrian and Crimean crises raised doubts related to its role as a security guarantor (Singh, 2014). The Obama administration also became uncertain to its allies in East Asia as it failed to present a clear and absolute stance against China. In an empirical context, in 2009, Obama acknowledged China's "Core Interests" in Asia, which greatly alarmed its allies. In 2011, after China's maritime assertiveness increased, Obama began to rebalance strategic attention to Asia. This rebalancing strategy is known as "Pivot to Asia", which provided security relief to its allies. However, in 2013, the Obama administration once again became ambiguous with regards to its security commitment in the region after it had announced support for China's "New Model of Great Power Relations" (Green, 2016), in which China's core interests—territorial issues—were the main elements (C. L. a. L. Xu, 2014).

According to the mentioned development of Obama's policies in East Asia, the problem is spotted, which is the empirical contradiction of the US engagement in East Asia as it introduced not only stability but also uncertainty in the region. In particular, the US was ambiguous in the sense that it made a strategic move to develop amicable bilateral relations with China followed by subsequent fluctuating policies. That ambiguity could have dramatically affect confidence and security of the US long-standing ally, specifically Japan. That was not really the case for South Korea, as the US had always been relatively firm and resolute in the Korean Peninsula issue.

Thus, to respond to the problem statement, the paper will prove how the US ambiguity, defined in this paper as simultaneous "China Engagement" and "China Containment" diplomacy, had any impacts on Japan's self-defense capability.

1.2 Aim and Significance

This paper aims to examine the impacts of Obama administration's ambiguity towards China through the form of simultaneous "China Engagement" and "China Containment" diplomacy on Japan's security policy. This objective is worth exploring because there have not been any concrete studies that paid attention to this particular issue yet. Mostly, the existing studies focused mainly on the nature of the US's ambiguity itself and the rationales behind the ambiguity. Not enough works have touched upon the impacts of the ambiguity, particularly on Japan's security policy, which is very critical to the dynamism of the tension in the region. Most works have touched upon two main factors that affect Japan's restructuring of defense capabilities, which are assertive China and North Korea, yet not enough works have explained the role of the US ambiguity behind that.

Moreover, the findings of this topic would yield both theoretical and empirical contributions. Hegemonic stability theory explains only how stable the international system is with the presence of a responsible hegemon. Yet, it fails to point out how the ambiguous relationships between the hegemon and its allies have impacts on the international system. Therefore, theoretically, it would enrich the scholarly and academic sphere of international relations theory concerning the role of the superpower or hegemon in the region.

Empirically, it can provide the insights for debate as to whether the US is still indispensable in the regional security or whether its East Asian allies should still mainly depend on it given those impacts from its ambiguity.

All in all, since there have been scarcely any discussions, studies, or assessment over the empirical impacts of the US ambiguity in the broader concept of the regional security, this thesis attempts to fill the literature through examining the impacts of the Obama administration's ambiguous policies on Japan's security policy, specifically its security policy.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the statement problem, which spots out the problem existing in East Asian security, and the literature, which uncovers the loophole of the academic focus on the impacts of the US hegemony in the region, in general, and in East Asia, in particular, the direction of this thesis would primarily be guided by the question: How did the Obama administration's ambiguity affect Japan's security policy?

In order to construct the framework of the findings to the main research question, the author finds it necessary to split and narrow the question down into four sub-research questions to examine the instances of ambiguity and its subsequent impacts on the Japanese security policy. Accordingly, these sub-research questions emerged and will guide the author to the findings in the next Chapters:

- What were the signals of the Obama Administration's "China Engagement" diplomacy in the context of Japan's security?
- What were the impacts of the Obama Administration's "China Engagement" diplomacy on Japan's security policy?
- What were the signals of the Obama Administration's "China Containment" diplomacy in the context of Japan's security?
- What were the impacts of the Obama Administration's "China Containment" diplomacy on Japan's security policy?

1.4 Hypothesis

The author would hypothesize that the Obama administration's ambiguity might have existed in the form of simultaneous "China Engagement" and "China Containment" diplomacy in the context of Japan's security. Such ambiguity would inevitably have impacted on Japan's revised security policy that would guide JSDF capacity to move in increasing manner both unilaterally and bilaterally with the US.

1.5 Meanings of Concepts

In order to obtain the most relevant data to the research questions, it is crucial to formulate a clear conceptual and theoretical framework. The main concepts of the thesis, as outlined in the guiding questions, are *Ambiguity*, *Security Policy*, *“China Engagement” diplomacy*, *“China Containment” diplomacy*, and *Dilemma of Deterrence*. In this section, the author will conceptualize these main concepts accordingly.

- **Ambiguity:**

This concept refers to the fluctuating and uncertain policy trend of the Obama administration from 2008 to 2015 toward East Asia. Particularly, on the one hand, his foreign policy had been ambiguous or not firm with regards to China in terms of regional security that would have affected the confidence of the US allies, particularly, Japan.

Accordingly, “ambiguity” is conceptualized as the fluctuating foreign policy of the Obama Administration against the antagonism of China in East Asian context with respect to Japan’s security interest. The fluctuation of the foreign policy will be measured by the signals of “China Engagement” diplomacy and “China Containment” diplomacy of the Obama administration concerning Japan’s security. In the “China Engagement” diplomacy, Senkaku/Diaoyu island issue will be employed as the case study to test the US commitment in dealing with Sino-Japanese confrontations.

From the literature over the nature of and theories related to the US ambiguity, the author would regard ‘ambiguity’ in Obama administration as the “intended policy” to serve the US geopolitical interests in the region. In that sense, “ambiguity” served as a “one stone hitting two birds”. First, it allowed the US to maintain practical economic ties and certain good diplomatic relation with China. Second, it still could preserve a space for the US to act as the security guarantor for its allies and contain China’s rise or maintain the status quo. That kind of ‘offshore balancing’, to prevent the rise of another hegemon in other regions, is the task a regional hegemon like the US is supposed to carry (Mearsheimer, 2014, p. 04).

- **“China Engagement” diplomacy:**

This concept refers to the foreign policy moves—rhetorical, documental, and action—of the Obama Administration that are perceived to be appealing towards China by deliberately ignoring Japan’s security interest. That would include the Obama administration’s weak reactions towards China ‘s assertiveness and proactive friendly moves towards China.

- **“China Containment” diplomacy:**

This concept refers to the foreign policy moves—rhetorical, documental, and action—of the Obama Administration that are perceived to be upgrading the US-Japan alliance to enhance Japan’s security interests against China. In this case, the US Rebalance or Pivot to Asia would serve as the independent variable.

- **Security Policy:**

It is hypothesized to be a factor that was affected by the Obama administration’s ambiguity. In this context, the author measures the impacts on “Security policy” by looking at the change in Japan’s self-defense force posture as guided or initiated by official policies. In this regard, Japan Self-Defense Force (JSDF) would be examined as the dependent variable.

- **“Dilemma of Deterrence”**

The author argues that the impacts of the Obama administration’s ambiguity on Japan’s security policy could be understood through the perspective of “dilemma of deterrence” derived from the notion of “Security Dilemma”. That notion emerges from the lens of ‘Defensive Realism’ under the branch of ‘Neo-Realism’.

“Dilemma of deterrence” was originally coined by Benson and Niou to explain the impacts of the strategic ambiguity of the US on the Cross-Strait relations between China and Taiwan (Niou, 2001). Zhongqi (2010) further discussed the notion and explained that the US ambiguity in the form of “dual deterrence”, would end up in “dilemma of deterrence”. On the one hand, by deterring China from using force against Taiwan, the US would give Taiwan incentive and leverage to declare

independence. On the other hand, by deterring Taiwan from declaring independence, the US risks giving the signal to China to forcefully unify Taiwan. Either deterrence would be disastrous or produce an undesirable result if not well balanced.

Accordingly, the author would apply the notion of “dilemma of deterrence” to assess the impacts of the Obama’s ambiguity on Japan’s security policy, too. Basically, on the one hand, the Obama administration’s “China Engagement” diplomacy would result in increasing Japan’s vulnerability, leading to the decrease in Japan’s confidence, and thus increasing Japan’s need to restructure its self-defense capability. On the other hand, the Obama administration’s “China Containment” diplomacy, in the form of upgrading US-Japan alliance, would also result in a direct restructuring of Japan’s self-defense capability. Either way would have inevitable implications for regional security (see figure 1.1 below). This research will explore those impacts in detail.

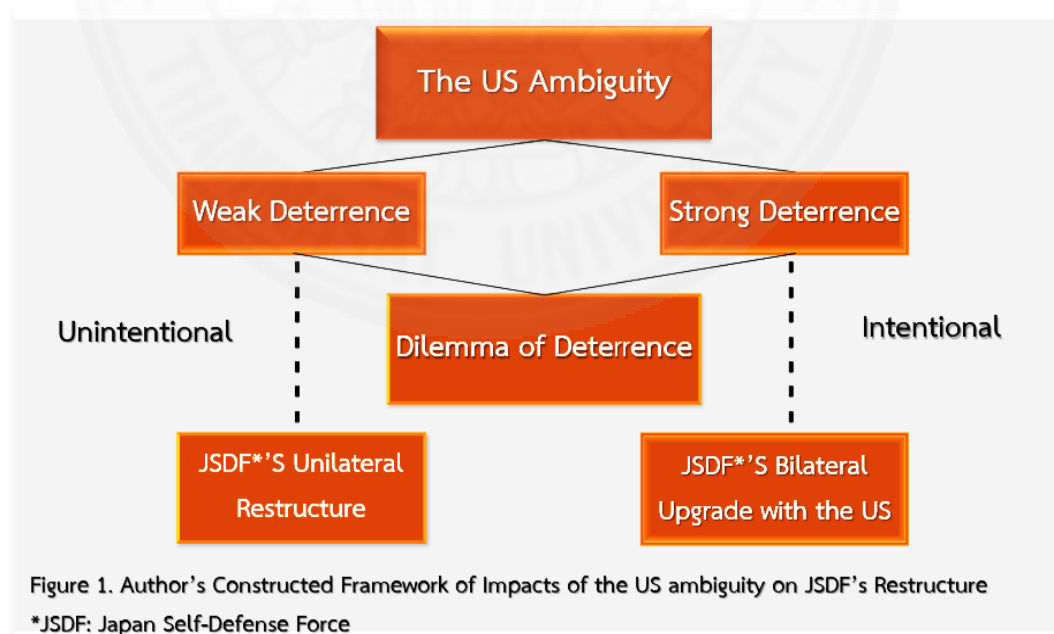


Figure 1.1 Framework of “Dilemma of Deterrence”

1.6 Scope and Limitation

Due to the limited timeframe and resource access, this study has its scopes accordingly. Firstly, the study will investigate the impacts of the ambiguity on Japan's security policy only during Obama administration. Actually, the ambiguity did exist before that and is even carried on until Trump administration. However, the Obama administration is proven to be the most plausibly recent option for the author. Moreover, Obama Administration's ambiguous development does fit the study purpose and two terms of administration would be a complete timeframe to study.

Secondly, the study picks only the US, China and Japan as the samples. Specifically, the US's "Engagement" and "Containment" diplomacy towards China would serve as independent variables, while Japan's security policy would be the dependent variables of the study. Other prominent actors such as North Korea and South Korea are left out due to not only the time constraint of the research but also to the fact that the Korean Peninsula issue did not fit the case of US ambiguity at all as the Obama administration had always been relatively resolute in the case.

Another potential variable, which is domestic dynamism inside Japan also left intact. The reason is that the author only aims to examine the external impacts of the US ambiguity on Japan security policy. The impact of domestic dynamism on Japan security policy, thus, could be investigated in a separate study. However, in Chapter 2, the author also devotes a section to suggest that the shift in domestic administration of Japan did not produce much shift in the security policy trend at all.

Thirdly, regarding the US "Engagement" diplomacy towards China, Senkaku/Diaoyu issue will be employed as the case study as the disputes between China and Japan over this group of islands are critical to Japan's security.

Fourthly, the impact is limited to only security angle, and the security per se is conceptualized only into the level of Japan's security policy as it is deemed to be the most relevant, affected, and serious impacts of the ambiguous maneuver of the US. Other angles such as economic and political aspects are left untouched opening the gap for further research.

Lastly, this research undeniably faces many other loopholes and limitations. Perceivably, since this study is, in its nature, qualitative and comprehensive, the author might face difficulty getting access to all the crucial, relevant, and sensitive data to respond to the research question. Also, because no empirical experiment can be done, the linkage between the US ambiguity under Obama administration and the security policy of Japan can be hardly causative in nature. However, the author will put his utmost effort to minimize the effects of these limitations on the overall quality of the findings.

1.7 Methodology

The paper will adopt a qualitative research design to respond to the research questions by analyzing and interpreting the government policies and documents of Japan in response to the “China Engagement” and “China Containment” diplomacy of the Obama administration. Through correlational design, the author would assess the impacts of the US ambiguity on Japan’s security policy by comparing the tones and wordings of the official security policy documents or guidelines of Japan in different versions plus interpretation and discourse-analyses of the data.

Accordingly, retrospective research will be used to examine the issue during the two terms of Obama administration from 2008 to the end of 2015. Specifically, the author will examine the moves of the administration which could be perceived as either “China Engagement” and “China Containment” diplomacy with respect to Japan’s security; and the instances of Japan’s security policy update.

The author will refer to mainly primary data to assess how Japan responded to the “China Engagement” and “China Containment” diplomacy of the US through its security policy. The primary data will be extracted from the US and Japanese governmental documents and Japanese official reports and policy documents concerning its security policies. Specifically, the author will depend on the original English versions of those sources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense of Japan website.

The author will also consult with secondary data to consolidate the findings and to verify the analysis. Those secondary sources may include, but not limited to, papers and journal articles from Center for Strategic and International Studies, London School of Economic and Political Science, Foreign Affairs, Asia Pacific Review, and International Security, among other widely recognized journal institutions; international news and websites (CNN, BBC, The Diplomat, Reuters, The Guardian, and Xinhua, among others); and other accessible necessary sources. Finally, all the data obtained will be synthesized and analyzed according to the qualitative nature through interpretation and discourse analysis.

1.8 Existing Theories

The US foreign policies toward Japan and Taiwan under the Obama administration clearly illustrate the ambiguous positions of Obama administration towards China in the context of the security alliance with Japan and Taiwan. Empirically, it could be understood that Obama was compelled to resort to that option to both reassure the US allies in the region while avoiding interrupting the US relation with China, who is its biggest trading partner and the second biggest military power in the world (McCurry & Branigan, 2014). Theoretically, that ambiguity could be explained through the lens of the following theories.

First, based on Economic Interdependence Theory, in terms of security, the US could not be decisively in support of Japan and purely against China as it is strongly economically interdependent with China in terms of production networks and trade exchanges (T. U. C. B. Council, 2016). At the same time, it is also bound by the peace treaty with Japan, so it cannot completely ignore Japan's security interests. Ambiguity, as a consequence, is the key to honor its treaty with Japan, while being able to sustain its practical economic tie with China.

Secondly, the notion of Security Dilemma, developed by German scholar John H. Herz in his 1951 book titled *Political Realism and Political Idealism* (Sabine & Herz, 1952), may explain such ambiguity of Obama's administration. Based on that notion, any serious and unambiguous military commitment from the US to Japan would inevitably result in drastic assertive response back from China, which in turn just forces the US to further increase its resources in the protection of Japan.

In that case, eventually, the US would be trapped in that vicious circle, which is not a desirable goal of its engagement in the region at all. Instead, the US would try to preserve as much stability as possible without having to engage in the arms race with China. Ambiguity then would be the best choice that serves at least the US geostrategic interests, even not necessarily Japan's confidence in the alliance.

Thirdly, one can turn to Balance of Power Theory by S.E. Robertson and David Hume (Whelan, 1995, pp. 315-332) to explain this phenomenon. Viewed from this theory, the US may have decided to remain the security guarantor of Japan because, apart from being tied to its peace treaty with Japan, it would like to simply fill the gap of the power imbalance between China and its East Asian allies.

Its goal, in this context, is merely to establish the balance of power in the region so as not to allow China to be the regional hegemon, which may lead to aggressive rise or domination. It does not necessarily have to fully oppose or counter China. It could be ambiguous in the defense or in its commitment in the defense of Japan, so it could send a signal to China that its intention is not to be antagonistic against China, but it is also ready to act should China makes any drastic move against Japan. Its unambiguous engagement in the region, therefore, is enough to create the regional balance of power.

Fourth, one can understand the rationale of the US ambiguity in its engagement with China that could undermine Japan's security interest by looking at the notion of "distribution of power" under the lens of "Structural Realism" or "Neo-Realism" by Kenneth Waltz in his book, "Theory of International Politics." Based on that notion, WALTZ (1979) asserted that states tend to behave based on the actual distribution of power. In the case of the US ambiguity, thus, the US cannot be unambiguous in the defense of Japan against China because the distribution of power in the present is not too tilted towards the US as during the early end of the Cold War. China has been world number two in the world economy with increasing military modernization. Therefore, based on that fact, it is not recommended for the US to openly confront with China as any confrontation would be highly costly.

Based on the same "Neo-Realism" branch, international structure or system also shapes a state behavior. That said, the US's ambiguity in the context of Japan's security issues against China may have also been derived from the global

system that requires the US to focus more on the war on terrorism in the middle east and the system, in which the US needs to collaborate with China in certain global issues ranging from the nuclear programs of North Korea to the global climate change. Again, ambiguity, viewed through this lens, is still proved to be very pragmatic and useful.

1.9 Overview of Senkaku/Diaoyu Dispute

As explained in the scope and limitation section, Senkaku/Diaoyu issue will be employed to assess the US “China Engagement” diplomacy because it is critical to Japan’s security. Before examining how Obama Administration’s ambiguity cast any impacts on Japanese security policy in the Senkaku/Diaoyu context, it is important to be informed of the overview of the issue per se. The issue revolves around the dispute over eight uninhabited islands and rocks in the East China Sea. Totally, the islands occupy the area of around 7 square kilometers and form what is known as Senkaku in Japan, and Diaoyu in China. Together, they lie north-east of Taiwan, east of China, and South-west of Japan. Administratively, they have been controlled by Japan (BBC, 2014a).

This dispute has been widely attributed to its strategic and economic importance. Strategically, they are proximate to important commercial shipping lanes and lie over the critical point of rising competition between the US and China for military dominance in the Asia-Pacific region (BBC, 2014a). Moreover, as a gateway to Miyako Strait leading to the Pacific Ocean, it also serves as a key strategic point that could play a decisive role in achieving the Area Access/Area Denial (A2AD) strategy of China (Osawa, 2013).

Economically, they are apparent rich fishing grounds, and according to the estimate of the US Energy Information Administration, the East China Sea could contain 60-100 million barrels of oil and 1-2 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves. That acutely matters since both China and Japan are the largest energy consumer in the region (Administration, 2012). Moreover, nationalistic pride should not be omitted, too, in the discussion over the Sino-Japanese competition due to the bitter historical memory between their nations (Gurtov, 2014).

Japan’s ground on the claim is based on the fact that it had surveyed and proved the islands were uninhabited before incorporating them into its territory

in 1895. China never raised any objections to any deals concerning the islands, but it is only since the 1970s, after the emergence of energy discovery on the islands, that China began claiming. On the other hand, China asserts that since ancient time, the islands have been part of its territory, administered by the province of Taiwan, which was ceded to Japan in 1895 after China was defeated in the Sino-Japanese war. When Taiwan was returned from Japan, the islands should be still under Taiwan's sovereignty, yet according to China, Taiwan did not raise the issue because it was dependent on the US and was not capable of claiming anything back (Drifte, 2014).

All in all, the section above have provided a clear overview regarding the rationales behind the competing claims over the island—strategic, economic, and nationalistic—and the arguments from each side based on their respective interpretation of history.

1.10 Structure of Thesis

The study will seek the answers to the main research question by accumulating the answers to all the sub research questions. Firstly, in Chapter 1, Introduction to Research Topic, the author explains how the topic is formulated and the methodology to reach the findings. Secondly, Chapter 2 entitled 'Historical and Empirical Context of the US Ambiguity' presents a historical context, overviews, and thorough literature review over the topic. The two next chapters will provide the findings to the research question. Chapter 3 explores the signals of the Obama administration's "China Engagement" diplomacy and subsequent impacts on Japan's security policy. Then chapter 4 further illustrates the signals of the Obama administration's upgrade of the US-Japan alliance or "China Containment" diplomacy and subsequent impacts on Japan's security policy. Lastly, chapter 6 will deliver analyses of the findings and conclude the answers to the main research question.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL AND EMPIRICAL CONTEXT OF THE US AMBIGUITY

2.1 Introduction

Before exploring the answer to the issue, it is necessary to browse through the historical context of the US's ambiguity involvement in East Asia and some overviews of Sino-US relations and the US-Japan security alliance. Moreover, the paper can proceed only after a thorough examination of the literature concerning the US hegemony and ambiguity in the region.

Thus, it would be helpful to categorize this chapter into five main parts. The first four parts would cover the historical background of the US involvement and ambiguity in the region, overview of Sino-US relations, an overview of the US-Japan security alliance, and a brief examination at domestic administrations of Japan. The last part would be devoted to the literature review of the discussion over the US hegemony in Asia; the ambiguous nature of Obama's administration in the region; and the ambiguous nature of Obama's administration specifically towards Japan and Taiwan cases.

2.2 Historical Context of the US Involvement and Ambiguity in Asia

Since its successful conquest for independence in 1776 till the onset of the 19th century, the US had been guided by the policy of "isolationism", which had shielded the US from the political and strategic issues with the world, including Europe and Asia. Only trade and commerce were the main elements of bridging the US with the rest of the world. Only from 1812, after the Spanish-American war, did the US started to engage in Asia through the occupation of the Philippines (History, 2017).

The US became more involved politically and strategically with the world, particularly with Europe during World War 1. Yet, "isolationism" still lasted.

Then World War 2 brought the US to be more engaged Europe against Germany and with Asia, particularly against Japan; both were the main actors of Axis and started the hostilities that prompted the US to the war. “Isolationism”, then, increasingly faded, especially due to the “Cold War” that followed the war, and the increasing globalization trends (History, 2017).

The “Cold War” not only sustained the US engagement with Asia but also further intensified it. It started immediately after World War 2 from 1945 to 1991 in the form of ideological confrontation between the US, who promoted “liberal democracy” and contained “communism”, and the Soviet Union, who advocated “communism”. The war led the US to be engaged with Asia through “proxy wars”, which pitted small powers against one another, each respectively backed up either by the US or the Soviet Union (Gabriel, 2017).

In China, the US began to intervene in the war between the Mao Zedong-led communist force and Chiang Kai-Shek democratic force by supporting the latter from 1945 to 1949, when the communist side won and established the People’s Republic of China. Meanwhile, Chiang fled to Taiwan to establish the Republic of China, which has built a strong diplomatic and strategic relations with the US until the present (Cohen, 2017).

After the victory of the Communist China, “ambiguity” started to emerge in the US policy towards the mainland republic and the island republic across administrations. During the administration of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, the US recognized only Taiwan as the representative of China in the United Nations (UN). However, the Richard Nixon administration in the early 1970s started to cultivate close ties with the mainland China and even transferred the UN seat from Taiwan to the mainland. The move was made strategically in response to the “Cold War” environment against the Soviet Union (Cohen, 2017).

In Korea, after World War 2, the country was divided between the US in the South and the Soviet Union in the North. From 1950, following the North Korean invasion of the South, the confrontation between the US and the Soviet Union and China became intense until the ceasefire in 1953, which established the Republic of Korea in the South, and Democratic Peoples, divided by the 38th parallel. Since then,

North Korea has cultivated a strong tie with China, while South Korea has forged a strong alliance with the US (Richards, 2017).

Aside from Chinese civil war and Korean War, Vietnam war was the longest and most costly in terms of both expenditure and casualties for the US in its engagement in the “Cold War”. The US officially intervened in this war from the 1960s till 1970s to support the South Vietnamese government against the North Communist force. The notion that drove the US’s rationale behind this war is known to be “Domino Theory”, which posits that the fall of one country into “communism”, in this case, Vietnam, will lead to the fall of other countries in the region into “communism”, too, specifically Indochina, including Laos and Cambodia. Eventually, the US failed to prevent South Vietnam from “communism”, and the whole Vietnam became “Communist” (Rohn, 2016). However, the US still manages to maintain good relation with Vietnam till nowadays.

Besides China, Korea, and Vietnam, who had directly experienced “proxy wars”, Japan had been quite intact from the direct impact of the Cold War, largely due to the US commitment in its defense. After the victory over Japan in World War 2, the victorious allies put Japan under international control, while the US was responsible for the reconstruction of Japan with specific focuses on democratic building, economic stabilization, and most notably, pacification of Japan (which was guided by its famous Article 9 in the US-drafted pacific constitution). Japan could accept that constitution under the condition that the US took a primary role in defending Japan, while Japan would allow the US to station the forces on its territory. Many security arrangements were made to provide guidelines of cooperation, and the US had been practically committed and unambiguous in the defense of Japan throughout the Cold War and beyond (Jones, 2017).

After the demise of the Cold War in the early 1990s, the US became the main and sole superpower in the world and remained so till the onset of the 21st century. However, in 2001, after the 9/11 attack, the US started to direct its strategic pivot to the Middle East and Afghanistan in the “war on terrorism”. That mission, which was massive in scope and expenditure, reduced, to a great extent, the US engagement in Asia (Jackson, 2017). It lasted till the Obama administration, which,

perceived the lack of engagement in Asia, started to rebalance through the pivot to Asia (Clinton, 2011).

All in all, from a brief examination of the US's historical engagement in Asia, it is notable that the international security environment of the region has been essentially shaped by the US particularly from World War 2 onwards. Countries including China, Korea, and Vietnam were directly impacted by the US engagement in the Cold War, which affected and shaped their political and security environments to the form they are today.

In terms of “ambiguity”, generally, the US was not ambiguous at all in the defense of South Korea and Japan throughout the “Cold War”. As result, Korea could be saved in the South from communism, while Japan could maintain its peaceful development throughout the Cold War. However, it was ambiguous in the case of China and Vietnam.

In China case, the US transferred its international recognition from Taiwan to the mainland China to strategically counter the Soviet Union, while maintaining ambiguous position over the independence of Taiwan. In Vietnam case, the US changed its commitment to defending South Vietnam by withdrawing due to domestic pressure and the difficult nature of the war, resulting in the formation of the whole Communist Vietnam.

Therefore, in its historical context, the US engagement and its “ambiguity” or “unambiguity” in Asia had been empirically impactful on the course of strategic development in the region.

2.3 Overview of the US Amiable Relations with China amidst US-Japan Alliance

The US-Japan alliance has been the most resilient, long-lasting, and important in the world. However, it has reached a skeptical point given the rising complication of the trilateral relations among the US, China, and Japan, in which the US has to balance its indispensable connections with China in certain areas (House, 2015) with its security alliance with Japan amidst historical and territorial dispute between China and Japan. Notably, the US largest trade partner has shifted from

Japan to China since 2004, while the US-Japan alliance also faced many challenges as time passed (Tanaka, 2011, p. 03).

However, while China the US is increasingly interdependent economically, they still have competing values, ideologies, strategic, and security differences against each other. In the meantime, while the US-Japan alliance has decreased in relative importance, it is still indispensable for the sake of their respective interests and regional stability (Tanaka, 2011, p. 03).

Such a complicated development lingered till Obama administration, and it inevitably had led the administration to adopt ambiguity as the practical foreign policy in the context of this trilateral relation.

2.4 Overview of the US-Japan Security Alliance and Historical Evolvement of JSDF

The US and Japan have been the traditional allies since the end of World War II. Since then the security alliance between the two has played a significant role in regional's security. It could be traced back to 1951 when the US and Japan signed a 10-year-renewable US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty, a military agreement that laid down the security arrangement for Japan in conjunction with its postwar pacifist constitution allowing the US forces to remain on Japanese soil even after Japan gained full sovereignty (B. Xu, 2014).

In 1954, Japan Self-Defense Force (JSDF) was established as the unified military force of Japan responsible for national defense and security. In light of the 1960 Mutual Security Treaty that obliges the US to assist Japan in case of military attack, the role of JSDF has been largely defensive in nature (M. o. F. A. o. Japan, 1996).

Revised in 1960, the newly dubbed Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security allows the US to station its military bases and employ its offshore troops on the Japanese archipelago in exchange for its responsibility to defend Japan from any attack by outsiders. Soon after the deal, JSDF's military role within the alliance was kept minimal as it was restricted to only Self-Defense and non-overseas deployment.

That was acceptable by the US since what the US wanted was the legitimate bases in Japan to bolster its strategic presence in East Asia (B. Xu, 2014).

In 1997, the Mutual Security Treaty was amended through the 'Review of the Defense Guidelines on US-Japan relations and regional security'. That encouraged the US and Japan to reach a higher degree of cooperation and both in normal circumstances and in the case of emergency (M. o. F. A. o. Japan, 1996). That implies the possibility for Japan to pursue a more active military role. However, Japan chose not to totally commit herself to but to maintain the principle of the non-exercise of collective self-defense (Cossa & Glosserman, 2005, p. 14).

In 2005, the security role of Japan was further redefined through the 'US-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future' by the Security Consultative Committee, made up of the American and Japanese Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs. In the document saw the evolution of the Japanese armed forces from limited self-defense to a more broadened one (Rice, Rumsfeld, Machimura, & Ohno, 2005).

More than half a century passed, the alliance has proved to be meaningful in many aspects ranging from overall regional's stability to economic dynamism. Both sides have evolved to the interoperability of the joint military training and exercise regularly. So far, the alliance remained firm and rooted in US-Japan shared values and interests (B. Xu, 2014).

2.5 Dynamism of Japan's Domestic Politics on Security Policy

The section would explore briefly the influence of domestic politics in shaping Japan's security policy by focusing only on the change in the last two dominating administrations in Japan. There has been a mainstream view that the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), led by Shinzo Abe from 2012, was relatively more military transformative or revolutionary than the previous Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) (2009-2012). However, (A. P. Liff, 2015, p. 80) made a thought-provoking observation that the Abe administration did not really transform but instead only

continued the long-term trend of Japan's defense policy measures by the previous administrations, either LDP or DPJ.

Actually, the historical evolvement of Japan's security policy posture remains on upgrading trend, more or less. For example, Abe's LDP predecessors did achieve notable security policies that upgraded the trend of JSDF's capability and roles, such as the 1996 Japan-US Declaration on Security, and the revised version of the 1978 Guidelines for the US-Japan Defense Cooperation in 1997 (Affairs, 1997).

On the same trend with its political opponent, the DPJ administration (2009-2012) also directed Japan on upgrading security policy, which could not be underestimated as it laid the foundation for reforms carried on by Abe in his second term from 2012. In particular, the DPJ administration produced a historical move through passing the 2010 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), which shifted Japan's "basic defense force" to "dynamic defense force". Then in 2011, the DPJ administration also moved on to lessen the Three Principles on Arms Exports so as to elevate ballistic missile defense cooperation with the US. The administration also initiated the review of the 1997 US-Japan Guidelines, which was finalized as the 2015 US-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation (A. P. Liff, 2015, pp. 82-83).

In this context, it is noteworthy that Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama from DPJ who ruled Japan from September 2009 to June 2010, did make controversial attempt to distance Japan from the US military umbrella by pledging to close the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Okinawa Prefecture—a focal point in the US-Japan security treaty. However, his administration did not succeed in fulfilling the campaign at all due to large controversy among Japanese politicians and lawmakers (B. News, 2010). The controversy stemmed from the fact that Japanese public opinion was very sensitive to China's assertiveness, which made the move away from the US very unpopular. Consequently, Kan Naoto, the successor of Hatoyama, quickly pledged to restore security alliance with the US (Rozman, 2012). That just proved the uninterrupted trend of the US-Japan security link.

After Abe rose to power in 2009, he just resumed the upgrading trend of the security policy of the preceding administrations. Among notable achievements are the 2013 NDPG (the revised version of 2010 NDPG), 2013 National Security

Strategy, 2014 Reinterpretation of Constitution, 2015 US-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation, and 2015 New Security Legislation (A. P. Liff, 2015, p. 79).

That implies that the change in domestic administrations does not play a decisive role in the trend of Japan's security policy at all. The switch in administrations mostly results in "evolutionary" rather than "revolutionary" move. Therefore, there is a need for the study of external factors that could play a complementary role with the domestic factor in shaping security policy of Japan, one of which is the impact of the US ambiguity.

2.6 Literature Review

2.6.1 The US Hegemony in Asia

In the present context, it is not absolutely true to claim that the US is the world hegemon due to the existing belief of multipolar world by some scholars (Varisco, 2013) (Deutsch & Singer, 1964, pp. 390-406) (Haass, 2008, pp. 44-56). John Mearsheimer (2014, p. 03), a renowned scholar in the field also claimed that it is too difficult for any superpower, even the most powerful, to strive to be the world hegemon. However, no one can question the fact that the US used to be the main actor of the World Order during and after the two world wars, the US used to be the prevailing superpower immediately after the Cold War, and that the US is enjoying a dominant status as the regional balancer in the Asia Pacific as the security guarantor of its allies and protector of international rule of law. Even though regional hegemony of the US in the region is perceptible, one can see the debates among scholars over the essence of such hegemony over the region as portrayed by the followings.

First, this part looks at the advocacy of US regional hegemony by some scholars. Ikenberry (2004, pp. 353-367), a prominent scholar in the field, asserted that American hegemony would still prevail in East Asia in the long term; however, its significance would rest more upon security than economics. Economically, East Asian states are more likely to be tied to their neighbor, China, while they simultaneously need the US to counterbalance China in terms of security.

Any withdrawal of the US from the region, thus, would ultimately lead to a dramatic change of security order in the region.

Goh (2005) also proved that the US's allies in East Asia depend, to a great extent, on the US presence as their security guarantor. The proposition of the US as a security guarantor in the region is well supported by other scholars who claimed that the US security role in East Asia is visible through its broad deployment of troops in many regions, one of the notable of which is East Asia per se (Bialasiewicz et al., 2007, pp. 405-422) .

Moreover, Chiang (2015, pp. 01-13) also agreed with the assertion that the US regional power presence is essential, and his focus is on the US role in balancing against China due to the fact that only China is capable of balance against the US and vice versa. It is undeniable that the two are mutually interdependent in a wide range of issues from world trade to environment, yet the US cannot allow China to singlehandedly take control of Asia in general or East Asia in particular due to their competing nature for regional and global leadership role (Ikenberry, 2016, pp. 09-43).

Furthermore, John Mearsheimer (2014, p. 01), also share similar views arguing that back in the late 1980s to early 2000s, the US was unrivaled by any great power, so it was more occupied with the small wars in the Middle East and the fight against terrorism. That unleashed the opportunity for China to develop its economic and military power in the region without much balancing from any superpower, and that trend would end up in great power politics with China as a potential competitor. Consequently, China increasingly became more assertive in regional territorial disputes in the region including the South China Sea and the East China Sea. As a result, it is inevitable for Asian countries to welcome the US intervention (Wang, 2013, pp. 01-34). With that regard, Green (2016) pointed to the fact that from 2009, the US relations with many ASEAN states, especially in the context of their interests in the South China Sea, and its East Asian allies improved dramatically, mainly due to their common threats, China.

However, whether US hegemony is indispensable for the region or not is still highly debatable. While there are scholars arguing in favor of it, there are

also, relatively fewer, those who are skeptical of the US hegemonic role. Cartalucci (2016), for example, argued that the US, who seemingly protected the stability of the region, is just an opportunist who attempted to contain China regardless of certain side effects of the region. In particular, he believed, most of the issues interrupting the region including the South China Sea and Korean Peninsula are mainly provoked by the US as part of its strategy to isolate China because, from his point of view, a stronger and stable Asia would not be as beneficial for the US.

Another rare insight refuting the regional need of the US is that proposed by Beeson (2006, pp. 541-560). He alarmingly reminded that in the modern history, there have been hardly any major intra-regional wars in Asia. Those that took place were caused by extra-regional influence. The examples are the US involvements in Vietnam War and Korean War. Therefore, Asia could have been safe or even safer without the US presence. Instead, he argued, without the US presence, Asian states would find it more compelling to cooperate in the context of non-traditional security challenge and economic interdependence. The US presence just reduced the necessity of regional security interdependence of the small Asian powers since they could just resort to bandwagon with the US for their respective security and interest, as governed by the 'Hub and Spoke' system.

In short, scholars disagree in terms of the "desirability" or whether the US hegemony is beneficial or harmful to the regional security of the region particularly East Asia, but none of them denied the fact that the US engagement does matter in the region and it serves as a key and unavoidable security player in East Asia.

2.6.2 The US Ambiguity in East Asia

There are many ways the US matters or can affect the security of the region, but the thesis would examine only the impacts of the US foreign policies under the Obama administration. The first part of this section provides an overview of the nature of the US ambiguous nature under the Obama administration in the general context of East Asian security. The following part will explore the question of why the US presence matters by examining the ambiguous nature of Obama's security policies toward Japan and Taiwan.

First, it is important to be clear about the term ‘ambiguity’. Academically, it can be referred to as ‘a policy of deliberate ambiguity’ or ‘strategic ambiguity’ or ‘strategic uncertainty’, all of which could be used interchangeably. In this paper, it would be defined as a practice or policy of a country to be intentionally ambiguous or uncertain with regards to certain issues of its foreign policy, which can be very harmful to the region in which the ambiguity exists as it can be misinterpreted differently by different parties, which lead to unexpected consequences or responses.

Actually, the ambiguity of the US engagement in the region occurred well before Obama’s administration, or specifically since the Cold War. The ambiguity allowed the US to maintain good relation with China as well as to engage deeply in the region, yet it also allowed China to take the opportunity to rise through the 21st century (O’Donnell, 2013, p. iii). The ambiguity then persisted even after the Cold War (Christensen, 2006, pp. 81-126).

On the one hand, one of the goals of the US regional engagement is to be assertive to push China to adopt reassuring policies towards its neighbors, most of which are US allies. However, on the other hand, from a zero-sum perspective, any resolute stance of the US against China would reversely attract China’s assertiveness in response (Christensen, 2006, pp. 81-126). Thus, it is better for the US to gain regional influence by having constructive and cooperative engagement with China rather than resolutely containing China. That is a root of the ambiguous policy of the US in the region: hedging against and forging amiable relations with China simultaneously to maximize its benefits, even with the cost of regional uncertainty.

Another scholar proves that the ambiguity had been extended till Obama administration. In the context of East Asia, there is an impression or perception shared by many American Asia specialists that the first Obama administration was very engaged in the regional affairs confronting China’s assertiveness, yet the second administration appeared to be weaker and less engaged (Kausikan, 2016, p. 09). That is based on the fact that the first administration could employ a historical ‘Pivot to Asia’ to update the US allies in the region, yet the

second administration had to focus their resources and attention more to the Middle East, particularly on the revolutions and fight against terrorism.

Rachman (2014) also pointed out to the fact that Obama's pivot to Asia, in general, and East Asia, in particular, had been very distracted and ambiguous. The distraction and ambiguity could be attributed to many factors. Firstly, it was due to the growing issues outside Asia, mainly in the Middle East, that demanded US attention. Secondly, the US decreasing focus in Asia could have occurred internally. It was Hilary Clinton who initiated the Pivot to Asia, but her successor, John Kerry, apparently had been more engaged and obsessed with the issues in the Middle East. Overall, according to Rachman (2014), the US's hegemony in Obama administration "had only been sufficient to antagonize China but not sufficient to reassure its allies."

Moreover, US ambiguous position towards China, situated in East Asia, not only mattered in East Asia itself but also the South China Sea. Up until Obama administration, the US had been more rhetorical than substantial or physical against China with regards to China's assertive claims and actions in the South China Sea. Sometimes, when crossing through the Chinese claimed areas, the US could not even make it clear whether it was Freedom of Navigation or Innocent Passage (Bosco, 2016). That catalyzed China to remain assertive in the region.

To conclude this section, it could be summed up that the ambiguous nature of the US in the region is not really the new phenomenon. It has been employed since the Cold War and up until now mostly to maximize its interest in the region—regional influence as security guarantor and economic benefits with China. Moreover, scholars also illustrate the ambiguous nature of Obama administration in East Asia through different angles. The ambiguity itself can originate from both internal and external factors; and that the impacts affect not only East Asia itself but also, to some extent, Southeast Asia.

2.6.3 US Ambiguity towards Japan and Taiwan

2.6.3.1 Japan

The following part, thus, will identify and prove, more specifically, the nature of the ambiguous policy of Obama administration with regards to Japan's and Taiwan's security. To begin with, it should be noted that Japan has disputes with China over the issues of history and territory, particularly the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands notably from 2012. Klare (2014) noted that the Obama administration had been, at its best, ambiguous. On the one hand, it assured Tokyo of its military assistance in case of any attacks on its sovereignty according to the US-Japan Mutual Defense Treaty of 1954. However, on the other hand, it also tried to please Beijing by many means including refraining from taking a side over the question of ultimate sovereign control over the islands; opting neutrality; and promoting dialogue between the disputing parties.

Moreover, while Obama administration emphasized the security treaty with Japan, it also used to express explicit opposition against Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Yasukuni Shrine in 2013, which was shocking to Japan. In particular, after Abe's visit, the US Embassy in Tokyo released a statement expressing disappointment in the Japanese leader's visit that would exacerbate tensions with its neighbors. This concern by the US could be understood as the US attempt to restore ties among East Asian neighbors—Japan, China, and South Korea—strained by their lingering territorial disputes and bitter memories over wartime history (Nishiyama, 2013).

Singh (2014) viewed these developments as Obama's two-faceted policies. On the one hand, through the security agreement, the US could reassure Japan of territorial security so that Japan would not provoke any sensitive historical issues that could infuriate China or would not revitalize its military role. On the other hand, by not taking a harsh stance against Chinese assertiveness, the US could maintain good relations with China for its economic sake. That ambiguity, however, resulted in the pressure for Obama to clarify his stance on his promised strategic pivot to Asia (Branigan, 2014).

In addition to rhetorical ambiguity, the US was also ambiguous in terms of military response toward China's move, which was harmful to Japan. That was so serious that Japan expressed its worry that the US had been too lenient toward China as the US did not substantially react to China's declaration of an air-defense zone around the islands in the East China Sea, which were claimed both by China and Japan (Rachman, 2014). That, to some extent, raised question over the US military commitment towards the protection of Japan's sovereignty against China.

2.4.3.2 Taiwan

Besides Japan, Taiwan, though not recognized as a state by the US, has also been assured of military protection by the US in the case of any external attacks. However, not different from the case of Japan, Taiwan is also affected by US's ambiguous stance in the cross-strait relations between the two Chinas, the mainland People's Republic and the island Republic. The strategic ambiguity policy of the US towards China had been lingering even before Obama's administration, specifically since 1979. The ambiguous positions range from its commitment to Taiwan's security, arms sales, and the island's future status (Zhongqi, 2003, pp. 387-407).

The ambiguity makes the US security commitment less assuring to Taiwan. Specifically, the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 states only that any attack on Taiwan is a "grave concern for the US" and contains less firm commitment than that offered to NATO and its allies, Japan and South Korea (Slocombe, 2016). Such an ambiguity could not be favorable in the cross-strait context as it is potential in causing the dilemma of cross-strait deterrence, arms race, and the chance of military involvement as in the case of the 1995-1996 cross-strait crisis (Zhongqi, 2003, pp. 387-407).

Obama administration, similar to the previous ones, merely tried to maintain the status quo, which is itself ambiguous through the policy of "dual deterrence" (C. L. a. L. Xu, 2014). On the one hand, it prevented China from coercively unifying Taiwan, but on the other hand, it also prevented Taiwan to declare independence to avoid angering China. The dual deterrence policy could be a long-term strategy of the US to democratize China by using Taiwan as the model of democracy to influence the political regime of the mainland China (Boon, 2014).

Moreover, when Obama's Washington emphasized its engagement with its Asian allies, most of the time, Taiwan was left unmentioned. That was perceived to avoid undermining the relations between the US and China as well as China and Taiwan. By being that ambiguous, China would have gained more incentive to resort to force to unify Taiwan as the peaceful means seems to be very less likely due to the overwhelming refusal of the Taiwanese people to unify with their undemocratic neighbor (Cole, 2012).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a sufficient background of related aspects regarding the topic concerning the historical context of the US ambiguity, Sino-US relations, the US-Japan alliance and evolvement of JSDF, and dynamism of domestic politics regarding security policy in Japan.

Overall, the existing literature is sufficient to prove the US strategic ambiguity with regards to its commitment towards the regional security, specifically, Japan. Based on the historical context of the US engagement in Asia, it is notable that the US ambiguity has been in existence but employed in different targets for different purposes in different administrations. For the study purpose, how the US had been dealing, particularly under the Obama administration, with China in the context of Japan security had been sufficiently manifested to be vague and thus drawn regional uncertainty.

Moreover, the theories related to the ambiguity, as elaborated in Chapter 1, have been sufficiently explored. However, those theories can only explain the probable causes or rationales for the existence of the ambiguity, while the empirical literature above mostly touched upon only the nature of the ambiguity.

Consequently, there have been scarcely any discussions, studies, or assessment over the empirical impacts of such ambiguity in the broader concept of the regional security. Therefore, this thesis attempts to fill the literature by examining the impacts of the Obama administration's ambiguous policies on East Asian security, specifically on Japan's security policy.

CHAPTER 3

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S "CHINA ENGAGEMENT" DIPLOMACY IN THE CONTEXT OF JAPAN'S SECURITY

The following sections of this chapter are going to examine the impacts of the Obama administration's "China Engagement" diplomacy on Japan's security policy. The US "China Engagement" diplomacy will be divided into two themes: the US's inactive moves towards China's assertiveness and US's proactive friendly policies towards China. Each theme contains respective causes and impacts.

The author would apply the case study in Senkaku/Diaoyu disputes between China and Japan in the theme of the US inactive moves against China's assertiveness because China had been frequently assertive (as shown in the following section) in this dispute, which affected Japan's security. Those inactive moves of the US, which could have undermined Japan's security interest were the US's weakness in 'Gray Zone' disputes between China and Japan in the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, and the US's unsubstantial reaction over China's unilateral Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the same dispute.

With regards to the US's proactive friendly policies towards China, which could have undermined Japan's confidence in the US-Japan alliance, the author has identified two main events, which were Obama's Respect for China's 'Core Interest', and Obama's Respect for China's Model of Great Power Relations.

3.1 The US Inactive Moves against China and Impacts on Japan's Security policy

3.1.1 The US Weakness in 'Gray Zone' Disputes in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands between China and Japan

"Gray-zone disputes" is the term famously used to refer to the disputes in the Senkaku/Diaoyu context since there had been a growing number of such disputes in the form of confrontations over territory, sovereignty and economic interests that were not potential to escalate to wars (Berkofsky, 2010, p. 36). Holmes

(2017, p. 02) added China had been maneuvering such a tactic very well in many cases persecuting through paramilitary or nonmilitary forces, including fishing vessels, indirectly supported by the Chinese Coast Guard. Actually, such disputes arose since the 1990s, but this section would raise only the disputes during the early Obama administration to explore the US “China Containment” diplomacy that affected Japan’s security confidence from 2008-2010 in the early Obama administration.

Since 2008, Japan had restarted to report the developments of Chinese naval activity, including the flotillas of Chinese naval warships passing through the disputed area. Particularly, In November 2008, four Chinese naval vessels, including the top-of-the-line Luzhou-class destroyer passed between Okinawa and Miyako island before heading to the Pacific ocean. Then in December, two Chinese maritime research ships of the State Oceanographic Administration were spotted conducting navigation operations, hovering, and cruising within the territorial water of Japan near the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands that were not permitted to foreign ships under international law (Defense, 2010, pp. 61-62).

Subsequently, in June 2009, five more Chinese naval vessels passed through the Okinawa and Miyako island again. Then in 2010, the largest of these passages occurred with ten Chinese vessels, including Kilo-class submarines and Sovremenny-class destroyers passing through the disputed waters in the East China Sea before conducting military exercises (Defense, 2010, p. 61). The same year also saw Chinese paramilitary tactics employed in the Senkaku/Diaoyu area when a Chinese fishing vessel collided with Japanese coast guard vessel in the disputed area (Shapiro, 2016). At that time, when Japanese destroyers were launched to monitor those vessels, China consequently launched helicopters to fly near those destroyers (Defense, 2010, p. 61).

Despite such military assertiveness of China toward Japan, the US was not active in response at all. In this case, it is important to look back at the Security Treaty underlying the US-Japan alliance, which states that the US would intervene and protect Japan only in case of the external attack, which is normally perceived as a conventional attack by the external military forces (B. Xu, 2014). Therefore, the alliance is not practical at all in the context of the Senkaku/Diaoyu

issue, where the tensions had been ongoing in the form of clashes between China and Japan in a level lower than conventional attack criteria or ‘gray-zone disputes’.

3.1.2 Impacts of the US Weakness in ‘Gray Zone’ Disputes on the Formulation of 2010 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG)

3.1.2.1 Overview of 2010 NDPG

This section explains how China’s assertiveness in the ‘Gray Zone’ disputes with Japan in the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands and the US weakness to intervene could impact on the draft of the 2010 NDPG. It should begin with the fact that, one of the most important indicators of Japan’s restructuring of domestic defense mechanism is the adoption of a new Defense Guidelines, known as the “National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG)” in December 2010. It is the highest level document of Japan’s defense policy by setting principles, roles and force posture of the Japanese Self Defense Force (JSDF) (Dian, 2013, p. 08). The fourth of their kind after the 1976, 1995, and 2004 NDPG, the 2010 NDPG. the 2010 NDPG is a new security plan of Japan that outlines the country’s 10-year defense strategy through the establishment of a more flexible armed forces (Berkofsky, 2010, p. 34).

According to the translation of the original version of the ten-year-plan 2010 NDPG, approved by the Japanese Security Council and the Cabinet, the attempt to the restructuring of the Japanese domestic defense mechanism is apparent. At its core, the 2010 NDPG substitutes the “Basic Defense Forces Concept” (“kibanteki boeiryoku koso”), first formulated in the 1976 “National Defense Policy Outline” (“NDPO”), with the “Dynamic Defense Force” (“doeki boei ryoko”) (Berkofsky, 2010, p. 35). In particular, the guidelines lay down the plan to expand the role of the Defense Forces in accordance with the Dynamic Defense Force concept.

In responses to the current trends of the security environment prior to 2010, Japan found it important to develop a Dynamic Defense Force that possesses readiness, mobility, flexibility, sustainability, and versatility to achieve dynamic deterrence (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010, pp. 06-07). Consequently, the guidelines further mention the reinvigoration of the Force Posture of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF), including the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF), Maritime Self-Defense

Force (MSDF), and Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF). Moreover, based on the guidelines, SDF will also be strengthened through the improvement of their functions, organization, equipment, and force disposition. Specifically, all Japanese SDFs would be improving their intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance (ISR) capabilities in a more mobile and flexible structure (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010, pp. 10-19).

3.1.2.2 How ‘Gray Zone’ Disputes with China and US Weakness in the Issue Impacted on the Formulation of 2010 NDPG

It is very likely that the 2010 NDPG is realistic in response to China’s military modernization and assertiveness in the context of the East China Sea, or Senkaku/Diaoyu issue. It does not alter the fundamental elements of the decades-old Japanese security and defense policies at all including “Exclusive Defensive Defense Policies”, “Three Non-Nuclear Principles”, “and self-imposed ban of weapon or weapon technology exports to other countries other than the US” (Berkofsky, 2010, pp. 41-48). Instead, however, it only emphasizes the need for a dynamic defense mechanism, which is mainly directed in response to the Chinese assertiveness.

Notably, the 2010 NDPG 2010 further boosted the trend kick-started in the previous NDPG to shift the focus of Japanese SDF from the defense of Hokkaido in the North to the island chain in the Southwest including the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands (Fouse, 2011, p. 03). Japan’s defense planners also pointed out that the restructuring of the SDF is in response to the need of the defense of the country’s southwestern parts and islands, the Senkaku/Diaoyu, which are in relative geographic vicinity to China, and are in the ‘Gray Zone’ disputes with China (Berkofsky, 2010, p. 36).

Moreover, interestingly, in the preamble part, particularly the “Security Environment Surrounding Japan”, the 2010 NDPG included a discourse of China by mentioning “China” repeatedly (Berkofsky, 2010, p. 33) (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010, pp. 03-04). As directly quoted, the section reads:

“China, a growing major power, is beginning to play an important role for regional and global security. On the other hand, China is steadily increasing its defense expenditure. China is widely and rapidly modernizing its military force, mainly its nuclear and missile force as well as navy and air force, and is strengthening its capability for extended-range power projection. In addition, China has been expanding and intensifying its maritime activities in the surrounding waters. These trends, together with insufficient transparency over China’s military forces and its security policy, are of concern for the regional and global community.”

(t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010, p. 04)

That leads to the basic idea of the 2010 NDPG to be alarmed by the threat to Japan’s security. Recognizing the importance of its very own effort or self-reliance as the foremost factor for the country’s security, the guidelines stipulated that Japan incessantly utilize all means to ensure its own security (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010, p. 05).

Actually, the 2010 NDPG also indicates the US-Japan alliance as an indispensable factor for Japan’s security (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010, pp. 07-08). However, as noted in the previous section, the Security Treaty obligates the US to intervene and protect Japan only in case of the external attack, conventional attack by the external military forces (B. Xu, 2014). However, the incidents in the ‘gray zones’ had made the dependence on the US irrelevant, since Obama was not active in response to those incidents at all.

Therefore, it is important that Japan restructure its own domestic defense mechanisms, such as the 2010 NDPG, which does not alter basic values Japan adheres to, but instead upgrade its ability to protect itself amidst China’s assertiveness and US’s inactive response. Indeed, Japan’s adoption of the 2010 NDPG presented a strong signal that the US’s commitment to deter China in early Obama administration in the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue was not sufficient in the gray zone disputes. That could be perceived as a kind of “China Containment” diplomacy in this context.

3.1.2.3 How the 2010 NDPG Differs from Its Predecessors

As mentioned above, before the adoption of the 2010 NDPG, there have been three NDPGs adopted already namely, the 1976 NDPG, 1995 NDPG, and 2004 NDPG. It would be comprehensive to briefly examine the core of each NDPG and compare them with the 2010 version.

The 1976 NDPG was formulated against the backdrop of the détente between the US and the Soviet Union, in which East-West stability was prevailing and the Japan-US alliance had been firmly established. The emphasis was on the measures to prevent an invasion of Japan, and the 1976 NDPG was attached to the 'Basic Defense Force Concept'. Notably, furthermore, at that time, China was not perceived to be the main threat to Japan at all (Defense, 2014b, p. 139).

The 1995 NDPG was drafted amidst the change of international system at the end of the Cold War and JSDF's increasing activities in the U.N. Peacekeeping Operations. Basically, it followed the same approach like the 1976 version by adhering to the 'Basic Defense Force Concept'. However, this version emphasized on the further utilization of JSDF capabilities not only in self-defense but also in response to natural disasters and various other situations. Again, China was not identified as a threat yet (Defense, 2014b, pp. 139-140).

Next, the 2004 NDPG was formulated in response to new threats in the evolving international system including the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and terrorism. The main security goals were to prevent, repel, and minimize direct threats from reaching Japan; and to improve the international security environment to reduce the possibility of facing those threats. Three approaches were integrated, including Japan's own effort, Japan-US Arrangements, and international cooperation. Like the previous guidelines, 'Basic Defense Force Concept' was still applied, while China still had not been identified as a threat (Defense, 2014b, p. 140).

Then, the formulation of the 2010 NDPG was made with many unique aspects notably differing from its preceding versions. The 2010 NDPG was shaped in the light of regional large-scale military capacity and modernization, dramatic progress in military technology, and transnational security issues.

Accordingly, the 2010 NDPG transitioned from the ‘Basic Defense Force Concept’ of its predecessors to ‘Dynamic Defense Force’ that encompasses readiness, mobility, flexibility, sustainability, and versatility (Defense, 2014b, p. 141). One more notable difference between the 2010 NDPG and the previous guidelines is the fact that the 2010 NDPG had identified China as a security threat, by mentioning China repeatedly and explicitly with regards to its assertiveness, especially in the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue (East China Sea) (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010).

All in all, there is a discernable link between the US Weakness in the ‘Gray Zone’ disputes between China and Japan in the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue and the impact on the formulation of the core of the 2010 NDPG. Firstly, the fact that the 2010 NDPG has highlighted China repeatedly and explicitly identified it as a security threat mirrored clearly to the clashes and disputes between China and Japan in the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue. Secondly, the transition from ‘Basic Defense Force Concept’ to ‘Dynamic Defense’ Force has a strong implication over Japan’s need to restructure its own SDF capabilities amidst the irrelevance or weakness of the US-Japan alliance in the ‘Gray Zone’ disputes.

3.1.3 The US Unsubstantial Reaction towards China ‘s Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ)

On 23rd November 2013, 10:00 local time (02:00GMT), further tensions in the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands accumulated when China declared the enforcement of the “Air Defense Identification Zone” (ADIZ) over the two-thirds of the East China Sea, covering the disputed islands of Senkaku/Diaoyu (BBC, 2013). The Chinese Defense Ministry stated that any aircraft must comply with the following Chinese instructions: maintain two-way radio communications, respond to identification inquiries from the Chinese government in a timely and accurate manner, maintain radar transponder function, and exhibit clear nationality and logo markings. In case of no cooperation or refusal to follow the instructions, China’s armed forces will adopt defensive emergency measures. According to the same ministry, ADIZ “is not directed against any specific target, but only to safeguard state sovereignty, territorial land, and air security, and maintain flight order” (China, 2013).

However, the intention of China was doubtful as the Chinese Defense Ministry spokesperson Colonel Yang Yujun stated that the boundary of the Zone is only 130 kilometers away from “some country” ’s territory because the shortest distance that “some country” established the ADIZ in early 1969 to the Chinese mainland was also 130 kilometers. This strongly implied that the 2013 ADIZ of China is directed against Japan, who established its ADIZ in 1969. Moreover, the nature of the 2013 ADIZ was not friendly at all due to the fact that it was established unilaterally by China without any consultation with its neighbors and that China did not allow the “get acquainted” period as it immediately enforced the instructions by the time of announcement (Osawa, 2013).

In his analysis of the 2013 ADIZ, Holmes (2017, p. 02) also labeled the zone as the airborne counterpart of the “nine-dash-line” in the South China Sea. By announcing the zone, Beijing was trying to refer to the zone as its territorial airspace or airspace over its territorial sea. That was certainly Chinese intention to reinforce its claim over the disputed islands, though ADIZ has no territorial implications according to international law. In other words, it was aiming to reduce the effective control of Japan over the Senkaku/Diaoyu as it tried to regulate overflight over the islands’ geographic features controlled and administered by Japan.

Interestingly, in his article, titled “The strategy behind China’s ADIZ in the East China Sea” Kazianis (2016) pointed to the fact that the applicability of the enforcement of the 2013 ADIZ remained skeptical due to the limited capability of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), specifically the integrated command and radar facility. However, notwithstanding its plausibility of enforcement, the 2013 ADIZ was still very potential in serving China’s maritime strategy, particularly in the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue. According to Kazianis (2016), China could play the card of 2013 ADIZ in the negotiation with Japan, by, for example, lessen the instructions to demand concessions in the Senkaku/Diaoyu. Moreover, whenever the PLA’s capability reaches the threshold, China can always achieve the real enforcement over the zone. Either way, China loses nothing.

It is clear how the 2013 ADIZ presented a danger to Japan's maritime security. Like previous sections, this section will prove that the US opted certain deterrence toward China in this case, yet it was not strong enough to assure Japan. Thus the author still assumes the US deterrence toward the 2013 ADIZ of China as "China Containment" diplomacy'. It is notable that after the announcement of the 2013 ADIZ, a number of reactions flowed from Washington as expected. In his remark, the US Secretary of State John Kerry stated that, "this unilateral action constitutes an attempt to change the status quo in the East China Sea" (State, 2013).

Moreover, the US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel also claimed that "this announcement by the People's Republic of China will not in any way change how the United States conducts military operations in the region" (U. S. D. o. Defense, 2013). He also agreed with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe that both the US and Japan would not accept the 2013 ADIZ and that they would cooperate closely to deal with the issue. "The U.S. is deeply concerned by the attempt to unilaterally change the status quo in the East China Sea. This action has raised regional tension and increased the risk of accident and miscalculation," he added (Aoki, 2013). Furthermore, Washington also refused to recognize the zone by ignoring the Chinese 2013 ADIZ instructions and pursuing its regular patrol flights in the area, as well as criticizing the enforcement, so that it can protect the freedom of its military aircraft in East Asian airspace and its ability to observe China's military forces (Drifte, 2014).

However, the US was not decisively against the 2013 ADIZ at all. While the Defense Department objected to the ADIZ, the US Department of State also advised and effectively encouraged civilian airlines to follow China's instructions, which is a signal of certain acquiescence to Chinese demand (Aoki, 2013; Drifte, 2014). Moreover, Washington did not take a decisive stance on the 2013 ADIZ in the context of Senkaku/Diaoyu at all, which left Japan insecure. At best, the US, through Vice President Biden, on his trip to Northeast Asia in December 2013, only advised both China and Japan to establish a crisis management structure before the ADIZ crisis. It should be noted that the US only supported Japan's administration over, but

not the sovereignty on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. That provided China the incentive to further push its claim over the islands through the extension of the ADIZ.

3.1.4 Impact of the US Unsubstantial Reaction towards China's ADIZ on Japan's 2013 National Security Strategy

Weeks after the establishment of China's ADIZ over the disputed East China Sea, and apparent US's unsubstantial reaction, in late December 2013, Japan's cabinet, under Shinzo Abe, had approved a National Security Strategy, the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" that will guide Japan's national security policy over the next decade, with the aim to increase the defense spending of Japan. In the strategy, Japan would in five years, import hardware including drones, aircraft, and amphibious vehicles necessary for its security. Moreover, the JSDF would also construct a new amphibious force capable of reclaiming the disputed islands (Panarmenian, 2013).

To see the link between the US "China Engagement" diplomacy and Japan's National Security Strategy, it is useful to examine the core of this strategy. At the beginning, the strategy starts with the purposes, which are to maintain the peace and security of Japan and to ensure its survival, both of which are the primary responsibilities of the government of Japan. The part mentions the fact that Japan's security environment becomes ever more severe and that Japan cannot secure its own peace and security by itself (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2013, pp. 01-02).

The document has cited one of the threats explicitly from China. It claims China has been rapidly advancing its military capabilities by increasing in its military budget and has taken coercive actions including in the East China Sea, intruding into Japan's territorial waters and airspace around the Senkaku Islands. Most importantly, the 2013 National Security Strategy also specifically raised the concern over China's 2010 ADIZ over the disputing area that appears to unduly infringe the freedom of overflight above the high seas (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2013, pp. 12-13).

The National Security Strategy could impact on both the US-Japan alliance and Japan's internal capacity building, specifically the Renewal of Arms Export. Firstly, the National Security Strategy emphasizes the urge for Japan to

elevate the US-Japan security arrangements to realize a more multifaceted alliance, which is vital for the security of Japan. Accordingly, it lays down the initiatives to increase the dynamism of the alliance including “Further Strengthening of Japan-U.S. Security and Defense Cooperation in a Wide Range of Areas” and “Ensuring a Stable Presence of the U.S. Forces” (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2013, pp. 21-22). Moreover, the document also highlights the objective to strengthen the deterrence necessary for maintaining Japan’s peace and security and for ensuring its survival, thus deterring threats from directly reaching its territory (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2013, p. 05). This could be inferred as a sign of Japan’s concern of the signals of the US unsubstantial reaction against the Chinese ADIZ that undermined Japan’s territorial interest.

Secondly, the National Security Strategy is not limited to only updating the US-Japan alliance but also upgrading Japan’s internal self-defense force capability. As clearly stipulated in section 1 Strengthening and Expanding Japan’s Capabilities and Roles, Japan will build a Comprehensive Defense Architecture to Firmly Defend itself. Among many approaches, Japan is set to strengthen its maritime domain awareness capabilities, efficiently develop a highly effective and joint defense force, maintain and improve a comprehensive architecture for responding seamlessly to an array of situations, ranging from armed attacks, and develop a streamlined planning and programming process, among other (t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2013, pp. 12-13).

The National Security Strategy also paved the way to revised Japan’s arms export ban. Japan’s military modernization or domestic defense procurement has been quite limited due to the “the arms export ban” that has been in effect since 1967 (Dian, 2013, pp. 10-11). It had prohibited Japan from exporting weapons to Communist-bloc countries, those countries subject to embargoes on arms exports under the United Nations Security Council’s resolutions, and those countries engaged or likely to be engaged in international conflicts (M. o. F. A. o. Japan, 2014).

This ban, consequently, eliminated the external market for Japan’s military products, thus causing Japanese domestic defense industry to be procured only from Japan Defense Agency. The absence of market coupled with non-

competition resulted in the sheer reduction of the possibility to develop state of the art weapon production capacity of Japan (Dian, 2013, p. 11). In particular, many Japanese companies had left the defense industry, while the national defense budget had shrunk from the 1990s (Hirose, 2014).

However, the 2013 National Security Strategy served as a guide to the renewal the enduring arms export ban. Consequently, in early April 2014, Japan's Cabinet announced the relaxation of the arms export ban, through the establishment of "Implementation Guidelines for the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology" (t. N. S. Council, 2014).

That move that would allow Japan to jointly develop arms with allies and make its defense industry wider access to new markets and technology than otherwise, though the restrictions on exports to countries or subject to UN embargos or involved in conflicts would remain. The cabinet also mentioned that after the renewal of the ban, Japan would be able to participate in joint development and production of defense equipment and that Japan also would export arms if it could contribute to global peace and serve Japan's security interests (BBC, 2014b). That, as a result, would dramatically enhance Japanese domestic defense companies' capabilities through getting access to cutting-edge defense technology (Kubo, 2014).

In July 2014, the National Security Council of Japan (NSC-J) had approved Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the largest Japanese arms manufacturer, to supply high-performance sensors for PAC-2 surface-to-air missiles to Raytheon, a major US defense contractor and industrial corporation. Japanese companies also started to obtain many licenses from the US companies, including components of fighter jets and helicopters, parts of surface-to-air missiles, missile launchers for ships, and engines for aircrafts and ships, and are ready to supply components or parts to US firms, who in turn would assemble and export the military hardware back to Japan and their partners. For example, Japan would be able to supply a lot of components and parts to the US companies and the US, in turn, would assemble and export back to Japan many state of the art military hardware's including the SM-3BlockIIA, a next-generation antiballistic missile to be deployed in 2018; next-

generation assault amphibious vehicles; batteries for unmanned vehicles; and anti-air and surface radars for ship and land from the US (Hirose, 2014).

All in all, as part of the Obama's "China Engagement" diplomacy, the US unsubstantial reaction towards China's unilateral establishment of the ADIZ in 2013 did have a clear link with the impact on the subsequent formulation of the 2013 National Security Strategy of Japan. Firstly, the strategy document pointed out explicitly to the threats posed by China in the East China Sea and specifically to the ADIZ establishment over the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. Secondly, it also raised the need to elevate the US-Japan alliance, which implied the concern over the US unsubstantial reaction to the Chinese ADIZ.

3.2 The US Proactive Friendly Policies towards China

3.2.1 The Obama Administration's Respect for China's Core Interest

On 17th November 2009, Obama made his first presidential visit to China, and, to the alarm of American allies, he emphasized his intention to respect China's "core interests" in Asia (Green, 2016). After a long tough negotiation, a joint statement between the US and China was issued stressing that "the two sides agreed that respect each other's core interests is extremely important to ensure steady progress in China-U.S. relations" (America, 2009).

The November 2009 visit made Obama the first U.S. president to visit China during the first year in office, and it was also his first time visiting China. This means by that time, he had very little exposure to China. What is known is that, as both a lawyer and the first African American president, Obama treated civil society and human rights issues uncompromisingly and dealt with China with these interests in mind. However, in his presidential visit, he did not try to express anything against the 'Core Interests' of China. Nor did he promote American values to China at all (Li, 2016). That proved Obama was shockingly compromising with China for the sake of the US interest, to the surprise of the US allies, including Japan.

For China, such core interests cover the situations in Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang, and the territorial integrity critically important for the legitimacy of the

Chinese Communist Party as the ruling party of China (Xinbo, 2011, p. 02). Firstly, the presage of the Obama's respect for the 'Core Interests' of China emerged since one month before his explicit declaration of the respect for those interests. That was in the case of Tibet. It was notable that Obama was a staunch advocate of the Tibetan human rights issues against the oppression of China. However, in October 2009, he refused to meet the Tibetan leader Dalai Lama in Washington, one month before his meeting with the Chinese counterpart in Beijing and postponed the meeting till after his summit with the Chinese. The decision came after China launched the campaign urging nations to ignore the Tibetan spiritual leader (Spillius, 2009).

Consequently, that move was seen and interpreted widely as an appeasement towards China in order to work closely with China on critical issues, such as nuclear proliferation, climate change, and economic issues on the expense of the human rights issue of Tibet. Obama's Secretary of State Hillary Clinton even used to state that the issue of human rights could not interfere with the issues of global economy, climate change, and security, a statement that earned her a strong appreciation by the Chinese. The administration also termed that policy as "strategic reassurance" to ensure China that the US is not aiming to contain the emerging Asian power like China at all (Pomfret, 2009, p. 01).

Secondly, the substance of the US respect for 'Core Interest' of China was very manifestly evident in the case of Taiwan. In 2011, after the declaration of the respect for China's 'Core Interest', Obama Administration showed a signal of appeasement towards China in arms sales toward Taiwan. It should be reminded that according to the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, the US is responsible to provide defense weaponry to Taiwan to prevent forced unification by China. After several requests from Taiwan to purchase the advanced F-16 C/D model aircraft had lingered for many years, Obama eventually decided to deny against the requests for both the F-16 C/D model and submarines (Gertz, 2011) (G. Security, 2011). Instead, Obama agreed to only sell the weapons and equipment to upgrade the existing island's F-16 jets of Taiwan, while the proposed F-16 C/D models were far more capable than the existing F-16s in terms of strike capabilities. The decision occurred

while China had been building up its air forces along the coast opposite Taiwan (Gertz, 2011).

That move was a notable implication of Obama's respect for the 'Core Interests' as the Taiwan issue has always been one of the prioritized interests of China. Obama might have been very careful on the arms deal towards Taiwan or the US would get undesirable drawbacks including the damage of military exchanges with China and pressure from China over China's Treasury debt holdings in the US (Gertz, 2011). Since the declaration of the respect for the 'Core Interest', the Obama administration had tried harder to avoid offending China and damaging bilateral ties. Although the administration had permitted some arms sales to Taiwan, they were not proactive in nature, but only defensive as formulated in the 1979 Relations Act. Also, in 2011, the administration only approved the sales of items that were already approved by the previous administration (G. Security, 2011).

Thirdly, the issue of the Senkaku/Diaoyu in the East China Sea with Japan was also boldly mentioned by China as its 'Core Interest'. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying, in April 2017, stated that since the islands are the matters of sovereignty and territorial integrity, they are part of China's core interest, too (KYODO, 2013). It should be reminded that Obama only mentioned the US support of Japan's administration over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, but he always remained neutral over the sovereignty aspect. Furthermore, in a joint press conference with his Chinese counterpart, Hu Jin Tao, Obama even reiterated that: "The relationship between our two nations (The US and China) goes far beyond any single issue" (F. News, 2009).

To sum up, the early administration of Obama in a broad context had brought about signals of "China Engagement" diplomacy in the context of the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute between China and Japan. Firstly, the mentioned vague position of Obama or the irrelevance of the US-Japan security treaty in response to the 'gray zone' disputes between Japan and China had already rendered Japan to feel uncomfortable and insecure in terms of its territorial sovereignty. Secondly, Obama's manifest respect for China's 'core interests', including the Tibet, Taiwan, and Senkaku issues to appease China on other common issues, inevitably affected

Japan's confidence in the territorial security, mainly in the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, claimed by both China and Japan.

3.2.2 The Obama Administration's Respect for China's New Model of Great Power Relations

In early 2012, during his official visit to Washington Xi Jinping, the then Chinese Vice-President, introduced to the US his new proposal of the “new type of relationship between major countries” or later famously dubbed “China's New Model of Great Power Relations”. Since then Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, State Councilor Yang Jiechi, and other top Chinese officials had consistently promoted the phrase (Wyne, 2014). Later in mid-2013, at the Sunnylands Summit, Sunnylands Estate, Rancho Mirage, California, Xi, as Chinese President, again reiterated his idea of “new model of great power relations” (Haenle, 2014).

In response, Obama embraced that proposal by expressing the US willingness to build a new model of cooperation with China on the basis of mutual interests and respect. Since then, the US Secretary of State John Kerry, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, and other top US officials had followed the same direction (Wyne, 2014). For example, in a major speech last November 2013, Susan Rice released the US intention to operationalize the “New Model of Great Power Relations” (A. S. E. a. A. P. Liff, 2014).

During a March 2014 summit with Xi in the Hague, Netherlands, Obama also reemphasized his commitment to “continuing to strengthen and build a new model of relations” (A. S. E. a. A. P. Liff, 2014). Later the same year, in July, in his statement in the sixth US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED), Obama even stressed that the US “is committed the shared goal of developing over time a ‘new model’ of relations with China defined by increased practical cooperation and constructive management of differences” (Secretary, 2014).

Notably, after the Obama administrations explicit respect for “China's New Model of Great Power Relations”, the US-China military-to-military ties, which had been lagging since long, came into revival. A number of developments had been employed including the increasing interactions at all levels through institutional dialogue and consultations, exchanges of officers, and joint training and

drills. For example, China participated with other 23 nations for the first time in the RIMPAC exercise organized by the US. The two also agreed on the confidence-building mechanisms (CBMs) to bolster strategic trust, managing crisis and preventing risks between their militaries (Wenzhong, 2015).

3.1.3 Impacts of the US's Proactive Friendly Policies toward China and Impacts on Japan's Perception of Group of Two (G2) Model between the US and China

As outlined above, there are two notable instances of Obama Administration's proactive friendly moves toward China, which could have deliberately ignored Japan's security: US respect for Chinese 'Core Interest' and Respect for "China's New Model of Great Power Relations". These developments, to a great extent, reduced Japan's confidence in the US reliability when it comes to territorial disputes with China, particularly on the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue simply because Japan feared the US is regarding China as its collaborator in the global arena in G2 model as explained below.

The perception by Japan of the close strategic and military relations between the US and China is somehow implicitly manifested. Interestingly, the 2013 and 2014 Defense White Papers of Japan did note down concisely, in the section of China's relation with the US, the strategic and military relationship between the two superpowers. The papers mentioned that the US welcomed China to take a responsible leading role on global issues such as world economy, climate change, and proliferation of WMD. Also, the papers moved on to highlight the expression of the US to not let any disagreement with China to hinder cooperation on issues of mutual interests (M. o. Defense, 2013, p. 45) (Defense, 2014a, p. 48).

The US's proactive friendly moves towards China could have led to Japan's perception over the possibility of the G2 model between the US and China because notably from 2013 onwards, after the soft approach towards Beijing, Obama administration had achieved several agreements on global issues with China including the climate change in Paris, maritime risk reduction protocols, nonproliferation of nuclear weapons in Iran and North Korea cases, and cybersecurity, among others.

However, these accomplishments ran paralleled with continued Chinese assertiveness in the region, including the East China Sea.

Therefore, the amicable relations the US tied with China to achieve those common interests did not come without a cost. Beijing did view its support of Washington's key global issues as an exchange for its military advantage in the region (Cha, 2016). Haenle (2014), former official at the National Security Council Staffs of former presidents George W. Bush and Barak Obama and current director of Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global, also stressed that in order for the US to get the concessions or cooperation from China in global issues, it is inevitable that it has to make certain military concessions or improve its military relations with China first.

Regarding Japan's security, according to the experts in the workshop coordinated by the Center for American Progress and Rebuild Japan Initiative Foundation, such Obama administration's soft approach towards China and subsequent China's increasing assertiveness did create anxiety in Tokyo that Japan's interests would be compromised or traded with strong US-China relations. Several experts in the workshop consolidated this claim by pointing out to the process behind the 2014 climate agreement between the US and China in the sense that the US might have made concessions on certain regional security issues to provide incentives for China to back down in global issues (Harding, 2017).

The US may have perceived those soft approaches towards China as not that weak, yet what matters is how the Chinese side perceived it. For example, the US acceptance of the Chinese -proposed "new model of great power relations" may have implied signal to China as a permission for China to act unconditionally, unnerving the US allies in the region, particularly its nearest neighbor Japan (A. S. E. a. A. P. Liff, 2014). And similarly, what matters next is how Japan perceived those soft approaches from the US towards China. Given the Obama's close tie with Beijing, increasing Chinese assertiveness, and the US unsubstantial responses, it is certain that Japan felt threatened and insecure with the perceived G2 model between the US and China. As a result, that only increase the mistrust and doubt from Japan toward China's intentions in the region.

3.1.4 Impacts of the US's Proactive Friendly Policies (Coupled with the Inactive Moves against China) toward China and Impacts on Japan's Reinterpretation of its Constitution

In July 2014, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had proposed a reinterpretation of Japan's postwar constitution, so that JSDF would be legally able to use force alongside other national militaries, a right that JSDF had always been refused (S. Smith, 2014). The reinterpretation of the constitution outlined by the panel, and presented to Abe in May, called for comprehensive review of the limitations on the JSDF, argued to renounce the constraint that the JSDF should only use the minimal necessary amount of force in its effort to defend Japan, stressed the need for the JSDF to be able to use its weapons when operating with others (S. A. Smith, 2014).

Back to the history, in 1947, Japan's constitution after drafted by the US was ratified by the Japanese government (S. Smith, 2014). Article 9 of the article states that:

“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.” For that purpose, “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained.”

(T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 22)

However, after the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which entered into force in 1952 and restored sovereignty to Japan as well as recognized Japan's possession of the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense and its participation in collective security arrangements, the Japanese government had interpreted its constitution to allow for self-defense and to further restructure a post-war military known as the JSDF, created in 1954. (S. Smith, 2014) (T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 22).

Then in 2007, Abe, in his first term, established the Advisory Panel on Reconstruction of the Legal Basis for Security, yet his administration still

maintained the position that such a right of collective self-defense could not be exercised (T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 01). However, in 2013, recognizing the increasing changes in the region, which presented increasing threats to national security, Abe, in his second term had resumed the meetings of the Panel, which then had been instructed to advise the government on how to maintain peace, security, and survival of Japan, including for the most effective operation of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements (T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 03).

After reevaluating the changes in regional security, the panel suggested the reinterpretation of the constitution, which then was accepted by Abe. Below is the direct quotation of how the constitution should be interpreted, according to the suggestion from the panel:

“[...] the provision of paragraph 1 of Article 9 of the Constitution (“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.”) should be interpreted as prohibiting the threat or the use of force as means of settling international disputes to which Japan is a party. The provisions should be interpreted as not prohibiting the use of force for the purpose of self-defense, nor imposing any constitutional restrictions on activities that are consistent with international law, such as participation in U.N. PKOs etc. and collective security measures. It should be noted here that imposing limitations on the use of weapons in U.N. PKOs and other activities by reason of paragraph 1 of Article 9 is a doubly inappropriate interpretation of the Constitution, firstly in that it imposes restrictions on participation in U.N. activities, and secondly because it confuses the “use of weapons” with the “use of force”[...].

(2) Given that paragraph 1 of Article 9 renounces the threat or the use of force as “means of settling international disputes,” paragraph 2 stipulates that “in order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph,” war potential will never be maintained. Accordingly,

paragraph 2 should be interpreted as prohibiting the maintenance of war potential that could be employed in the threat or use of force in order to settle international disputes to which Japan is a party but not the maintenance of force for other purposes, namely self-defense (regardless of whether it be individual or collective) or so-called international contributions to international efforts. Ideas similar to (1) and (2) were also taken in the Panel's 2008 report"

(T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 24).

The above parts, the plan to reinterpret the constitution of Japan, present clearly the aim of increasing the dynamism and proactivity of JSDF. This can be linked to the US's "China Engagement" diplomacy in the context of Japan's security, too, by examining at the rationales behind the plan. Among the six changes or threats pushing Japan to reinterpret the constitution, two changes appear very relevant to this paper. Firstly, the panel highlighted the assertiveness of China. Specifically, the panel mentioned that China's skyrocketing nominal defense spending (increasing 40 times in the past 26 years and its 2014 defense budget surpassed nearly triple that of Japan), military modernization, and coercive territorial expansion in East China Sea, including Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, made it urgent for Japan to increase an even greater role for ensuring peace and stability in the region (T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 13).

The second threat that pushed Japan to reinterpret its constitution to allow for more active JSDF, is its concern for the alliance with the US. The report of the panel acknowledged Japan's need of the US by mentioning that without the Japan-US alliance, it would be impossible for Japan to adapt to the changing security environment and ensure the security of Japan. However, the report also added that the meantime, Japan can no longer unilaterally depend solely on the US as it did in more than half a century ago. Instead, Japan should be compelled to undertake a more active role and capability of its SDF to contribute to the peace and security of the region as well as to maintain and deepen the vitality of the alliance. Moreover, while it is important to strengthen the Japan-US alliance, it is also crucial for Japan to

build trust and cooperative relations with partners inside and outside the region, too (T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 14).

3.3 The 2015 Legislation for Peace and Security: The Hallmark of Japan's Security Policy Reformulation

The above-mentioned guidelines, security policy, and reinterpretation of constitution issued by the cabinet and advisory panel, then, had been well incorporated in concrete policy and framework of action by the 2015 New Security Bills, specifically the Legislation for Peace and Security that presented the hallmark of Japan's security policy reformulation.

The legislation covers a broad range of areas of reform discussed above, including gray-zone scenarios and collective self-defense. For example, to respond to the gray-zone situations, that are neither pure peacetime nor contingencies, the Japanese government issued cabinet decisions that categorized the gray-zone scenarios into three cases: "Foreign Naval Vessels Making Maritime Navigation that Does Not Fall under the Category of Innocent Passage under International Law", "Responses to Illegal Landing on Remote Islands by Armed Groups", and "Responses to Foreign Vessels Infringing on Japanese Commercial Vessels on the High Seas". Accordingly, the legislations laid down the procedures and prescriptions to be exercised in each case (Ministry of Defense, 2016c, pp. 223-224).

Regarding the use of collective self-defense, the legislation also reiterated the attempt to reinterpret the pacifist constitution by expanding and diversifying the rights of JSDF to jointly cooperate with the US and its allies. For instance, the legislation allowed JSDF to participate in Internationally Coordinated Operations for Peace and Security in addition to the existing three types of operations—UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), International Election Observation Operations, and International Humanitarian Relief Operations (Ministry of Defense, 2016b, p. 217). Furthermore, in the new 2015 legislation, JSDF was also granted the right to use weapons and protect weapons and equipment of allies under specified conditions (Ministry of Defense, 2016a, p. 214&218).

Overall, the New Legislation for Peace and Security explicitly expressed Japan's policy to be more active in unilateral self-defense and collective self-defense globally and to carry more responsibility in the US-Japan alliance (Borah, 2015) (Ministry of Defense, 2016). That would serve as a response to mend the ambiguous US-Japan alliance to strengthen the deterrence against external threat, including China.

3.4 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, it is instructive to review the main causes and impacts, which are the "China Containment" diplomacy of the Obama administration (in the form of weak reaction against China's assertiveness and proactive friendly moves towards China) and Japan's security policy.

Firstly, the author has identified the instance of US weak reaction against China's assertiveness against Japan, which is the US's weakness in the "Gray Zone" disputes (from 2008 to 2010) in the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands between China and Japan. That weak reaction, as explained, had a great impact on the formulation of the 2010 NDPG of Japan, an important guideline that laid down the plan for JSDF to move from "basic defense force" to "dynamic defense force" posture.

Secondly, the author has found another weak reaction of the US towards China's assertiveness, which is the US unsubstantial reaction towards China's establishment of ADIZ over the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. Such China's bold move and the US's unsubstantial reaction, to a great extent, impacted on the adoption of Japan's 2013 National Security Strategy, which boosted US-Japan alliance, strengthened JSDF internal capacities, and introduced the Removal of Arms Export Ban.

Thirdly, "China Containment" diplomacy of the US, in the form of proactive friendly moves of the US towards China, has also been spotted. Obama's respect for China's "Core Interest" in 2009 and the US respect for China's New Model of Great Power Relations in 2013 are both remarkable instances of the proactive friendly moves of the US towards China. According to the data

accumulated, they could impact on Japan's perception of the G2 model, the cooperation between the US and China on mutual global issues, that could have deliberately sidelined Japan security interests. Furthermore, those proactive friendly moves of the US towards China, coupled with the simultaneous weak reactions of the US to China's assertiveness, also led to the Reinterpretation of the Constitution in 2014 by Abe administration to allow more proactivity for JSDF.

Finally, all those security guidelines, policies, and reinterpretation of the constitution were coherently codified into a concrete security policy plan through the 2015 New Legislation for Peace and Security by the cabinet decision of the Abe administration.



CHAPTER 4

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S "CHINA CONTAINMENT" DIPLOMACY IN THE CONTEXT OF JAPAN'S SECURITY

The following sections of this chapter are going to examine how the US "China Containment" diplomacy impacted on Japan's security policy on JSDF restructuring. The main theme of the "China Containment" diplomacy in this context would be the US Rebalance or Pivot to Asia. The author will investigate its impacts on JSDF restructuring by examining how the pivot impacted on the implementation of the 2010 NDPG and its 2013 revised version, and the 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines.

4.1 The US Rebalance/Pivot to Asia

Before embarking on the pivot itself, it is noteworthy to note that the US has been consistent in its focus on Asia, in general, and Japan, in particular, since the first administration of Obama. In early 2009, Obama welcomed Japan's then Prime Minister Taro Aso as his first official head of state guest to the White House, while the then US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton made her first overseas trip to Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, and China (Yamaguchi, 2013). Then in 2010, the US Defense Department issued its Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDR 2010), which unlike the previous 2006 one that focused on the global war on terror, stressed more on regional strategies on Asia, specifically, the significance of the US-Japan and US-South Korea alliance for deterrence in Northeast Asia *US Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report*

One more year later, in 2011, the US pivot to Asia became into an overtly and explicitly perceived strategy after the issuance of Hilary Clinton's article, "America's Pacific Century," in November 2011 issue of Foreign Policy, and the subsequent endorsement by Obama. Also known as Obama's 'Rebalancing Strategy' toward Asia, the pivot was believed it to be very critically important to the

US per se and its allies in general, in terms of peace and stability, economic prosperity, and rule of law (Clinton, 2011).

According to Clinton, the Asia Pacific region could be reached by the US diplomatically, economically, and strategically, all of which are packaged in the pivot. For the pivot to be launched, key lines of actions are to be implemented (Clinton, 2011). Among those, this thesis will examine the strengthening bilateral security alliances through ensuring nimbleness and adaptability of alliances and guaranteeing their defense capabilities and communications infrastructure); and broad-based military presence.

Few years before the introduction of the pivot, during 2008-2009, talks between China and Japan on resource sharing in the disputed area were productive (Gurtov, 2014). Moreover, according to the report by the Center for American Progress, many US and Japanese experts also pointed to the fact that from 2009-2011, under the rule of the Democratic Party of Japan, the US-Japan relations were managed and kept at a trough level, in which military and security matters in the disputed area were not sparkled by both governments. However, after Abe rose to power, shortly after the introduction of the pivot, the US and Japan were increasingly active in upgrading their security alliance in the context of the disputed area with China (Harding, 2017).

This leads to the possibility of the pivot contributing to Japan's restructuring of its defense capabilities through direct military assistance.

4.1.1 The Military Aspect of the US Pivot in the US-Japan Alliance

As noted above, the US Pivot to Asia is a dimensional foreign policy move engaging the US allies in many areas including diplomatic, economic, and military. Militarily, the pivot encircles two main components: internal upgrade of the US military capabilities to reassure its allies and external upgrade of its security relations with regional allies (Dian, 2013, p. 04). The following section would examine the latter component, specifically, how the US pivot contributed to the upgrade of security capabilities of Japan.

Before moving on to the military contribution of the US towards Japan's more active military capability, it is useful to look at the rationales behind such a move. There are two main reasons that the US is compelled to encourage Japan to play a more active military role in the region after launching the pivot. Firstly, the pivot aims to diversify the US allies—South Korea, Australia, and the Philippines—as well as engaging the US former adversaries—Myanmar and Vietnam. That consequently leads to the reduction of Japan's strategic importance for the US (Daniel Katz, 2010). Secondly, Japan also started to decrease its geostrategic importance as the new Chinese A2AD capabilities leave the main US bases in Japan vulnerable to a plausible first strike. As a result, the US finds it compelling to encourage Japan to provide different possible contributions to the US-Japan alliance through updating more active military role of Japan (Dian, 2013, p. 06). That could be perceived as part of the US "China Containment" diplomacy in the context of Sino-Japanese relations because any upgrade of Japan's military capability would have implication on its territorial defense against China.

The second reason that the US needed to upgrade Japan's military is the fact that Japan alone is not capable of upgrading its own military capability due to two main reasons. First, the Japanese government is impeded from enhancing its military capability as it never abolishes the one percent of GDP ceiling on defense spending. Second, military capability or modernization of Japan per se remains limited due to "the arms export ban", which had been impacted by the Pivot as discussed below.

4.2 The US Pivot Impact on Japan Self-Defense Capability Restructuring

The most sensible way to illustrate how the US pivot presented a "China Containment" diplomacy in the context of Senkaku/Diaoyu issue is to examine how the pivot shapes the restructuring of Japan's domestic defense mechanism, which is important for the protection of its sovereignty. In the *Journal of London School of Economics and Political Science*, titled *Japan and the US pivot to Asia Pacific*

Matteo Dian (2013, p. 04) pointed out that the pivot boosted the renewal and deepening of the US-Japan alliance and contributed to a more active Japanese security strategy in East Asia. Thus, the next section will examine the signs of Japan's more active defense mechanism as supported by the pivot, specifically the 2010 NDPG and its revised 2013 version, and the Revised Defense Guideline for Japan-US Cooperation in 2015.

4.2.1 The US Pivot Impacts on the Implementation of 2010 NDPG

As mentioned, the 1960 treaty put JSDF limited to inactive self-defense, and neither the 1997 nor the 2005 redefining guidelines of the treaty produced a substantial shift of Japan's security role in the region. Instead, it was the pivot that accelerated the shift because at the core of the pivot is 'alliance diversification'. That means the US needed Japan to not only be 'security consumer' but also to share the burden of the security provision, too, especially when Japanese territory can no longer provide the US troops a completely secure rearguard against the sophisticated development of Anti Access and Area Denial (A2AD) of China (Cronin, Giarra, Hosford, & Katz, 2012, pp. 11-12) (Dian, 2013, p. 06). This section looks at how the US pivot contributed to Japan's implementation of the 2010 NDPG.

According to Tomohiko Satake (2011), a research fellow at National Institute for Defense Studies at the Policy Studies Department of the Japanese Ministry of Defense, the US pivot to Asia had greatly contributed to Japan's establishment of the "dynamic defense force" introduced by the 2010 NDPG. Firstly, the pivot assisted in strengthening the "*tosho boei*" or defense of southwestern islands. After Japan's Minister of Defense declared the attempt to enhance the capabilities to swiftly and seamlessly respond to attacks on offshore islands, the US military started to join the JSDF's exercise for the "*tosho boei*" (Ishihara, 2012).

Moreover, On April 27, 2012, the US-Japan Security Consultative Committee (2 plus 2) in the context of enhancing the 2010 NDPG. In particular, the committee had stressed the implementation of the US-Japan "dynamic defense cooperation (DDC)," initially announced by both the US Defense Secretary Panetta and former Japanese Defense Minister Ichikawa after their meeting in November

2011. The DDC contains three key elements. Firstly, it paves the way for the JSDF and the US military to have timely exercises for maximum effectiveness with regional allies, including the first 2011 US-Japan-Australia joint military training in the South China Sea and the first 2012 US-Japan-ROK joint military training in the waters near the Korean Peninsula (Ishihara, 2012).

Secondly, the DDC also covers ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Planning) activities between Japan and the US. After the 2 Plus 2 Meeting in 2012, the US and Japan announced that both sides would jointly utilize the US military's Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAV) for more effective ISR activities. Introducing UAVs, with a longer flying range than casual manned vehicles, may potentially expand a surveillance area of the JSDF beyond the East China Sea. As a result, the greater the cooperation in ISR, the superior Japan and the US would become in information gathering than regional countries, even China, thus significantly increasing deterrence capabilities. The joint statement after the 2 plus 2 meeting in April 2012 also revealed that Japan and the United States would more actively collaborate in outer-space, especially in Space Situational Awareness (SSA) (Ishihara, 2012).

Thirdly, from the agreement in the DDC, the US and Japan also increase access to the common use of each other's facilities. For instance, they planned to develop training areas in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands as commonly used facilities by the US forces and the JSDF (Ishihara, 2012).

4.2.1.1 The Rationales for the US to Contribute to the 2010 NDPG

It is also noteworthy the US had been interested in assisting Japan in enhancing the 2010 NDPG because firstly, it is considerably significant for the US strategy to enhance its operation in China's A2/AD strategy since the US forces in the region are covered by Japan's anti-ballistic missile system. The JSDF's defense capabilities including mine countermeasures, anti-submarine warfare, air and missile defense, defense of remote islands and anti-ship warfare in the southwestern part of Japan, if properly coordinated, could potentially serve to support the US to overcome an A2/AD strategy China (Yamaguchi, 2013). According to the Armitage-Nye

Report, released in August 2012, the 2010 NDPG is consistent with Air-Sea battle tactics designed by the US to offset China's A2AD strategy. Technically, Air-Sea battle is an operational concept focusing on the development of integrated air and naval capabilities to maintain the capacity to military power projection against a sophisticated A2AD strategy(Dian, 2013, p. 04).

The 2010 NDPG's new concept of dynamic defense is consistent with Air-Sea Battle and could respond to the A2/AD strategy of China in the sense that under the Air-Sea battle concept, defense of the islands to the southwest of Japan is perceived to be critical in checking and preventing the Chinese Navy's expansion in the area between the First Island Chain (From the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan, and the Philippines) and the Second Island Chain (connecting the Bonin Islands and Guam (Jan van Tol, 2010). Meanwhile, Japan's "counter A2/AD capabilities," including improving anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities or strengthening the US military bases in Japan, is also consistent with the US air-sea battle concept (Takahashi, 2012).

Secondly, the 2010 NDPG also highlighted Japan's role in maritime security, the primary importance of anti-submarine warfare capabilities, and the increasing strategic relevance of the joint US-Japanese Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) system (Armitage & Nye, 2012, pp. 11-12) (Dian, 2012). Thirdly, the 2010 NDPG is also consistent with the US' request for increased interoperability and 'jointers' between the allied armed forces, which could enhance intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities to increase operational readiness of the JSDF and the alliance. Under the framework of the new dynamic defense concept, Japanese forces will focus on regional deterrence at sea and the security of its surrounding maritime areas.

Fourth, the JSDF will not only maintain the ability to patrol and control the waters of the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea, but also paves the way for extra-regional role for JSDF to serve as an instrument of a 'multilayered security network' encompassing key US allies to foster maritime security in the Indian Ocean and in the Western Pacific (Patalano, 2011, pp. 82-89).

Overall, any level of the realization of the 2010 NDPG would mark a milestone in the process of dismantling of Japan's post-war self-binding consensus or Japan's restructuring of its self-defense capabilities. It would also be relevant to the US's strategic move in the region. Involvement in the BMD would result in the acquisition of offensive-oriented military assets such as Aegis Destroyers, SM-3 medium range, and PAC-3 missiles and increased command and control capability (S. M. P. P. Kallender-Umezu, 2010). That, alongside the other mentioned areas of cooperation with the US, would constitute a significant restructuring of the JSDF's defense capabilities and the US strategic benefits.

4.2.1.2 How the 2010 NDPG Differed from Its Predecessors in terms of the US Military Involvement

Overall, compared to the previous NDPG from 1976, 1995, and 2004, only the 2010 NDPG had been advanced in terms of JSDF upgrade with the assistance of the US. For instance, the 1976 NDPG gave considerations to five main areas namely, furnishing various defense functions, maintaining balanced posture in organization and deployment, carrying adequate surveillance in peacetime, coping with limited and small-scale aggressions, and reserving capability to upgrade when necessary. Overall, the 1976 NDPG focused mainly on Japan's internal self-defense building, not involving notable upgrade from the US at all (Defense, 2014b, p. 139).

Likewise, the 1995 NDPG mostly maintained the minimum-necessary defense force like the 1976 version, with only the addition of the capabilities to respond to large-scale disasters and various situations. Again, there was no notable upgrade of JSDF from the US at all (Defense, 2014b, pp. 139-140). A bit different from the previous two versions, the 2004 NDPG started to see the notable involvement of the US to upgrade JSDF under the form of Japan-US arrangements. However, the US upgrade compared to the 2010 NDPG was still limited in the 2004 version, mainly because, like the 1976 and 1995 NDPGs, the 2004 NDPG still maintained 'Basic Defense Force Concept' (Defense, 2014b, p. 141).

Interestingly, the 2010 NDPG was the first of its kind to have been assisted by the US assistance, as part of the Pivot to Asia. Mainly, the 2010

NDPG set forth a groundbreaking direction from its predecessors from ‘Basic Defense Force Concept’ to ‘Dynamic Defense Force’(t. S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010). As a result, the US pivot, as detailed above, had been proved to be very critically significant to the implementation of the dynamic defense posture direction of the 2010 NDPG.

4.2.2 The US Pivot Impacts on the Revision of 2010 NDPG (2013 NDPG)

Apart from impacting significantly on the implementation of the 2010 NDPG, the US Pivot to Asia also further impacted on the 2010 NDPG revised version. In late 2013, the Japanese cabinet, under Shinzo Abe, issued the 2013 NDPG, which is the revised 2010 version (Keck, 2013). The following section explains how the US pivot impacted on the adoption of the 2010 NDPG by looking at the preambles and objectives of that revised version.

Firstly, the rationales behind the adoption of the 2013 NDPG were highlighted as the assertiveness of China and other actors such as North Korea and Russia. Those threats seemed to be the main reasons behind the revision of the 2010 NDPG. However comparatively, the tone of the word and the intensity of those threats were not significantly different between the 2010 NDPG and the 2013 NDPG. For example, despite different in specific details, the Chinese threats to Japan in both NDPGs were cited similarly as its military assertiveness and modernization, and maritime expansionism, including the ‘gray zone’ disputes (S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010b, pp. 02-04) (S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2013c, pp. 01-04).

Instead, the notable part that made the difference between the 2010 NDPG and 2013 NDPG is the mention of the “US Pivot to Asia” in the latter. In the 2010 NDPG, the role of the US was described as ‘Engagement’. The 2010 NDPG noted the increasing engagement by the US, importance of cooperation with allies, and the US effort to enhance security ties bilaterally and multilaterally (S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010a, p. 04).

In the 2013 NDPG, the US pivot was mentioned, a part that made a significant difference between the 2010 NDPG and the 2013 NDPG. In the section Security Environment Surrounding Japan, the 2013 NDPG stated as quoted directly:

“The U.S. has clearly manifested its strategic decision to put greater emphasis on the Asia-Pacific region (the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region) and is maintaining and strengthening its engagement and presence in the region despite fiscal and various other constraints in order to maintain the stability and growth of the region while enhancing its relationships with its allies and expanding cooperation with partner countries. In addition, the U.S. has made its stance clear to prevent coercive actions that aim at changing the status quo in the region in cooperation with allies and partners”

(S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2013b, p. 04).

Secondly, the US pivot did have a great impact on the objective part of the 2013 NDPG, specifically on the enhancement of the US-Japan alliance to strengthen JSDF capability. For example, the pivot would assist JSDF in terms of strengthening deterrence and response capabilities (including the gray zone situations), expanding cooperation in a broad range of fields (including maritime affairs, outer space, and cyberspace), and improving measures of stationing of US forces in Japan (S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2013a, pp. 08-10). Compared to the 2010 NDPG, the 2013 revised version, was expanded in more depth and details, while the most significant difference between them is the addition of the Pivot contribution to the US-Japan alliance update or JSDF capabilities (S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010c, pp. 07-08).

4.2.3 The Pivot Contribution to Japan’s 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines

Another indicator to measure the instance of US “China Containment” diplomacy in the context of Japan’s security is how the Obama administration contributed to Japan’s defense capacity building through the 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines to enhance the US-Japan alliance. In April 2015, Japan and the United States made a historic announcement of the adoption of the newest bilateral defense cooperation known as the 2015 Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation. The revised Defense Guidelines is the greatest milestone development of the US-Japan defense cooperation in the last two decades. On the

one hand, it is complimentary with Abe administration's aim of "proactive pacifism", while on the other hand, it fills in the checklist of the Obama administration's pivot to Asia, in the alliance update section (Panda, 2015).

Actually, the new guidelines were adopted following a meeting in the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (2+2) meeting between the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of States of the US and Minister of Defense and Foreign Minister of Japan in New York City in 2013 (A. M. P. Kallender-Umezu, 2015). It is noteworthy that the document was originally created since 1979 to set the parameters for the cooperation between the US force and JSDF in case of military attacks against Japan. Then it has been through revisions, first in 1997 and the second is this newest one, which began the process in 2013 and completed in 2015 (Tatsumi, 2015).

This section will examine the original English version of the 2015 Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation to see how it contributed to the restructuring of Japan's self-defense capability. The guidelines begin with the need to ensure Japan's peace and security under any circumstances through seamless, robust, flexible, and effective bilateral responses from the bilateral security and defense cooperation between the US and JSDF. In particular, the guidelines list down many sets of defense policy including firstly, the alliance coordination which will be strengthened through Alliance Coordination Mechanism, Enhanced Operational Coordination, and Bilateral Planning (M. o. D. o. Japan, 2015, pp. 01-04).

Moreover, the guidelines also touch upon how the US and Japan should handle the gray zone incidents by outlining that the two governments will take measures to ensure "Japan's peace and security in all phases, seamlessly, from peacetime to contingencies, including situations when an armed attack against Japan is not involved." In other words, this part implies that the US could come into Japan's assistance even in the event of clashes under conventional armed attacks or wars, technically known as the "gray zone" (M. o. D. o. Japan, 2015, p. 04).

Next, the guidelines list down how the US and JSDF could improve their capability in Cooperative Measures from Peacetime. In that section, the JSDF and the US forces will enhance interoperability, readiness, and vigilance to prepare

for any possible events. In details, they would elevate the level of ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance), Air and Defense Missile, Maritime Security, Asset Protection, Training and Exercises, and Use of Facilities. Plus, the guidelines also move on to elaboratively detail on the responses to emerging threats of Japan's peace and security as well as actions in response to an armed attack against Japan (M. o. D. o. Japan, 2015, pp. 05-15).

Furthermore, JSDF would also gain a more active role in the revised defense guidelines. In section "Actions in Response to an Armed Attack against a Country other than Japan", the guidelines illustrate that JSDF is allowed to conduct appropriate operations with the use of force to respond to events where there is an armed attack against a foreign country that is in close relation with Japan that could threaten Japan's survival and pose a clear danger to the fundamental rights of the Japanese people to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. Also, section "Cooperation for international, trilateral, and multilateral defense cooperation" did elaborate how Japan could gain a more active role in contributing to the defense of its allies (M. o. D. o. Japan, 2015, pp. 15-20). For example, previously, JSDF was restricted to deploying its assets only in a regional designation, entitled "situations in areas surrounding Japan" (SIAS-J), but the new guidelines could broaden its scope of territory in humanitarian and peacekeeping operations (Panda, 2015). Moreover, according to the new guidelines, Japanese missile defense systems would also be able to intercept any weapons launched toward the US (A. M. P. Kallender-Umezu, 2015).

The last section of the guidelines, "Bilateral Enterprise" is the most important one that indicates the immense contribution of the US pivot to the restructuring of Japan's self-defense capabilities. Notably, this also includes the cooperation in defense equipment has been mentioned the first time in the new guidelines (Tatsumi, 2015). The section aims to further improve the effectiveness of bilateral cooperation between the US force and JSDF by developing and enhancing the areas of 'Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation', 'Intelligence Cooperation and Information Security', and 'Educational and Research Exchanges.

4.2.3.1 How the 2015 Guidelines Differ from Its Predecessors

Generally, the 2015 Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation is relatively more comprehensive in strengthening the US-Japan alliance and operational cooperation between the two's armed forces, compared to its predecessors, one in 1978 and another 1997. On the one hand it is similar to the older guidelines in the sense that it covers the details of how the US and Japan would respond before, during, and after an attack against Japanese territory, but on the other hand, the new guidelines move further to expand Japan's active role in international security roles and defense of its allies as well as to increase JSDF's defense capabilities through the cooperation with and assistance from the US in all areas of defense including facilities, training, strategies, frameworks, and defense equipment. Specifically, the 2015 Guidelines differs from its predecessors as followings.

Firstly, the 2015 Guidelines is the first of its kind to include “seamless, robust, flexible, and effective” bilateral responses in the military cooperation between Japan and the US (Defense, 1978) (Defense, 1997) (Defense, 2015a, p. 01). Notably, it stated that “the two governments will establish a new, standing Alliance Coordination Mechanism, enhance operational coordination, and strengthen bilateral planning” (Defense, 2015b, p. 03). Overall, it is aimed to achieve a more strengthened coordination and more enhanced cooperation to be paralleled with the newly developed “dynamic defense force” of Japan

Secondly, the 2015 guidelines contained a part that could not be found in the 1978 and 1997 Defense Guidelines. In particular, the 2015 guidelines introduced the statement that space and cyber would be the domains that hold the greatest potential to expand the bilateral US-Japan alliance cooperation. In section VI, the 2015 guidelines listed in details the “Cooperation in Space” and “Cooperation in Cyberspace” Japan (Defense, 1978) (Defense, 1997) (Defense, 2015a, pp. 21-22). Since Japan is still lagging behind the US in this area, this part would be crucial in developing JSDF's capability.

Finally, the 2015 guidelines differ from its predecessor in the sense that it is the only one to include the cooperation in defense equipment and

technology cooperation. In Section VII of the guidelines, subsection A (Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation) stated that:

“In order to enhance interoperability and to promote efficient acquisition and maintenance, the two governments will:

- *cooperate in joint research, development, production, and test and evaluation of equipment and in the mutual provision of components of common equipment and services;*
- *strengthen the basis to repair and maintain common equipment for mutual efficiency and readiness;*
- *facilitate reciprocal defense procurement to enhance efficient acquisition, interoperability, and defense equipment and technology cooperation; and*
- *explore opportunities for cooperation with partners on defense equipment and technology.”*

(M. o. D. o. Japan, 2015, pp. 22-23)

4.3 Conclusion

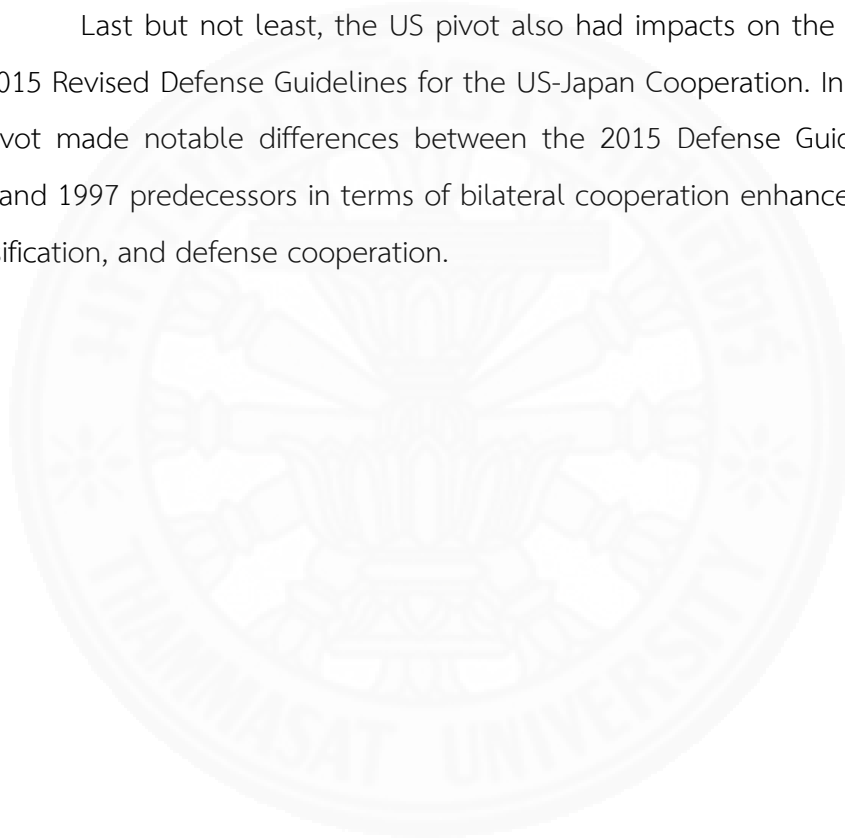
This chapter could be soundly concluded by reviewing the main impacts of the US “China Containment” diplomacy and impacts on Japan’s security policy and capabilities. In the scope of the study, “China Containment” diplomacy is defined as the US Rebalance to Asia or the US Pivot. Regarding JSDF restructuring, the author has touched upon three important guidelines that are potential in shaping Japan’s self-defense structure: the 2010 NDPG and its revised version, the 2013 NDPG, and the 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines for the US-Japan Cooperation.

Firstly, the US pivot is proved to have impacts on the implementation of the 2010 NDPG, which guides the JSDF to a “dynamic” force posture. Specifically, the pivot assists on the technical and military enhancement of the JSDF through the joint cooperation and coordination between the US military and Japan self-defense forces.

The cooperation had been in line with the “dynamic force concept” of JSDF as well as the US military strategy in the region, too.

Secondly, the US pivot also impacted on the formulation of the revised version of the 2010 NDPG, which is the 2013 NDPG. The linked between the pivot and the 2013 NDPG is the fact that the only main difference between the 2013 NDPG and its predecessors is the mention of the “US Rebalance to Asia” part and the details of how the pivot could assist the enhancement of JSDF.

Last but not least, the US pivot also had impacts on the formulation of the 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines for the US-Japan Cooperation. In particular, the US pivot made notable differences between the 2015 Defense Guidelines and its 1978 and 1997 predecessors in terms of bilateral cooperation enhancement, domain diversification, and defense cooperation.



CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

Based on the two preceding chapters, the author has accumulated sufficient, if not overwhelming, data to proceed to analyze and conclude the answers to each sub-research questions of the main research question. At this point, it is worth restating the main research question of this study, which is how did the Obama administration's ambiguity affect Japan's self-defense capability?

Accordingly, in the methodology and conceptual framework section of the thesis, the author has formulated four sub-research questions to construct the answers to the main research question.

The first two sub-research questions are designed to prove the actual existence of the Obama Administration's ambiguity towards Japan security, which include:

- What were the signals of the Obama Administration's "China Engagement" diplomacy in the context of Japan's security?
- What were the signals of the Obama Administration's "China Containment" diplomacy in the context of Japan's security?

The last two sub-research questions are designed to show the correlation of such ambiguity and the impacts on Japan's self-defense capability, which include:

- What were the impacts of the Obama Administration's "China Engagement" diplomacy on Japan's security policy?
- What were the impacts of the Obama Administration's "China Containment" diplomacy on Japan's security policy?

This chapter will synthesize the accumulated data in chapter 3 and 4 to these sub-research questions to eventually answer the main research question. Section I will explain the actual existence of the Obama Administration's ambiguity towards Japan security, while section II will explain how such existence affects Japan's security policy. Accordingly, in section II, the author will apply the concept of

“Dilemma of Deterrence” under “Defensive Realism” as the lens to guide the assumption that on the one hand, Obama’s “China Engagement” diplomacy led to decreasing confidence of Japan in its own security, thus pushing it to increase its self-defense capacity or to restructure its self-defense mechanism, while on the other hand, Obama’s “China Containment” diplomacy, did also increase Japan’s self-defense capacity through direct US assistance.

5.2 The Obama Administration’s Ambiguity on Japan’s Security

This section will utilize the data of Chapter 3 and 4 to prove the actual existence of Obama Administration’s ambiguity towards Japan security. The main argument in this section is that the Obama Administration had actually been ambiguous because it employed both “China Containment” diplomacy and “China Containment” diplomacy in the context of Japan’s security.

5.2.1 The Obama Administration’s “China Engagement” Diplomacy in the Context of Japan’s Security

Chapter 3, illustrates clearly the instances of Obama administration’s “China Containment” diplomacy in the Context of Sino-Japanese Relations. The author begins the chapter by pointing out the fact that the Obama Administration had been maintaining amicable relations with China amidst US-Japan Alliance. Accordingly, the instances of “China Containment” diplomacy of Obama administration in the context of Sino-Japanese relations were mentioned in two main themes: the US weak reaction towards China’s assertiveness (Senkaku/Diaoyu Case Study), and the US proactive friendly moves towards China.

In the first theme, there are two remarkable instances of the US weak reaction towards China’s assertiveness in the Senkaku/Diaoyu case. The first one is the US weakness in “Gray Zone” disputes in Senkaku/Diaoyu issue between China and Japan, specifically from the period of 2008 to 2010. As elaborated, all of the clashes between China and Japan in the disputed Senkau/Diaoyu area had been in the category of “gray zone”, under the level of a conventional military strike that

made the US-Japan alliance irrelevant in the assistance to Japan's security. Since Obama administration had remained silent with regards to that, it could be considered one of the instances of "China Containment" diplomacy.

The second instance of the US weak reaction towards China's assertiveness in the Senkaku/Diaoyu case is the US unsubstantial reaction towards China's unilateral establishment of the ADIZ over the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. At best the Obama administration could only make a rhetorical objection, and it was not consistently carried on by the Department of Defense and the Department of State, which made no substance to assure Japan of that issue.

In the second theme, there are also two outstanding instances of the US proactive friendly move towards China. Firstly, in 2009 Obama declared his respect for "China's Core Interest". The core interests of China in that sense include the Tibet issue, Taiwan issue, and Chinese territorial integrity which covers the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue as well. As elaborated, Obama was very inactive and unsubstantial in dealing or responding to China's assertiveness in the mentioned issues as covered by China's "Core Interest", which had been corresponding with his administration declaration. That, as a result, could be regarded as another instance of "China Containment" diplomacy to China.

Secondly in 2013, the Obama administration further took the proactive friendly relations to another level after the proclaimed respect for China's "New Model of Great Power Relations", whereby the US and China can coexist and cooperate as the two world superpowers for mutual gains in global issues, such as climate change, Iran Nuclear deal, and North Korean issue.

5.2.2 The Obama Administration's "China Containment" Diplomacy in the Context of Japan's Security

While Chapter 3 outlines the instances and detailed evidence of the Obama administration's "China Engagement" diplomacy, Chapter 4 introduced the simultaneous "China Containment" diplomacy by looking at how the US contributes to the defense of Japan. In that context, the author looks at the US Pivot to Asia, by focusing on the military aspect. Three important guidelines were

examined: the 2010 NDPG, the 2013 NDPG, and the 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines for Japan-US Cooperation.

Firstly, the pivot could contribute greatly to the 2010 NDPG of Japan, one of the most prominent defense restructuring of JSDF. Moreover, the pivot also impacted on the revised version of the 2010 NDPG, which is the 2013 NDPG. Furthermore, the pivot moved on to enhance the self-defense capability of JSDF in the form of 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines for Japan-US Cooperation through the cooperation with and assistance from the US comprehensively. All of these contributions were made due to the fact that the US needs Japan to be stronger in defending its own security and in assisting the US troops in the region, and also due to the fact that Japan alone cannot realize a stronger JSDF as planned.

To sum up, as argued by the author, the ambiguity of Obama administration in the context of Japan's security did actually exist. This argument is well supported by the evidence proving that the Obama administration had employed both "China Engagement" diplomacy (which reduced Japan's confidence) and "China Containment" diplomacy (which reassured Japan's confidence) at the same time which, as a result, makes that policy "ambiguous".

5.3 Impacts of the Obama Administration's "China Engagement" Diplomacy on Japan's Self-Defense Capability

5.3.1 The Cases of the US Weak Reactions towards China's Assertiveness

5.3.1.1 The US Weakness in 'Gray-Zone' Disputes and Impact on Japan's 2010 NDPG

This section explains how the US weak reactions towards China's assertiveness in the Senkaku/Diaoyu disputes between China and Japan could impact on JSDF's restructuring. The first instance of the weak reaction towards China's assertiveness is the US weakness in the "Gray Zone" disputes between China and Japan. The author argues that such weakness had a strong impact on the formulation of the 2010 NDPG of Japan. Below are the analyses that link the weakness and its impacts.

The main rationale behind the adoption of the 2010 NDPG was to enhance the defense capability of JSDF in responses to the growing threats towards Japan's security, particularly the assertiveness of China in the maritime disputes with Japan. In particular, the guidelines did point out to the need to strengthen deterrence in the regional security environment around Japan by upgrading from "basic defense" force posture to "dynamic defense" posture. Instead of altering basic values Japan adheres to, the NDPG's main aim is to upgrade its ability to protect itself amidst China's assertiveness in the "gray-zone" disputes and the US weakness in those areas.

Regarding China's assertiveness, the 2010 NDPG mentioned "China" repeatedly and highlighted China's assertiveness, including its aggression in the Senkaku/Diaoyu disputes and military modernization. Interestingly, compared to the NDPGs in 1976, 1995, and 2004, which were designed based on the Cold War, Post-Cold War, and fight of terrorism, respectively, the 2010 NDPG was formulated by considering the increasing intensity of security environment surrounding Japan, principally, the threats from China. Moreover, comparatively, the 2010 NDPG was the first of its kind to upgrade JSDF from "basic defense" to "dynamic defense" force posture.

Actually, the 2010 NDPG also stressed the importance of the US-Japan alliance; however, given the US's irrelevance in the "Gray Zone" disputes, which occurred frequently between China and Japan in the Senkaku/Diaoyu area, the 2010 NDPG's focus was more on Japan's aim of self-restructuring of its own defense capacity. Indeed, Japan's adoption of the 2010 NDPG presented a strong signal that the Obama administration's deterrence against China in the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue was not sufficient and that Japan needed to restructure its security policy.

5.3.1.2 The US Unsubstantial Reaction towards China's ADIZ and Impact on Japan's 2013 National Security Strategy

The US unsubstantial reaction towards China's ADIZ had a strong link on the formulation of Japan's 2013 National Security Strategy. The document has cited one of the main threats explicitly from China by claiming that

China has been rapidly advancing its military capabilities by increasing in its military budget and has taken coercive actions including in the East China Sea.

The Most important intrusion, according to the document, was the China's unilateral establishment of ADIZ in 2013 over the disputing area that appears to unduly infringe the freedom of overflight above the high seas. The document also emphasized the urge for Japan to elevate the US-Japan security arrangements, which is vital for the security of Japan. That could be implied as Japan's move in response to the assertiveness of China over the dispute and the US unsubstantial reaction.

The impacts of the National Security Strategy on JSDF restructuring are also prominent. First, it laid down the initiatives to increase the dynamism of the alliance including "Further Strengthening of Japan-U.S. Security and Defense Cooperation in a Wide Range of Areas" and "Ensuring a Stable Presence of the U.S. Forces". Moreover, the document also highlights the objective to strengthen JSDF's internal capabilities as well as including the "Renewal of Arms Export Ban", which was important in developing the military industry and production.

5.3.2 The Cases of the US Proactive Friendly Moves towards China

5.3.2.1 Japan's Perception of G2 Model

The US proactive friendly moves towards China, particularly Obama's respect for China's "Core Interests" and China's "New Model of Great Power Relations", to some extent, could have shaped Japan's perception of G2 model between the US and China. Although there have been no official positions of Japan that explicitly manifest this kind of perception, it is notable that the Defense White Papers of Japan from 2010 till 2014 mentioned the US position not to allow any differences between the US and China to affect their cooperation on mutual gains. That somehow could serve as implicit expression of Japan's concern of the US proactive friendly moves towards China.

Alarmingly, after the US's declaration of respect for China's "Core Interests" in 2009 and China's "New Model of Great Power Relations" in 2013, China assertiveness against Japan remained on high intensity. Moreover, the level of China's aggression against Japan went paralleled with the level of the US-China's

fruitfulness in global cooperation ranging from climate change to Iran and North Korean nuclear deal. Those developments, coupled with the US's weak reactions towards China's assertiveness, have led to a consensus among scholars that the US proactive friendly moves towards China could have been executed on the expense of or by sidelining Japan's security interests. Therefore, notwithstanding that there is no explicit expression from Japan of its concern of the G-2 model between the US and China, there is no valid objection against that proposition.

5.3.2.2 Japan's Reinterpretation of Its Constitution

The panel responsible for the reinterpretation of the constitution of Japan in 2014, can be linked to the US's "China Engagement" diplomacy in the context of Japan's security, too (both weak reaction against China and proactive friendly moves towards China). Firstly, the reinterpretation presented clearly the aim of increasing the dynamism and proactivity of JSDF (S. A. Smith, 2014).

Secondly, among the six changes or threats pushing Japan to reinterpret the constitution, two changes are remarkably relevant to the US "China Engagement" diplomacy. First, the panel highlighted the China's military modernization, and coercive territorial expansion in the East China Sea, including Senkaku/Diaoyu islands (T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 13). Second, the panel expressed the concern for the alliance with the US. The report of the panel acknowledged Japan's need of the US for the sake of Japan's security. However, the report also mentioned that Japan could no longer unilaterally depend solely on the US. Instead, the panel had the urge to allow Japan to undertake a more active role and capability of its SDF (T. A. P. o. R. o. t. L. B. f. Security, 2014, p. 14).

As a consequence, the reinterpretation would be potential in presenting the impacts on the reform of JSDF. The core of the reinterpretation of Japan's postwar constitution is the aim to allow JSDF to be legally able to use force alongside other national militaries, a right that JSDF had always been refused for half a century. The reinterpretation called for a comprehensive review of the limitations on the JSDF, argued to renounce the use of a minimal necessary amount of

force in its effort to defend Japan, and stressed the need for the JSDF to be able to use its weapons when operating with others.

5.4 Impacts of Obama's "China Containment" Diplomacy: The US Rebalance to Asia

In this part, "China Containment" diplomacy of the Obama administration was, as detailed in Chapter 4, framed to be the US pivot to Asia, specifically the military aspect to update its allies in the Asia Pacific region, in this case, mainly Japan. The author regards the US update of Japan's military capacity per se as the direct impacts on the restructuring of Japan's self-defense policy, specifically on the implementation of the 2010 NDPG, the formulation of the 2013 NDPG, and the formulation of the 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines for Japan-US Cooperation.

Firstly, the US pivot had strong impacts on the implementation of the 2010 NDPG to achieve the "dynamic defense force" through Dynamic Defense Cooperation (DDC); Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Planning (ISR), joint military exercise, and increase access to the common use of each other's facilities.

Secondly, the US pivot's impact, to a great extent, led to the revision of the 2010 NDPG, which is the formulation of the 2013 NDPG. The link between the pivot and the 2013 NDPG is that the only difference between the 2013 NDPG and its 1976, 1995, 2004, and 2010 predecessors is the notion of the 'US Rebalance to Asia' as the main rationale of the 2013 NDPG.

The impacts that the US pivot had on the 2013 NDPG that could shape JSDF restructuring were the enhancement of the US-Japan alliance to strengthen JSDF capability, including in the 'gray zone' dispute; expansion of cooperation in a broad range of fields; and improvement of measures of stationing of US forces in Japan. Also, compared to the 2010 NDPG, the 2013 revised version, was expanded in more depth and details, while the most significant difference between them is the addition of the Pivot contribution to the US-Japan alliance update or JSDF capabilities (S. C. a. t. Cabinet, 2010c, pp. 07-08).

Last but not least, the US pivot also impacted on the formulation of the 2015 Revised Guidelines on Japan-US Cooperation. There are three pieces of evidence to suggest the link between the US pivot and the guidelines. Firstly, the 2015 Guidelines is the first of its kind to include “seamless, robust, flexible, and effective” bilateral responses in the military cooperation between Japan and the US. Secondly, the 2015 guidelines expanded the cooperation between the US and Japan to cover the domains of space and cyber. Such domains were not covered in the 1978 and 1997 Defense Guidelines. Thirdly, the 2015 Guidelines is the only one among its predecessors to include the cooperation in defense equipment and technology between the US and Japan. These three aspects are, essentially, parts of the US Pivot’s alliance update.

The impacts of the 2015 Guidelines on JSDF restructuring are the fact that first, it allows the JSDF to operate through seamless, robust, flexible, and effective bilateral responses from the bilateral security and defense cooperation between the US and JSDF. Alliance Coordination Mechanism, Enhanced Operational Coordination, and Bilateral Planning were all included. Second, the Guidelines also touches upon how the US and Japan should handle the gray zone incidents with China. Third, the Guidelines lists down how the US and JSDF could improve their capability in Cooperative Measures from Peacetime.

5.5 Conclusion

The elaborative chapters 3 and 4, built upon clear contextual introduction and framework of Chapters 1 and 2, to this point, have accumulated sufficient data to reach a sound conclusion to the research question of the thesis, which is “how did the Obama administration’s ambiguity affect Japan’s security policy?”. The author has answered that by respectively answering each sub research question.

To sum up, there are two main findings reached with the guidance of the research question. The first finding is that the Obama administration’s ambiguity in the context of Japan’s security did exist, and it had been constructed in the form of

simultaneous “China Engagement” diplomacy” and “China Containment” diplomacy in the context of Japan’s security.

“China Engagement” diplomacy” is indicated by two main themes. The first theme, in the case study of Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, is the US’s weak reactions towards China’s assertiveness against Japan. The instances of such weak reactions are the US weakness in the “gray-zone” disputes between China and Japan in the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands (2008-2010), and the US unsubstantial reaction towards China’s ADIZ over the Senkaku/Diaoyu disputed zone in 2013. The former instance impacted on the formulation of Japan’s 2010 NDPG, while the latter impacted on the formulation of Japan’s 2013 National Security Strategy, both of which could boost the internal capacity building of the JSDF.

The second theme is the US’s proactive friendly moves towards China. The instances of such moves are the US respect for China’s “Core Interest” in 2009 and of China’s “New Model of Great Power Relations” in 2013. Both instances, coupled with the first theme, could have impacted on the subsequent reinterpretation of Japan’s constitution in 2014.

Meanwhile, “China Containment” diplomacy is evident by the US Rebalance to Asia or shortly the US pivot. Regarding Japan’s security policy, the US pivot is found to be impactful on the implementation of Japan’s 2010 NDPG, the formulation of the 2013 NDPG, and the formulation of the 2015 Revised Defense Guidelines for Japan-US cooperation. All of them are found to be critically significant in upgrading JSDF’s capacity.

Those guidelines, security policy, and reinterpretation of constitution issued by the cabinet and advisory panel, then, had been well incorporated in concrete policy and framework of action by the 2015 New Security Bills, specifically Legislation for Peace and Security, that cover a broad range of areas including Peace Keeping Operation, gray zone scenarios and collective self-defense. The New Security Bills explicitly express Japan’s policy to be more active in self-defense and collective self-defense globally and to carry more responsibility in the US-Japan alliance (Borah, 2015) (Ministry of Defense, 2016). That would serve as a response to mend the

ambiguous alliance to strengthen the deterrence against external threat, including China.

Superficially, it seems that “China Engagement” diplomacy was transformed to “China Containment” diplomacy, with the introduction of the “US Rebalance to Asia”. However, it is not valid to claim that because “China Engagement” diplomacy still lingered even after the implementation of the pivot. Instead, it would be more justifiable to assert that the overall nature of the two types of diplomacy had been “simultaneous” rather than “transformative”. That is what makes the diplomacy “ambiguous”.

Moreover, it should be noted that the ambiguity existed, or in other words, the US employed both types of deterrence with clear intention, guided by the notion of “off-shore balancing” (Mearsheimer, 2014, p. 04). “China Containment” diplomacy was launched to mitigate the possibility of China becoming the regional hegemon and to maintain the alliance with Japan, while “China Engagement” diplomacy was constructed to ensure close collaboration with China in global issues of mutual interests. Meanwhile, the impacts of each type of deterrence are intentional and unintentional, respectively, as simply explained in the second finding below.

The second finding postulates that both “China Engagement” diplomacy and “China Containment” diplomacy had impacts on the restructuring of Japan security policy by making it move in upgrading manner, in the form of “dilemma of deterrence”. In other words, on the one hand, Obama’s “China Engagement” diplomacy had rendered Japan less confident, thus “unintentionally” pushing it to “unilaterally” attempt to upgrade its defense policies. On the other hand, Obama’s “China Containment” diplomacy, launched in the form of the US Pivot to Asia, “intentionally” led to the direct upgrade of Japan’s self-defense policy through bilateral military assistance in various forms. Either way would have inevitable implications for regional security.

Having argued that, this paper is not to claim that the Obama administration’s ambiguity alone was the only main cause behind the upgrade in Japan’s security policy. Other external factors such as China’s assertiveness and

North Korean threats coupled with domestic sentiment and agenda to upgrade internal defense capacity building could not be underestimated or ignored. Instead, this paper argues that the Obama administration's ambiguity served as the complementary factors, along with those other factors, to accelerate the upgrade of Japan's security, unilaterally and bilaterally.



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